

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

Date: October 14, 2021

To: Honorable City Council
c/o City Clerk, Room 395, City Hall
Attention: Honorable Mike Bonin, Chair, Transportation Committee

From: Seleta J. Reynolds, General Manager  for
Department of Transportation

Subject: **EXECUTIVE DIRECTIVE 25 - LA'S GREEN NEW DEAL: LEADING BY EXAMPLE - ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN REPORT-BACK**

SUMMARY

As directed in Council File (CF) 20-0187, this report outlines the necessary staff and resources for the Department of Transportation (LADOT) to implement the Active Transportation Implementation Plan, and effectively deliver an expedited or expanded work program at double the scale. Additionally, this report includes a list of unfunded or partially funded priority projects based on the criteria in the LADOT report dated June 8, 2021.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the City Council RECEIVE and FILE this report.

BACKGROUND

On June 12, 2021, the Department of Transportation (LADOT) submitted an Active Transportation Implementation Plan to the City Council (Council) and the Office of Mayor Garcetti, as directed by Executive Directive 25.

The Active Transportation Implementation Plan provides a framework and criteria for building corridors and local networks for safe and sustainable transportation. It uses the citywide Mobility Plan 2035, which includes comprehensive citywide active transportation networks, as the basis for defining and prioritizing projects. The Implementation Plan includes a list of funded priority projects that the Department and its Public Works partners will implement within the next three to five years. Additionally, the Implementation Plan identifies future active transportation priority projects, based on the criteria outlined by Executive Directive 25: the Mobility Plan Bicycle Enhanced Network, the High Injury Network, and communities of high need as defined by the California Healthy Places Index.

In July 2021, Council directed LADOT to report back on the resources necessary to implement the plan as presented, and to expedite delivery of prioritized corridors and networks at double the pace. Council also directed LADOT to identify the next phase of corridors that meet the prioritization criteria outlined in Executive Directive 25 and the Implementation Plan.

DISCUSSION

Executive Directive 25 directs LADOT to complete at least one major regional active transportation project and one neighborhood-oriented active transportation network per year. It further directs LADOT to prioritize these improvements based on health and equity metrics (specifically, the General Plan Element Plan for a Healthy Los Angeles's Community Equity and Health Index) and the High Injury Network. The following discussion highlights LADOT's short and long-term work plan to accomplish the directive's goals.

The Green New Deal for Los Angeles responds to our global climate crisis, and commits the City to an action plan that reduces emissions and increases resiliency. Los Angeles communities' already face some of the highest pollution burdens and health disparities in the nation that will compound as climate change continues. Today, a lack of safe and accessible transportation options, including infrastructure, prevent us from providing Angelenos with a wider range of low-cost, low-carbon mobility choices. Reducing vehicle miles traveled through sustained investment in infrastructure is a critical component of Los Angeles's responsibility to tackle climate change.

LADOT Active Transportation Three to Five Year Priority Projects Work Program

LADOT's current multi-year work program, as outlined in the Active Transportation Implementation Plan, includes approximately 22 Priority Projects that feature bicycle facilities, led by the LADOT Active Transportation, Vision Zero, and Safe Routes to Schools programs. The Bureau of Engineering leads two additional projects included in the Priority Project list that will require LADOT's partnership in design review and project coordination. This list includes fully funded or mostly funded projects that prioritize active modes and include dedicated facilities for bicycles and wheels. To deliver complete corridors, LADOT will also need to make improvements to close network gaps, prioritizing equity and feasibility, as described in the Implementation Plan.

Additionally, the department implements quick-build projects on a short-term basis each year by making upgrades that coincide with street resurfacing under the StreetsLA Pavement Preservation Program. LADOT uses local funds allocated through the annual budget for these projects. The annual lane-miles that LADOT can deliver through this program vary based on staff capacity and individual project feasibility, but these quick-build projects constitute the greatest proportion of annual lane-miles implemented or improved.

Current Staff Dedicated to Active Transportation

LADOT currently has a limited number of staff fully dedicated to active transportation as well as additional staff from the project delivery team and other divisions who help support and advance this work.

