


CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL MEMORANDUM

Date: May 23, 2025

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

From: Laura Rubio-Cornejo, General Manager 
Department of Transportation

Subject: **Status Report On The Effort To Undertake A New Transit Service Analysis**

SUMMARY

As directed in Council File (CF) 18-0244-S4, this report provides a status update on the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation's (LADOT) Transit Service Analysis (TSA).

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council NOTE and FILE this report.

BACKGROUND

In 2018, the City Council approved LADOT's Transit Services Analysis 2018 (TSA 2018). This comprehensive plan aimed to improve and expand the transit services provided by LADOT. To date, LADOT implemented significant portions of the plan, including the addition of early morning and late evening service hours, increased frequency on many routes, and the introduction of new services, such as the micro-transit service LAnow and a new Commuter Express route. LADOT also realigned routes including the Downtown DASH D and DASH E, as well as DASH San Pedro.

In addition to these service adjustments, the TSA 2018 identified several new community DASH routes to enhance LADOT's transit services. To date, LADOT implemented one of the Phase 1 routes, DASH Sylmar. DASH North Hollywood, which originally designated Phase 2 route, was launched ahead of schedule at the direction of the City Council, which also provided the necessary funding for its early implementation. LADOT also secured grant funding and launched a Phase 1 route in Pacoima which started service on May 3, 2025. The Department has not yet launched the remaining Phase 1 routes, DASH Boyle Heights West, and DASH Canoga Park, due to the expected structural deficit that would result from operating these services.

The implementation of the 2018 TSA plan faced delays due to challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, the subsequent changes to ridership and travel trends, and increased operational and capital costs. More specifically, these challenges include difficulties in hiring and retaining drivers, delayed delivery of electric buses, and delays in the electrification of transit yards. Additionally, operational funds to support new and increased service levels are increasingly constrained. In response to Council direction, LADOT prepared a multi-year forecast of revenues and expenditures (CF 18-0244-S4) that demonstrated insufficient funds and structural imbalance if LADOT were to implement the 2018 TSA

Service Plan. On receipt of LADOT's Report, City Council directed LADOT to pause further roll-out of the TSA Plan and to initiate a new TSA.

In response to City Council's direction and recognizing the need to adapt to changing conditions and financial constraints, LADOT will conduct a Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA) of its services. This COA will help align transit services with current circumstances and identify opportunities to better align services to meet rider demands. Staff identified the need to update the TSA with the COA due to changes in available resources, evolving travel patterns, and new regional transportation infrastructure development. The new COA will also provide the Councilmembers that were not on City Council in 2018 an opportunity to inform the course for transit operations in their districts.

In October 2024, LADOT released a Task Order Solicitation (TOS) to initiate COA, and on November 14, 2024 LADOT held a mandatory Pre-Submittal Conference. All proposals were submitted in February 2025, and the selection panel conducted interviews on April 2, 2025. LADOT aims to award and execute the contract by the summer of 2025.

DISCUSSION

The COA will replace the 2018 TSA and set clear operational goals and priorities for DASH, Commuter Express, Cityride, and LANow, with equity as a central guiding principle. Based on the COA, LADOT will allocate resources to address the needs of communities with the greatest transit dependency, ensuring inclusivity and reducing systemic disparities. By conducting a thorough evaluation of existing services, LADOT aims to optimize routes, align services with changing rider patterns, and maximize both ridership and cost-effectiveness.

The COA will begin with an assessment of the remaining recommendations from the 2018 TSA. This initial phase will evaluate which elements have been implemented, which remain outstanding, and whether the remaining recommendations still align with current operational goals, community needs, and funding conditions. By grounding the new analysis in the context of the TSA, LADOT will ensure that the COA builds on previous planning efforts while updating priorities based on current community travel needs.

As part of the COA, LADOT will re-evaluate the unimplemented routes that were recommended for implementation in the 2018 TSA. These routes will undergo a fresh feasibility analysis to determine whether they still align with current operational priorities, community needs, and available resources. This review will consider updated data, demographic shifts, and service demand to ensure that any future implementation decisions are grounded in present-day realities and system-wide goals.

As part of this effort, the COA will assess potential service modifications and new transit opportunities to better serve communities. LADOT will identify new routes or service modifications primarily through a combination of quantitative data analysis, community input, and guidance from Council Offices. This data-driven and community-informed approach will ensure that any new service recommendations are responsive to current needs and grounded in measurable demand.

The COA will also take into account previous Council requests for new or expanded transit service. These requests will be reviewed alongside current data and community feedback to determine their feasibility and alignment with overall system goals. As part of the engagement process, LADOT will conduct targeted outreach to each Council District Office to ensure they have the opportunity to inform the new plan and share priorities specific to their communities.

Additional scope of work under the COA will include improving reliability and ensuring on-time performance by deploying more buses, adjusting schedules, and expanding operator staffing. The COA will also involve integrating LADOT's services with regional plans, such as Metro's NextGen, and preparing for increased transit demand from major events like the 2026 World Cup, 2027 Super Bowl, and 2028 Olympics. Additionally, the COA will focus on pursuing strategic funding opportunities to close financial gaps while advancing gender equity and safety, aligning with the Changing Lanes Gender Equity Study (C.F. 22-0229), Vision Zero Plan (C.F. 15-0546-S3), and Mobility 2035 Plan (C.F. 15-0719-S15). Each of these tasks will contribute to creating a more efficient, equitable, and reliable transit system that enhances mobility and quality of life in Los Angeles.

The COA will include a robust community engagement plan that follows LADOT's Community First Engagement guidelines, recently adopted by Council. Outreach activities will include a minimum of four public information meetings, presentations at Neighborhood Council meetings, a social media campaign, tabling at community events, and targeted direct outreach such as canvassing, mailers, emails, and phone calls to residents within a quarter mile to one mile radius of proposed service changes. The consultant will also be responsible for translation services, accessibility accommodations, and the design and production of outreach materials. Additionally, community ambassadors may be used to facilitate local engagement, and feedback collected will be incorporated into final service recommendations. This comprehensive outreach strategy ensures equitable access to project information and meaningful opportunities for public input throughout the COA process.

The solicitation process for the COA is currently underway. In October 2024, LADOT released a TOS inviting qualified firms from the LADOT technical bench to submit proposals to carry out this critical project. Interested firms were required to attend a pre-submittal conference on November 14, 2024 for a bid to be considered. At the conference, 21 attendees represented six firms. The selection panel completed its selection process and staff is currently finalizing the agreement. Once a Notice to Proceed is issued, the project will begin, with an anticipated timeline of approximately one year to complete the analysis.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no impact to the General Fund at this time, as the project will be funded with Proposition A local return funds.

LRC:JK:ks

Attachments