

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL MEMORANDUM

Date: October 29, 2025

To: Honorable City Council
c/o City Clerk, Room 395, City Hall
Attention: Honorable John S. Lee, Chair, Public Safety Committee

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

Subject: **STREET RACING AND INTERSECTION TAKEOVER EVALUATION REPORT**

SUMMARY

In response to Council File (CF) 22-1019, CF 21-0870, and CF 24-0390 this report discusses the Los Angeles Department of Transportation's (LADOT) efforts to address street takeovers to date, provides recommendations for the use of traffic control devices to discourage and deter intersection takeovers moving forward, and a summary of state legislation related to street racing in recent years.

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council Note and File this report.

BACKGROUND

The City of Los Angeles (City) and the surrounding region experienced an epidemic of street racing and related activities in recent years. These activities include drifting, donuts, intersection takeovers, and other illegal activities. Some of these activities are organized and planned, while others are spontaneous and occur randomly with little warning. While enforcement by the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) is the primary method of curtailing this activity, LAPD reports that enforcement is difficult due to the number of intersections where events can occur, the brevity of the events, and the organizers' use of social media to reorganize after police interventions. Select traffic control devices may assist in deterring these activities.

In September 2021, the City Council (Council) instructed LADOT, the Bureau of Street Services (BSS), the Bureau of Engineering (BOE), the Fire Department (LAFD), and the LAPD Street Racing Task Force to report on recommendations on a menu of traffic calming measures where street racing occurs, including a map overlaying known racing corridors and intersection with Vision Zero traffic data. In May 2022, based on LADOT's evaluation and report, Council directed LADOT to design, implement, and evaluate a pilot installation of raised pavement markers and double yellow delineator extensions at three intersections within Council District 7 (CD 7) to discourage intersection takeovers (CF 21-0870).

In October 2022, Council instructed LADOT, BOE, BSS, LAFD, and LAPD to report on data related to intersection takeovers in the public-right-of-way with the highest volume of calls Citywide, produce recommendations for these locations, such as designs to a Slow Streets framework, case studies of proven measures involving both enforcement and design treatments from other cities nationwide, and report on a multi-year work plan and funding strategy to implement these treatments for both intersection takeovers and street racing in priority locations Citywide, as identified by the LAPD Street Racing Task Force in their top 50 locations citywide (CF 22-1019).

In April 2024, Council instructed LAPD, and requested the City Attorney to report on existing laws, both state and local laws pertaining to street racing, takeovers, and sideshows, and conduct an analysis of their efficacy and the metrics that will be used to evaluate these laws, as well as potential modifications to these laws which may assist in controlling and mitigating such actions. Additionally, Council requested the City Attorney to report with an updated review on the current state of the law with respect to the City's vehicle forfeiture provisions (CF 24-0390).

In October 2024, Council instructed LADOT to report on the additional resources that the City can provide to disincentivize street racing, burnouts, and intersection takeovers, identify where the high priority areas are located, and the resources needed to effectuate the implementation of state legislation that strengthens California's ability to improve road safety; most notably Assembly Bills (AB) 1978, 2186, 2807, and 3085 (CF 23-0600-S98).

DISCUSSION

Street racing and street takeovers are distinctly different behaviors with different remedies. Street racing involves speed contests on roadway segments with distinct start and finish lines, while street takeovers typically involve event organizers closing off access to an intersection for "donuts" and other demonstrations. LADOT has successfully implemented speed humps or speed tables on roadways with reported street racing and has added them to our speed reduction toolbox for arterial streets.

In an effort to identify best practices to address street takeovers, LADOT attended a symposium with local agencies that included attendees from enforcement agencies, transportation officials, and street racing and demonstration groups. LADOT also spoke with other public agencies such as the cities of Inglewood, Compton, San Jose, and San Francisco. While some agencies had success addressing street takeovers with capital projects that significantly altered intersection design, LADOT found that across agencies low-cost treatments failed to adequately address street takeovers, created additional maintenance problems, and were not sustainable solutions to address the root cause of the problem. San Jose had a successful program that was limited to their unique geography that involved law enforcement closing roadways to trap participants within a confined area for enforcement. This program could be resource intensive depending upon geographic conditions related to events.

Street Takeover Interventions in Council District 7

Based on the top 50 street racing and takeover locations reported by LAPD, and as directed by Council in CF 21-0870, LADOT did pilot and evaluate quick build interventions focused on addressing street takeovers at three locations in CD 7. LADOT conducted an engineering assessment of the geometric layout and the types of vehicles using each intersection. In determining the appropriate devices to implement, LADOT considered the width of the streets, the type of traffic control, and the overall traffic volumes.

Glenoaks Boulevard at Polk Street

Left turn calming devices were installed at the signalized intersection of Glenoaks Boulevard and Polk Street, as pictured in Attachment 1. This treatment was designed to narrow the intersection by creating a vertical barrier to deter performing donuts inside the intersection. This device was selected since it would have minimal impact on everyday users of the intersection, including bicyclists, motorists, and pedestrians. Glenoaks Boulevard has four traffic lanes with left turn channelization, and Polk Street has four traffic lanes with left turn channelization and bike lanes on the south leg. The picture in Attachment 1 shows the left turn hardening devices that have been struck and need maintenance, as well as the donut markings within the intersection.

