

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

Date: August 7, 2019

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

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

Subject: **ADDRESSING DOCKLESS MOBILITY VEHICLES OVERSATURATION (CF #17-1125)**

SUMMARY

As directed by the Los Angeles City Council (Council) on June 25, 2019, this report assesses the impact of dockless vehicles in desirable markets.

RECOMMENDATION

RECEIVE and FILE this report.

BACKGROUND

The Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) continuously evaluates its Dockless On-Demand Personal Mobility Pilot Program to better understand, manage, and deliver a pilot program that provides mobility options to Angelenos and visitors, while minimizing negative impacts. On June 12, 2019, LADOT provided an overview of the one-year permitting process and first two months of the Dockless On-Demand Mobility Pilot. At that time, LADOT reported on its ongoing community outreach process and education campaign, addressing vehicle speed and sidewalk use, safety implications of dockless mobility, and the need for additional enforcement tools. To address stated concerns from constituents, Council directed LADOT to report on recommendations to address the impacts of dockless mobility in the “most desirable markets” in the City of Los Angeles (City).

DISCUSSION

Oversaturation in the Most Desirable Markets

LADOT defines “desirable markets” as areas with the highest demand for dockless vehicles and highest impacts to the public right of way, according to the number and density of vehicles deployed, average daily trips and daily activity, and negative impacts according to MyLA311 service requests.

For guidance on ideal vehicle density, LADOT looked to national best practices. The National Association of City Transportation Officials’ (NACTO) guide on walkable station spacing for docked bicycles considers approximately 28 stations per square mile, for high density areas, the best for coverage and access among all income brackets. In Seattle, the first American city to incorporate a free-floating dockless bike

share system, dockless vehicle density is limited to a maximum of 340 bikes per square mile within a service area. To address crowding in high demand areas, permit conditions in Seattle limited vehicles to 15 per block face, per operator.

Impacted High Demand Areas

To identify high demand, high impact areas, LADOT used information collected by Mobility Data Specification (MDS) and MyLA311 Service Requests. Table 1 below shows the number of vehicles deployed by Council District (CD) and service requests recorded per Council District.

Table 1

Council District	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Service Requests*	2	12	0	57	42	1	0	2	0	9	123	2	5	84	1
Average Daily Vehicles**	939	974	87	2,036	2,744	462	8	181	713	1,696	4,262	23	2,827	4,228	90

* Number of Service Requests received between 7/19/2019-7/26/2019

** Average daily fleet size sampled from 7/19/2019 - 7/26/2019

Based on the number of both vehicles and service requests, LADOT identified CD 11 as the highest demand, highest impact district in the City.

High Activity Areas

To determine where the highest level of dockless vehicle activity occurs, LADOT analyzed deployment, status change, and trip origin location data via MDS. Status change refers to when a vehicle is introduced into service at the beginning of the day, when a vehicle is moved for rebalancing or maintenance, whether the vehicle is dropped off by the user or operator, and when a vehicle is removed from service, and generally indicates the intensity of dockless activity. Table 2, below, identifies the neighborhoods where the highest number of trips have originated during the pilot program, the density of trips per square mile, and a one day snapshot of status changes. The Venice neighborhood experienced the highest number of trips, highest number of trips per square mile, and highest number of reported status changes for the day that data was analyzed.

Table 2

Neighborhood*	Square Miles	Trips Originating/Day**	Trips/Sq. Mile/Day**	Status Changes/Sq. Mile/Day (one day snapshot)***
Venice	3.17	5,567	1,756	5,902
Downtown	5.84	4,956	849	4,203
Hollywood	3.51	2,770	789	5,173
Koreatown	2.7	2,546	943	3,530
Westwood	3.68	1,979	538	2,082
Sawtelle	2.69	956	355	1,574
Fairfax	1.23	884	719	4,144

* Los Angeles Times Mapping L.A. Neighborhood Boundaries: <http://maps.latimes.com/neighborhoods/>

** Average of total trips originating within neighborhood from March 15, 2019 to July 11, 2019

*** Vehicle status changes counted within a 24 hour period on July 25, 2019

Venice Special Operations Zone

In addition to the highest dockless demand, impact, and activity, the Venice neighborhood has several unique characteristics, including the Venice Boardwalk, bike paths, and canals where dockless devices are restricted from operating.

In May 2019, LADOT established the Venice Special Operations Zone (VSOZ) to address illegal riding on the Venice Boardwalk, bike path, and canals, and to test the use of geo-fence technology to reduce vehicle speeds down to 0 mph. (Attachment 1). To address the high number of MyLA311 service requests made in the VSOZ, LADOT installed 22 physical parking zones, made visible with an affixed decal in the public right-of-way, and four virtual parking zones, viewable within the app without requiring physical infrastructure. Within the VSOZ, operators are required to deploy vehicles only in designated physical and virtual parking zones.

