

TRANSPORTATION

MOTION

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) and the City of Los Angeles, with the strong support of Los Angeles voters, are investing billions of dollars in public transportation improvements designed to give Angelenos a robust alternative to private vehicles and the traffic congestion they create. However, all too often, transit riders find themselves stuck in the same traffic as motorists. Providing signal priority to transit vehicles is a standard best practice that has been used by other jurisdictions in California and elsewhere for nearly 30 years to eliminate this problem.

The Transportation sector is the largest contributor to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the country, the State of California, and in the City of Los Angeles. One of the City's best ways to reduce GHG emissions is attracting and retaining riders through reliable and frequent service via a strong and thriving public transportation network.

However, where light rail and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) lines run at-grade—along or across surface streets without gates—transit vehicles have to wait at signals as if they were an ordinary vehicle, even though, for example, a three-car light-rail train can hold over 400 people and a single BRT bus can hold over 100 people. These delays to “street running” trains and buses worsen their service and increase the length of transit trips, and make it difficult for Metro to time service at transfer locations, where every minute counts to make connections. While this is an issue across Metro's transit network, it has been a particular problem on the A (Blue) and E (Expo) Lines south of 12th Street (CF 19-1236), and along the G (Orange) Line.

There is a solution: providing transit signal recall (also known as “dwell recall”), as well as Transit Signal Priority, and preemption for street running, separated guideway light rail, and Bus Rapid Transit.

When a fire shut down the I-10 Freeway near Downtown Los Angeles in 2023, Metro and the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) worked together to prioritize the A and E Lines through signal timing changes, achieving substantial time-savings. Recently, signals along the A Line along Washington Boulevard have been running on dwell recall due to problems in signal communication. Other formal pilot dwell recall locations along the G Line have been in operation for almost four years. Metro's and LADOT's successful dwell recall pilots and cooperation on transit signal priorities in times of emergency demonstrate that the agencies can work together to speed up and prioritize our transit service at signals.

Any adopted policy need not conflict with Council's stated goals for also improving signal timing as it relates to pedestrian travel. CF 23-1210 gave direction to LADOT that pedestrian signal timing needs should be balanced with maintaining transit signal priority. This integrated approach is essential towards making a truly multimodal transportation system that gives Angelenos safe, fast, and convenient non-auto commute options.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council INSTRUCT the Department of Transportation (LADOT) to report back, in collaboration with Metro, within 60 days, with guidelines establishing dwell recall for signals along at-grade rail lines and Bus Rapid Transit lines.

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Council INSTRUCT LADOT to report back, within 120 days, with a draft policy and implementation plan and timeline to modify signal timing citywide to operate traffic signals with dwell recall, Transit Signal Priority, or preemption along at-grade rail lines, Bus Rapid Transit lines, full-time transit lanes, and part-time transit lanes, with the goal of reducing signal delay to transit vehicles and reducing transit end-to-end travel times to the greatest extent possible. The timeline should identify changes that can be made without new equipment (such as implementing dwell recall) to be implemented as soon as possible, followed by changes requiring equipment and larger capital costs, such as improvements to Transit Signal Priority and preemption. The report should also include a draft policy and implementation plan to provide automatic pedestrian and cyclist phasing for adjacent crosswalks, bike lanes, and bike paths that run parallel to the direction of trains or buses in a separate lane or guideway.

OCT 08 2024

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Council INSTRUCT LADOT to report back, within 180 days, with a “Transit First Policy” that incorporates the above guidelines and policies and guides all future design or modification of traffic signals citywide, with the adopted goal of reducing signal delay to transit vehicles and reducing transit end-to-end travel times as much as possible above all other considerations, excepting safety. The Transit First Policy would also guide LADOT to work with Metro to upgrade to the type of signal prioritization or preemption that best meets the travel time goals of the policy. The policy should include a provision that deviations from these goals must be justified based on specific findings, on a case by case basis.

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Council INSTRUCT LADOT to study how the impacts of the above policies proposed in this motion affect speeds and timetables for transit services, and report this information within one year of adoption of the policies proposed in this motion.

PRESENTED BY:



NITHYA RAMAN

Councilmember, 4th District

PRESENTED BY:



PAUL KREKORIAN

Councilmember, 2nd District

PRESENTED BY:



BOB BLUMENFIELD

Councilmember, 3rd District

PRESENTED BY:



IMELDA PADILLA

Councilmember, 6th District

SECONDED BY:



ORIGINAL