


**CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL MEMORANDUM**

Date: March 10, 2023

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

From: Connie Llanos, Interim General Manager 
Department of Transportation

Subject: **PEAK-HOUR TRAVEL LANES / NON-TRANSIT PRIORITY STREETS / BIKE AND SCOOTER LANES / HIGH INJURY NETWORK (C.F. No. 22-1465)**

SUMMARY

In response to direction in Council File (CF) 22-1465, this report outlines the Los Angeles Department of Transportation's (LADOT) proposed work plan to identify existing peak-hour lanes Citywide and determine their future use.

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council, subject to approval by the Mayor:

1. APPROVE LADOT's proposed work plan to identify existing peak-hour lanes Citywide and determine their future use;
2. DIRECT LADOT to report back in 90 days with findings and recommendations to retain, convert, or eliminate peak-hour travel lanes.

BACKGROUND

In December 2022, the Los Angeles City Council (Council) directed LADOT to evaluate all existing peak-hour travel lanes to determine whether they are still needed, whether those streets are wide enough to accommodate new bike/scooter lanes, and whether it is feasible to repurpose underutilized peak-hour lanes for transit or other uses. Council further directed that LADOT give priority to streets that are on the High-Injury Network and/or have the highest posted speed limits.

DISCUSSION

Peak-hour travel lanes generally refer to lanes that provide parking during most hours of the day, but allow for vehicle travel at specified times when traffic volume is high. Depending on traffic patterns, some peak-hour lanes restrict parking only during the morning or evening peak period, while others are restricted during both peak travel periods. Decades ago, the City of Los Angeles (City) restricted parking on select street segments during peak traffic periods and converted those parking lanes to peak-hour travel lanes in an effort to expand roadway capacity and increase vehicle throughput.

As outlined in the Mobility Plan 2035 and the Green New Deal, LADOT's Strategic Plan sets specific transportation equity, safety, and sustainability goals. These goals include implementing new bus-only lanes and bicycle or scooter lanes to provide high-quality transportation choices that can improve access to jobs and services, reduce vehicle miles traveled, and eliminate traffic deaths. Modifying, repurposing, and in some cases, eliminating peak-hour lanes can create safer streets and allow for new bus and bicycle facilities where appropriate.

On select corridors with high-frequency bus service, and where buses experience delays due to congestion, LADOT repurposed peak-hour travel lanes to peak-hour bus lanes. During their hours of operation, peak-hour bus lanes are exclusive to buses, bicycles, and right turning vehicles. These peak-hour bus lanes typically serve low-income transit dependent riders and can reduce bus travel times by up to 15%. LADOT also removed peak-hour lanes on some Vision Zero Priority Corridors for operational and safety reasons. The Department has not comprehensively evaluated all remaining peak-hour lanes to assess their continued need, determine appropriate hours of operation and boundaries, or identify more beneficial uses.

Work Plan

To identify where peak-hour lanes should remain and where they can be repurposed, LADOT will first inventory and catalog all existing peak-hour lanes. This inventory will include all peak-hour lane boundaries and times of operation. LADOT will then analyze traffic volumes to identify where existing peak-hour lanes are most effective and where they are not significantly improving traffic capacity and flow.

In addition to traffic capacity and flow, LADOT will consider the following criteria to determine whether a peak-hour lane should be retained, converted, or eliminated, and recommend alternative uses:

- Safety: Peak-hour lanes can lead to faster, more aggressive driving, particularly if those lanes are underutilized. Peak-hour lanes may not be appropriate on High Injury Network streets, and streets with significant collision history.
- Mobility Plan 2035: Peak-hour lanes might be better used to improve bus speed and reliability or provide for other modes. Peak-hour lanes on the Transit Enhanced Network, and/or where there is high bus frequency may be better suited for peak-hour bus lanes.
- Street width: Most streets cannot accommodate new uses, such as dedicated bus lanes, bicycle lanes, curb extensions, or other safety measures without repurposing existing lanes. Repurposing or removing peak-hour lanes could provide additional space to create new facilities and implement safety treatments.
- Parking: Peak-hour lanes reduce parking availability, which could negatively impact residences without dedicated parking and local businesses in areas without substantial off-street parking. Underused peak-hour lanes may be better suited for full-time parking on streets without other mobility priorities.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no impact to the General Fund as a result of the recommended action.

CL:DM:rg