The VSOZ is approximately 1.3 square miles bounded by Navy Street, Via Marina, Alhambra Court, and Ocean Front Walk. Analysis of dockless vehicle trip start and end points within the VSOZ between July 8, 2019 and July 15, 2019 indicate between 2,000 and 2,700 vehicles are located there daily. For comparison, the entirety of the City of Santa Monica permits a total of 3,000 vehicles over an area of 8.4 square miles.

In addition to reviewing MDS data, LADOT performs targeted evaluations and observations in the field. In the VSOZ, staff tests the geofence at Speedway and Navy (borders Venice and the City of Santa Monica) as well as prohibited areas including the boardwalk, bike path, canals, and points of entry. Field observations also include vehicle counts at major thoroughways in the community within a 1-2 hour period, and within the 22 parking zones. As part of one field check, staff observed approximately 150

vehicles deployed in a single parking zone in the VSOZ - approximately 30 per operator. The use and locations of the vehicles observed in the field in addition with MDS data informed staff's recommendations to address the right-of-way impacts in this desirable market.

Venice Special Operations Zone Oversaturation Policies

Given the high demand, impact, and activity in the Venice neighborhood, the unique characteristics of the VSO and the availability of controlled deployment, LADOT identified the VSOZ as the best area to pilot policies that address oversaturation.

On July 26, 2019, LADOT issued a letter (Attachment 2) to all operators notifying them of policies that were effective immediately to operations in the Venice SOZ to address high demand impacts as described below:

- Operators are authorized to begin daily deployment **only** between the hours of 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. daily.
- Each Operator is authorized to deploy up to 150 vehicles **only** within LADOT-identified parking zones, including digital parking zones, between the hours of 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. daily.
 - **Up to 5 maximum per operator per parking zone.**
- Each Operator is authorized to rebalance vehicles **only** into LADOT-identified parking zones, including digital parking zones, after 10:00 a.m. daily.

Failure to adhere to the established policies will result in suspension of vehicles within the VSOZ for up to seven days.

Next Steps

LADOT continues to monitor compliance with the new Dockless Mobility Rules & Guidelines, and will assess the impact of policies implemented in the VSOZ, based on changes to the number of vehicles deployed daily, average number of trips daily, and daily level of activity, as well as MyLA311 service requests. LADOT will also track these trends citywide to assess if further policies should be implemented to maintain an orderly right-of-way. In addition, LADOT regularly communicates with industry operators and other cities to discuss the overall impact of the dockless scooters and operations to address policy and implementation strategies that may be replicated in other high demand areas of the City.

Given the growth and increasing needs of the dockless mobility program to ensure overall program compliance, LADOT secured compliance consultant services. The compliance consultant will lead compliance monitoring and allow limited staff capacity to focus on program evaluation, including an analysis of the effectiveness of its oversaturation policy in the VSOZ and a needs assessment based on the standards described above for additional special operations zones citywide.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact as this report is informational.

SJR/MP:je

ATTACHMENT 1



CITY OF LOS ANGELES
CALIFORNIA

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July 25, 2019

Subject: **UPDATES TO VENICE SPECIAL OPERATIONS ZONE RULES AND GUIDELINES**

Dear Operator,

On June 12, 2019, the Los Angeles City Council directed the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) to report in 30 days with recommendations to address oversaturation of vehicles.

Through a combination of data analysis and field observations, LADOT identified the Venice Special Operations Zone (VSOZ) as an area of vehicle oversaturation. LADOT observed an average of 2,000-2,700 vehicles a day within an approximate 1.3 square miles. LADOT will implement the following conditions to address oversaturation. The following conditions are effective immediately and all Operators are expected to be compliant within **7 days** of letter issuance.

- Operators will be required to begin daily deployments **only** between the hours of 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. daily.
- Each Operator is required to deploy **only** up to 150 vehicles within LADOT-identified parking zones, including digital parking zones, between the hours of 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. daily.
 - **5 maximum per zone.**
- Each Operator is required to rebalance vehicles **only** into LADOT-identified parking zones, including digital parking zones, after 10:00 a.m. daily.

Failure to comply with any of the conditions set forth will result in suspension for 7 calendar days from first infraction and all vehicles within the VSOZ must be removed within 24 hours. Failure to remove all vehicles within 24 hours may result in permit suspension and/or revocation.

As a reminder, all Operators must be compliant with all technical data and geofence requirements to be allowed to operate within the VSOZ.

Please confirm receipt of this letter and confirm your availability with LADOT staff for a check-in meeting on Monday, August 5th from 9:00 a.m. -11:00 a.m. at 100 S. Main St. 10th Floor.

AN EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY – AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

