


CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL MEMORANDUM

Date: June 13, 2023

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

From: Connie Llanos, Interim General Manager
Department of Transportation 

Subject: **IJA SMART GRANT PROGRAM CYCLE 1 AWARDED FUNDING (CF # 22-1394)**

SUMMARY

The United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) awarded the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) \$2,000,000 from Cycle 1 of the Infrastructure Investment Jobs Act (IIJA) Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART) program to deliver the *Code the Curb: Downtown Los Angeles* demonstration project (CF # 22-1394).

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council:

1. AUTHORIZE the General Manager of LADOT to execute any necessary funding, cooperative agreement, or contractual documents, subject to the approval of the City Attorney as to form and legality, for accepting the \$2,000,000 in SMART Grant Program funding, and
2. AUTHORIZE the Controller to establish a new appropriation account in the amount of \$2 million for the “Code the Curb” project within the Transportation Grant Fund No. 655, Department 94, as a front-funding source for this 100-percent reimbursable grant.

BACKGROUND

USDOT established the SMART discretionary grant program with \$100,000,000 appropriated annually for fiscal years 2022-2026. The SMART Program funds local agency demonstration projects that advance innovative solutions and smart community technologies to improve transportation efficiency and safety.

On November 7, 2022, the City Administrative Officer (CAO) presented a report to the City Council (Council) that outlined USDOT’s project eligibility criteria for SMART Grant applications and the proposed applications. The report authorized the General Manager of LADOT, or designee, to prepare a grant application for the Code the Curb project.

In February 2023, USDOT awarded LADOT \$2,000,000 to fund a pilot program to develop a digital inventory of curb assets and regulations in the Downtown Los Angeles area. By digitally mapping curb features such as meters, markings, access ramps, and transit and bike infrastructure, the inventory will

support LADOT's efforts to manage and prioritize curb use to advance the City's priorities for access, sustainability, equity, and economic growth.

DISCUSSION

LADOT is charged with managing the public right-of-way to facilitate the safe movement of goods and people throughout the City of Los Angeles (City). The last decade brought a proliferation of new transportation modes – such as rideshare, shared micromobility, robotic and app-based delivery services, and EV charging stations – that compete for curb space alongside traditional uses such as parking, delivery, and public transit. LADOT also introduced new curb uses to support businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, such as expanded outdoor dining on streets and sidewalks.

Los Angeles is an incubator for new innovation, and a center of transportation technology businesses and jobs. In order to provide all Angelenos with access to safe and affordable transportation choices, LADOT is developing tools and capacity to dynamically manage curbside demands in the public right-of-way.

LADOT is at the forefront of efforts to modernize curb management, with new tools like flexible smart meter parking, mobility data specification permit requirements, and zero-emission delivery zones. Through its Code the Curb Program, LADOT will develop a new system to inventory and maintain the City's expansive system of physical assets used to control traffic flows, manage curbside uses, operate parking, and implement mobility management strategies.

The Code the Curb Program will ultimately build and maintain a digital inventory of LADOT's curbside assets and regulations. These assets include approximately 34,000 single-space parking meters, 220 multi-space pay stations, 1 million street signs, and regulatory curb paint that covers 7,500 centerline miles of streets in the City. By developing and maintaining a digital inventory, LADOT can collect real-time curbside usage and activity data, proactively manage curbside uses, and dynamically change parking rates and policies based on usage. Implementing digital and dynamic curb management tools enhance LADOT's ability to advance safety, equity, and sustainability objectives while meeting the competing demands at the curb.

The USDOT SMART grant will allow LADOT to create and prototype a digital inventory of physical curb lane assets in Downtown Los Angeles (DTLA). The project will address the increasing demands for curb space due to the proliferation of freight, transit, and passenger vehicles, new shared mobility devices such as scooters, active transportation, outdoor dining, and more. To accomplish this goal, this demonstration project will leverage existing partnerships with organizations such as the Open Mobility Foundation (OMF).

LADOT is a founding member of OMF, an organization committed to tackling common problems with shared technology that includes the cities of Seattle, Portland, San Francisco, San Jose, Minneapolis, Philadelphia, and Miami-Dade County. OMF allows cities to provide technical implementation assistance and facilitate peer-to-peer learning and knowledge exchange. Together, these cities will digitally gather and analyze curb information to reduce congestion, enhance livability, and improve safety and equity on city streets to develop a shared open-source Curb Data Specification (CDS). The CDS is a data standard that will leverage data collected from this project to dynamically manage curbside usage.

The SMART grant allows LADOT to explore technologies to prototype a scalable digital curb management roadmap to accomplish the following:

- Develop a curb asset management system
- Collect curb activity data in real time using a standard specification (CDS)
- Digitize all curbside assets including parking meters, parking regulations, bike racks, traffic signal equipment, bus stop amenities, etc.
- Based on real-time curb demands, dynamically regulate and price curb activities
- Evaluate new parking pricing strategies and measures that incentivize the use of electric vehicles
- Streamline and enhance enforcement
- Measure outcomes to determine if digital curb management leads to increased compliance, less unsafe parking practices, reduced vehicle miles traveled, etc.

This demonstration project, *Code the Curb: Downtown Los Angeles*, will develop a prototype in DTLA where there is a high concentration of multi-functional curb spaces and an opportunity to drive economic growth through improved curb access. LADOT will begin the pilot in Summer 2023 with expected completion of the database at the end of the 18-month grant period. Information gathered and retained will only pertain to physical infrastructure such as street signs, curb markings, meters, and access ramps. Personal identifying information such as license plates or images of persons are excluded from data collection. This database will serve as a starting point for LADOT to standardize curb space management Citywide. A complete database will ensure that the operation and uses of the City's streets and sidewalks are consistent with the needs of communities.

This project will improve data collection, develop a data inventory, and standardize how curb activity data is collected in real-time data in order to manage delivery times, passenger loading, and parking to ease congestion, streamline the parking experience, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from circulating vehicles.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no impact to the City's General Fund since no local match is required for this project.

CL: JWK: aw

