

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT relative to developing a regulatory framework for personal delivery devices that operate in the City's public right-of-way.

Recommendation for Council action, as initiated by Motion (Blumenfield – Bonin):

INSTRUCT the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) and the Bureau of Street Services, with the assistance of the City Attorney, to develop a regulatory framework for personal delivery devices that operate in the City's public right-of-way, including, at a minimum: sidewalk accessibility and utilization, the use of digital management tools, public right-of-way use fees, limitations on advertising, enforcement capacity, consumer and public privacy, and what public benefits there are, if any; and, an option to prohibit the deployment of the devices in the City's public right-of-way.

Fiscal Impact Statement: Neither the City Administrative Officer nor the Chief Legislative Analyst has completed a financial analysis of this report.

Community Impact Statement: None submitted.

SUMMARY

On October 14, 2020, Council considered Motion (Blumenfield – Bonin) relative to developing a regulatory framework for personal delivery devices that operate in the City's public right-of-way. Motion states private companies have recently begun deploying delivery robots, also known as automated personal delivery devices, on sidewalks to complete last-mile deliveries for retail purchases and meal deliveries. Currently, the deployment of these devices is limited, but states and local jurisdictions across the nation have enacted local regulations to ensure the safe operation of these devices. In California, there is no legal prohibition to operating delivery robots; however, cities may adopt a regulatory framework to ensure their safety and the protection of pedestrians.

While these innovative technologies have allowed for more contactless delivery options in the midst of the global COVID-19 pandemic and provide a clean energy alternative to traditional package delivery by gas-powered vehicles, Motion movers believe that the City should analyze the impacts of allowing these devices to operate in the public right-of-way. Motion movers go on to state that the City should be proactive in regulating these devices in order to balance the health and environmental advantages of shifting last-mile deliveries to contactless, electric alternatives against the private use and capitalization of the City's public infrastructure and the potential job impacts in the City. Motion recommends that Council instruct LADOT and the Bureau of Street Services to report relative to regulatory framework for the operation of these devices in the public right-of-way. Council referred Motion to the Public Works and Gang Reduction Committee for consideration. The referral was subsequently changed to the Transportation Committee.

At its meeting held November 2, 2020, the Transportation Committee discussed this matter with the General Manager, LADOT. The Department General Manager stated that the delivery robots are not yet widely used, and instead are primarily deployed in densely populated areas and campus environments. The devices may be able to reduce vehicle emissions and collect data on behalf of the City regarding sidewalk and street usage and identifying needed repairs. Revenue

from fees can be reinvested in the public infrastructure that the devices use. It was recommended that a small pilot be conducted in one area of the City to evaluate their impact and potential public benefit.

Committee members expressed concern about the detrimental impact the devices will have on workers. It was stated that the automation of delivery of goods will destroy jobs. Large companies will profit from their use, but the benefit to the public was unclear. Concerns were also expressed regarding how the devices would interact with mobility- or visually-impaired pedestrians. It was further stated that companies using the devices should meet with City managers and officials before deploying them. Councilmember Buscaino suggested the pilot be implemented in San Pedro.

The Transportation Committee recommended that Council approve Motion's instruction for LADOT to report with a regulatory framework for delivery robots operating in the public right-of-way. Committee amended the instruction for LADOT's report to address sidewalk accessibility and utilization, the use of digital management tools, public right-of-way use fees, limitations on advertising, enforcement capacity, consumer and public privacy, and what public benefits there are, if any; and, to include an option to prohibit the deployment of the devices in the City's public right-of-way.

Respectfully Submitted,

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
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BONIN:	YES
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BUSCAINO:	YES
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KORETZ:	YES
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-NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL COUNCIL ACTS-