LADOT has a core team of eleven staff available and exclusively dedicated to active transportation infrastructure delivery, including three dedicated planners, six full-time dedicated engineers, and two management and administrative staff. The total positions in the Active Transportation section include three Transportation Planning Associate II positions, one of which is dedicated to project and application development for the Affordable Housing & Sustainable Communities Program; one Senior Transportation Engineer position; two Transportation Engineers and six Transportation Engineering Associates, three of which work solely on bike paths. The section also has two Management Analysts and one Program Assistant to support programs, operations and contractual services. The team also currently includes one borrowed Supervising Transportation Planner position. Of these total positions,

six are vacant: three engineering positions, including the Senior Transportation Engineer, one Transportation Planning Associate II, and one Management Analyst. These positions remain vacant due to a high volume of hiring demands on Personnel and a backlog of hiring and promotional needs across the department. The Active Transportation section relies on design support from LADOT's Geometric Design and Signal Design Divisions for all projects. LADOT Field Operations staff implements and maintains all projects that the department delivers "in-house," which is typically all LADOT infrastructure projects not inclusive of civil construction. Additionally, the work programs of the Vision Zero, Complete Streets and Safe Routes to School Programs within LADOT contribute to the implementation of the city's active transportation network, even though the implementation of biking or walking infrastructure is not a core function for these teams. Staff within the Transportation Planning & Policy Division also contribute to early project development, prioritization, tracking, and strategic long-range planning for active transportation projects.

The Active Transportation team also coordinates with the Bureau of Engineering and StreetsLA to contribute to network implementation through specific projects that deliver bicycle and mixed-use facilities. LADOT also coordinates closely with StreetsLA to ensure they assess and improve pavement quality prior to LADOT-led project delivery. This is particularly significant with StreetsLA's Pavement Preservation Program.

Staff turnover, retirements, and a high vacancy rate department wide have affected LADOT's ability to assign more staff, fully dedicated to Active Transportation. Today, only five staff are dedicated fully to on on-street active transportation infrastructure projects, for Los Angeles's 7,500 miles of streets. Compared proportionately to staffing levels for departments in other urban areas, Los Angeles has significantly fewer positions dedicated to bicycle and active transportation planning and implementation. The New York City Department of Transportation (NYC DOT), which oversees approximately 8,000 miles of roadway, maintains approximately thirty-four staff dedicated solely to pedestrian and bike programs, including two staff dedicated to bikeway geometric design. Including Vision Zero, a dedicated Pedestrian Ramp Program, a Public Space Program, and other similar initiatives, NYC DOT employs over 200 staff to work on broader active transportation programs and infrastructure. The City of San Diego, which oversees 2,800 miles of streets, recently committed to hiring a full-time staff of twelve to design and install bicycle facilities, with the goal of installing nine miles per year.

The three to five year work program of Priority Corridor Projects encompasses planned and funded projects that the Department and the BOE committed to deliver with existing resources, but it assumes fully staffed divisions. In order to successfully deliver the projects listed in that timeframe, and fulfill the goal of connecting continuous regional corridors as outlined in Appendix A of the Implementation Plan, LADOT will need to fill all existing vacancies. Increasing the pace or scope of this existing work plan will require additional staff.

Staff Resources Needed

LADOT has found success in delivering projects that bring together staff from multiple disciplines and classifications to cohesively plan, design, and deliver a focused program. For example, the unique structure of the Vision Program facilitates effective coordination and project delivery by bringing engineering, planning and administrative staff under a single team. A similar program structure that provides all staffing classifications needed from concept through final design and delivery would greatly streamline the City's approach to delivering active transportation infrastructure.

LADOT requests five additional planning staff to support a sustainable pipeline of projects from initiation through full concept development to delivery, including outreach and engagement. To expedite the multi-year Implementation Plan so the scale and/or pace of implementation are doubled will require proportionate staffing levels: a second project delivery team of four transportation planning staff would fully support project planning, development, engagement and delivery for a doubled work program.

Because the Active Transportation team also identifies projects, defines priorities, leads project conceptualization, and executes engagement and communications throughout the project life cycle, long-term sustainability requires a dedicated unit within the team to focus on early project selection and development, work program planning, funding strategy, and securing grants. This would support a long-term project funding pipeline and enable other staff to work directly on project delivery, the core function of the Active Transportation section.

