

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

Date: September 29, 2022

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

From: Connie Llanos, Interim General Manager
Department of Transportation

Subject: **CAMERA BUS LANE ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM**

SUMMARY

In response to Council File (CF) CF 21-1224, this report outlines the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) partnership with the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) to use automated cameras to enforce parking violations in bus lanes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the City Council:

1. REQUEST the City Attorney to prepare and present an Ordinance to amend the LAMC to:
 - a. Add a new section and amend LAMC Section 80.76.2 Civil Penalties, and LAMC Section 89.60 Authority to establish a base fine and late payment penalties for a bus lane parking violation.
 - b. Authorize towing for unlawful parking in a bus lane.
2. DIRECT LADOT to submit a budget request for two Traffic Officer II positions to support the future camera bus lane enforcement program.
3. DIRECT LADOT to report back after LADOT and Metro execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

BACKGROUND

On October 8, 2021, California Governor Gavin Newsom signed Assembly Bill (AB) 917 into law. AB 917, authored by Assemblymember Richard Bloom, amended California Vehicle Code §40240, §40240.5, and §40241 to authorize public transit agencies statewide to collect video images of parking violations in bus lanes and zones and partner with local jurisdictions to issue and adjudicate parking citations. This authority is effective until January 1, 2027.

In November, 2021, Council directed LADOT to report on the Metro/LADOT bus lane enforcement partnership and to include the following:

- An expected timeline for implementation, including a warning period at the start of the program;
- A communications plan letting the public know about upcoming enforcement;

- Any legislative actions by Council needed to locally authorize the program;
- Any staffing and budget needed to implement the program; and
- Engagement with municipal operators to assess the feasibility of their participation in the program.

DISCUSSION

Without the authority to issue citations using video feed, LADOT Parking Enforcement Officers monitor and enforce parking violations in bus lanes during peak hours. This resource-intensive approach relies on officer presence to achieve compliance, and has not resulted in lasting behavior change. The authority granted by AB 917 allows for an innovative partnership between Metro and LADOT to use automated cameras mounted on Metro buses to more consistently enforce parking violations in bus lanes.

Under this new program, Metro will mount cameras on its buses and provide violation information to LADOT. LADOT Parking Enforcement will then confirm valid violations and issue citations by mail. This new approach to bus lane enforcement is expected to improve efficiency, reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality, and reduce the frequency of illegally parked vehicles in bus lanes, which is a significant source of delay to buses during peak hours.

Since August 2021, LADOT and Metro have held regular meetings to develop a camera based enforcement flowchart and MOU that clearly identifies the roles and responsibilities of each agency. The MOU still lacks details on two key items, the cost of the program and proposed method of cost recovery for Metro. Metro expects to release a Request for Proposals (RFP) in mid-November 2022. Once bids are received, Metro will be able to clearly identify their anticipated costs for the program. LADOT will then submit the MOU to the Mayor and City Council for approval. The estimated timeline for the program is:

- Metro Board Approval: May 2023
- Executed MOU: July 2023
- Public Outreach: June 2023 – September 2023
- Installation & Configuration: June 2023 – September 2023
- Program Launch: September 2023
- Warning citations issued: September 2023 – October 2023
- First citation issued: November 2023

Bus Lane Ordinance

Currently LADOT Parking Enforcement cannot issue citations for parking in a dedicated bus lane without a motorist violating additional parking restrictions. Parking enforcement officers can cite motorists parking in a dedicated bus lane when they are also parking in an anti-gridlock zone, no parking or stopping, red zone, or in front of a fire hydrant. To improve enforcement in dedicated bus lanes and overall operational efficiency, LADOT recommends creating a violation for parking in a dedicated bus lane.

LADOT Program Resources

To implement a camera based bus lane citation program, LADOT requires funding and resolution authority for two Traffic Officer II positions. Daily duties for these new positions will include reviewing evidence packages for suspected violations of the Los Angeles Municipal Code or California Vehicle Code by motorists, verification or confirmation of the violation, and issuance of the appropriate parking citation. The estimated annual cost of the two Traffic Officer positions is about \$134,000.

Enforcement Communications Plan

Metro will lead public outreach for this new program with support from LADOT. Pre-launch outreach efforts will focus on the program's goal of minimizing the presence of private vehicles in bus-priority lanes to improve the speed, reliability, and safety of buses in bus lanes, bus stops and bus zones, Outreach methods will include coordinating with public stakeholders, maintaining on-going communication, and incorporating feedback. LADOT will support outreach with promotional materials and social media content. Metro will begin public outreach 90 days before the program begins. As required by law, warning citations will be issued for the first 60 days after program launch.

Municipal Operator Engagement

At this time, Metro plans to launch the program exclusively with the City of Los Angeles to improve bus speed and reliability in key travel corridors within the City, and to develop the MOU framework, test the technology, and work through any challenges that may arise. Once the program has proven successful, Metro will re-engage other municipal transit operators while evaluating program expansion.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

There is no fiscal impact at this time as this report is informational. Funding for two additional Traffic Officer positions in 2023-24, if approved through the annual budget process, will come from the General Fund. The cost will be offset by the expected increase in bus lane citations issued and improved operational efficiency of bus lane enforcement using automated cameras.

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