A complete team would also include a dedicated design team to streamline project design and delivery and avoid competing with department-wide projects for centralized design staff time. This team should include dedicated geometric design, signal design, and drafting staff as well as analysts and administrative support staff to support ongoing needs including project and grant management.

In order to expand the existing Priority Work Plan, including locally-funded projects and project delivery in future years, LADOT would need an additional 18 positions:

- Implementation & Project Delivery Planning team: one Supervising Transportation Planner II, one Supervising Transportation Planner, and three Transportation Planning Associate II positions (5 staff)
- Long-Range Planning & Grants team: one Supervising Transportation Planner and three Transportation Planning Associate II positions (4 staff)
- Design Team: one Transportation Engineer, a Transportation Engineering Associate III, two Transportation Engineering Associate II positions, and one Civil Engineering Drafting Technician (5 staff)
- GIS Specialist (one staff)
- Senior Management Analyst, Management Analyst, and Senior Administrative Clerk (3 staff)

Network expansion and implementation, especially on a streamlined basis, is critically dependent on interagency coordination and availability of resources for civil design and construction. High quality, low-stress active transportation infrastructure requires improvements to sidewalks, access ramps, intersections and bus boarding facilities to ensure accessibility and safety outcomes for all users. As such, partner Public Works agencies Bureau of Engineering and StreetsLA would also need to identify additional staffing needs to expand the pace and scale of implementation.

Capital and Construction Funding

Active Transportation implementation costs are funded through the annual budget with Proposition C Local Transit Assistance Fund, Metro Measure R and Measure M funding, and through multiple local, state, and federal grant sources such as the State of California Active Transportation Program, Metro Call for Projects and Active Transportation Program, and SB1-funded programs.

The Active Transportation section spends at least \$350,000 annually in local funds, allocated through the budget, on materials for quick-build implementation of bicycle facility projects. To scale the annual work program, the department will need to submit an additional funding request for direct materials costs

and contractual services to implement safety and mobility improvements such as bollards, high-visibility pavement markings, and other treatments on a more rapid basis.

Future Years' Work Program

The ED25 prioritization framework identifies 67 corridors, adopted in the City of Los Angeles Mobility Plan 2035, as priorities for high quality, low-stress active transportation infrastructure. These include High Injury Network corridors with a documented crash history and corridors in equity priority geographies based on the California Healthy Places Index. The attached map and list outline these corridors as identified by the ED25 criteria. These corridors demonstrate where connectivity, safety, and equity needs converge. It is important to note that corridors identified here are not project-ready. These still need additional technical analysis, scope refinement, and robust and inclusive community engagement to prepare for future work plans.

These corridors are not included in the initial Implementation Plan Priority Project list because they are unfunded and not expected to be complete in the next three to five years. Without additional staffing, LADOT is not resourced to initiate implementation of the next phase of prioritized corridors while also focusing on delivery of the existing, funded Priority Project work program (Implementation Plan Appendix A transmitted on June 12, 2021), which includes many grant-funded projects with committed delivery timelines. However, with additional funding and staff resources, LADOT and partner agencies could move toward the planning, outreach, and implementation of future unfunded projects on an accelerated timeline.

Comprehensive Citywide Prioritization

LADOT requests that the City identify resources to engage a third-party consultant to comprehensively prioritize the full scope of the Mobility Plan 2035 and deliver a complete strategic prioritization of the Bicycle Enhanced Network, Bicycle Lane Network, and Neighborhood Enhanced Networks. This will help the Department identify the highest priority projects, establish a sequencing plan, and begin to define project scopes, community outreach plans, and implementation timelines.

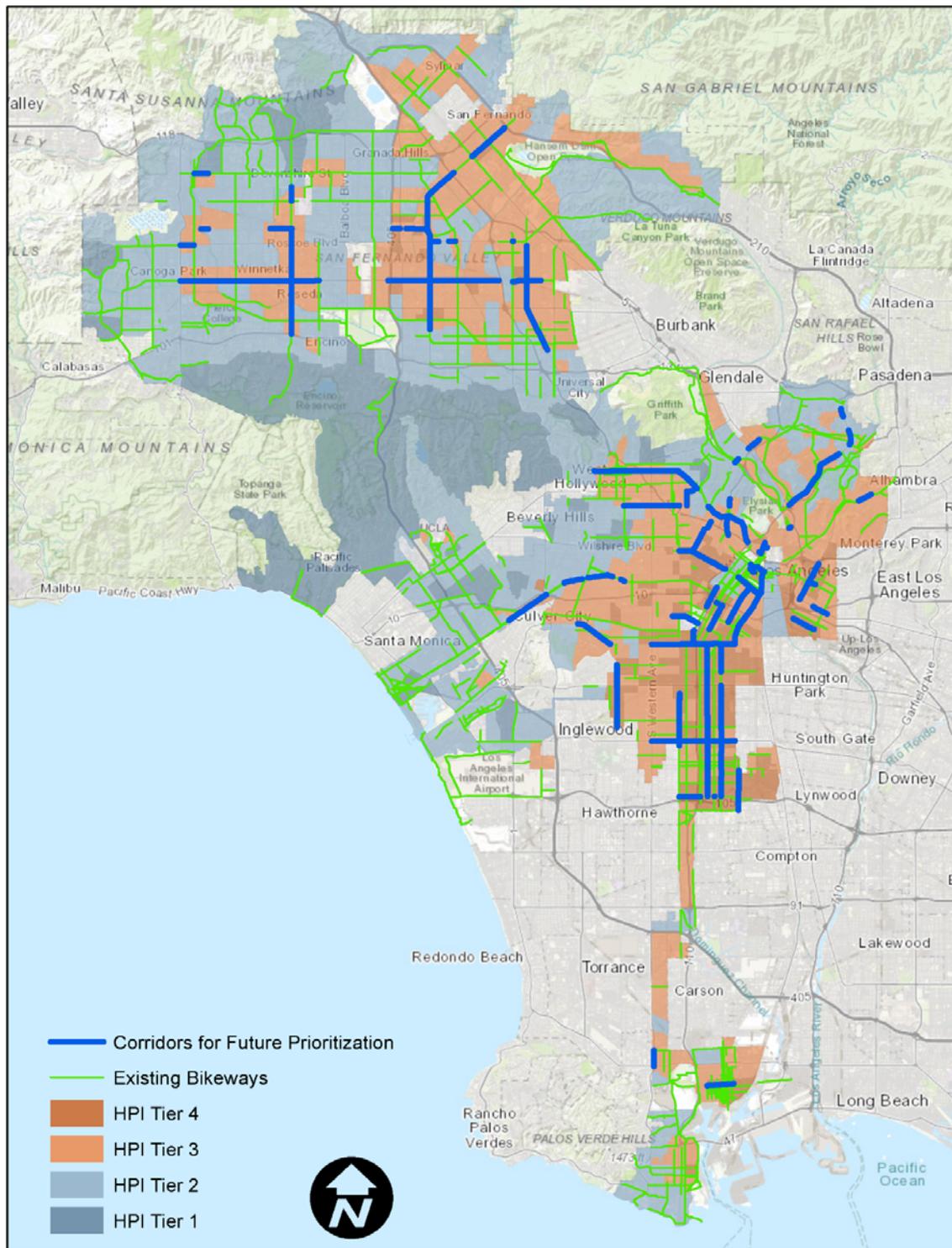
FISCAL IMPACT

All current projects included in the work program are funded through Proposition C Local Transit Assistance Fund, Metro Measure R and Measure M, the Transportation Development Act Article 3's Local Transportation Fund, and multiple county, state and federal grant programs. LADOT will need to secure additional project construction funding through the annual budget or through competitive infrastructure grant programs.

The estimated cost for 18 new positions outlined in this report may have an impact to the General Fund. Through the budget process, LADOT will define staff positions and salaries that would impact the General Fund.

SJR:DM:ce
Attachment

Green New Deal Criteria Corridors (Corridors for Future Prioritization)



Green New Deal Criteria Corridors (Corridors for Future Prioritization)

	<u>Street</u>	<u>Limits</u>	
1	1st Street	Los Angeles Street	Alameda Street
2	1st Street	Soto Street	Mott Street
3	7th Street	Hill Street	Central Avenue
4	7th Street	Vermont Avenue	110 Fwy
5	Anaheim	Wilmington Boulevard	Banning Boulevard
6	Avalon	Slauson Avenue	Imperial Highway
7	Avalon	MLK Jr Boulevard	51st Street
8	Barack Obama Boulevard	La Brea Avenue	MLK Jr Boulevard
9	Broadway	College Street	Cesar Chavez Avenue
10	Broadway	Avenue 18	Avenue 19
11	Central	Century Boulevard	120th Street
12	Central Avenue	1st Street	MLK Jr Boulevard
13	Coronado	Bellevue Avenue	Temple Street
14	Crenshaw	W 48th Street	W 79th Street
15	Devonshire	Canoga Avenue	De Soto Avenue
16	Figueroa	Avenue 26	Avenue 59
17	Figueroa	Yosemite Drive	Tipton Way
18	Figueroa	Roy Street	York Boulevard
19	Figueroa	Pico Boulevard	23rd Street
20	Figueroa	Exposition Boulevard	MLK Jr Boulevard
21	Fletcher Drive	Riverside Drive	Crystal Street
22	Fletcher Drive	Casitas Avenue	Estarra Avenue
23	Glendale	Aaron Street	Berkeley Avenue
24	Glendale	Sunset Boulevard	Temple Street
25	Hollywood Boulevard	La Brea Avenue	Hillhurst Avenue
26	Huntington	Eastern Avenue	Van Horner Avenue
27	Imperial Highway	Vermont Avenue	Broadway
28	Jefferson Boulevard	Budlong Avenue	Figueroa Street

29	Lankershim	Cantara Street	Magnolia Boulevard
30	Main Street	Washington Boulevard	Jefferson Boulevard
31	Main Street	MLK Jr Boulevard	Imperial Highway
32	Manchester	Western Avenue	Central Avenue
33	Melrose Avenue	Vine Street	Vermont Avenue
34	MLK Jr Boulevard	Western Avenue	Central Avenue
35	MLK Jr Boulevard	Barack Obama Boulevard	Crenshaw Boulevard
36	Olympic	Soto Street	Lorena Street
37	Parthenia	Vanalden Avenue	Reseda Boulevard
38	Parthenia	Burnet Avenue	Van Nuys Boulevard
39	Parthenia	Orion Avenue	Sepulveda Boulevard
40	Parthentia	Variel Avenue	De Soto Avenue
41	Rampart	Beverly Boulevard	7th Street
42	Reseda	Lassen Street	Plummer Street
43	Reseda Boulevard	Parthenia Street	Ventura Freeway
44	Roscoe	Topanga Canyon Boulevard	Canoga Avenue
45	Roscoe	Ranchito Avenue	Woodman Avenue
46	Roscoe	Laurel Canyon Boulevard	Pendleton Street
47	Roscoe	Van Nuys Boulevard	Wakefield Avenue
48	San Pedro	7th Street	25th Street
49	Santa Monica	Virgil	Sunset Boulevard
50	Sherman Way	Topanga Canyon Boulevard	White Oak Ave
51	Sherman Way	Haskell Avenue	Whitsett Avenue
52	Sherman Way	Laurel Canyon Boulevard	Tujunga Avenue
53	Soto	Wabash Avenue	Whittier Boulevard
54	Sunset	Parkman Avenue	Cluster Avenue
55	Sunset	Hillhurst Avenue	Sanborn Avenue
56	Van Nuys	Remick Avenue	Hatteras Street
57	Van Nuys	Foothill Boulevard	San Fernando Road
58	Venice	S Bronson Avenue	12th Avenue

59	Venice	La Brea Avenue	La Fayette Road
60	Venice	Stanley Avenue	S Cloverdale Avenue
61	Venice	Hughes Avenue	10 Fwy
62	Venice	S Sycamore Avenue	S Orange Drive
63	Vermont	60th Place	88th Street
64	Vignes	Broadway	Alameda Street
65	Virgil	Melrose Avenue	Santa Monica Boulevard
66	Western	Lomita Boulevard	Pacific Coast Highway
67	Whittier	Euclid Avenue	Spence Street