Bradley Avenue at Bledsoe Street

LADOT installed left turn calming devices at the all-way stop sign controlled intersection of Bradley Avenue and Bledsoe Street, which is pictured in Attachment 1. This treatment was designed to narrow the intersection by creating a vertical barrier to deter performing donuts inside the intersection. This device was selected since it would have minimal impact on everyday users of the intersection, including bicyclists, motorists, and pedestrians. Bradley Avenue has two traffic lanes with left turn channelization, and Bledsoe Street has two traffic lanes, bike lanes, and left turn channelization. At this intersection, LADOT extended the centerline further into the intersection and used left turn hardening treatments within the intersection. These devices need frequent maintenance because of turning vehicles and trucks hitting the bollards. The donut markings were eliminated at the pilot intersection but were observed to have moved to nearby intersections.

Foothill Boulevard at Yarnell Street

LADOT proposed a pilot location at the signalized intersection of Foothill Boulevard and Yarnell Street. The Department implemented a roadway resurfacing and reconfiguration project on the Foothill Boulevard corridor with protected bike lanes. The roadway reconfiguration has reduced donuts at this intersection as shown in the aerial image in Attachment 1. However, also pictured in Attachment 1 is the nearby intersection of Bledsoe Street and Herrick Avenue with donut markings. It appears that the behavior moved to nearby intersections.

LADOT conducted a post six-month evaluation of each treatment of these pilot locations to assess the effectiveness of each intervention. The evaluation determined that quick-build treatments had minimal success at changing behavior. For the two smaller intersections the behavior moved to other nearby intersections, and at the third larger intersection, the behavior continued. At the intersection of Bradley Avenue and Bledsoe Street, trucks turning at the intersection frequently damage the quick build treatments. Overall, the devices require frequent maintenance. This experience mirrors what we learned from other agencies. Projects using inexpensive materials are often ineffective, and they found better success with larger capital projects.

Multi-year work plan and funding strategy

The double yellow delineator extensions implemented at locations in CD7 cost roughly \$5,000 per intersection, excluding design costs. The frequency of maintenance required to retain these devices increases the costs to between \$10,000 (replacement twice per year) and \$60,000 per intersection (monthly replacement). The estimated cost for devices at all 50 locations identified by LAPD citywide is between \$500,000 and \$3,000,000 annually, excluding design costs. These locations would also require further evaluation to determine the feasibility of installing centerline extensions.

The Fiscal Year 2025-26 Adopted Budget reduced staff and funding to many LADOT programs, including to Engineering and Field Services staff who would need to review, implement, and maintain these devices. Resource constraints limit our ability to commit to an effective multi-year work plan and funding strategy to combat street racing. Low-cost solutions require significant maintenance, and more successful complete street programs require significant capital and staff resources. Instead, LADOT recommends the City focus its efforts on better enforcing speed demonstrations through innovative new technologies as outlined below.

Enforcement Programs to address Street Racing and Street takeovers*Automated Speed Enforcement (AB 645)*

In October 2023, Governor Newsom signed Assembly Bill (AB) 645 authored by Assemblymember Laura Friedman, which became law on January 1, 2024. The Bill authorizes the City of Los Angeles to install up to 125 Speed Safety Systems in order to calm traffic, reduce speeds, and reduce injury collisions. These systems can stay in operation for five years or until January 1, 2032, whichever comes first. As of August 2025, LADOT onboarded a consultant to analyze locations for the installation of systems for this pilot, as outlined in CF 23-1168. Locations that are eligible for enforcement are limited to:

1. Locations on Designated Safety Corridors.
2. Locations in School Zones.
3. Locations with a high number of incidents for motor vehicle speed contests or exhibitions of speed.

Based on the program's focus on violating speed limits, speed safety cameras are best equipped to enforce street racing rather than street takeovers. Locations are considered eligible for the third category if they receive calls for enforcement for at least four separate incidences of motor vehicle speed contests or exhibitions within two years prior to placement of the speed safety system. LADOT's consultant will consider the top 50 street racing corridors identified in LAPD's February 2024 report (CF 22-1019) as part of their evaluation to identify locations to install systems.

AB 645 requires any revenue generated, after covering program costs, to be invested into traffic calming. LADOT is implementing a speed safety camera program (CF 23-1168) which will install up to 125 devices in the City starting in mid-2026. This program will report separately to the Council on this program, including the effectiveness and the net revenue generated for traffic calming.

Red Light Camera Program

While not directly designed to address street takeovers, red light camera enforcement at key signalized intersections may deter some takeover behavior that cannot be addressed through speed detecting cameras. Red light camera enforcement programs cite vehicle drivers for red light infractions using photos or videos of the license plate and vehicle driver. These infractions are assessed to the vehicle driver, which affects their driving record and imposes penalties. Red light camera enforcement in California began as a pilot program under Senate Bill (SB) 833 in 1995 for red light infractions, and then was made into a permanent program by SB 1136 in 1998. The LAPD initiated a red light camera program in December 2000 with the support of LADOT for 16 signalized intersections in Los Angeles. The first cameras were activated in 2004, and the program grew to 32 locations by 2011.

As outlined in a joint report to Council summarizing the City Administrative Officer's (CAO) Vision Zero Independent Evaluation and LADOT's Vision Zero Evaluation and Safety Plan (CF 23-0600-S121), the 16 pilot intersections saw a significant reduction in collisions. In 2006, additional locations saw a 15% reduction in traffic collisions. LAPD reported a reduction in red light-related collisions in every year of the program, with a 40% reduction in 2008, and zero red light traffic collision fatalities at any of the program intersections. In 2011, LAPD reported a 63% reduction in red light-related crashes across all 32 locations and requested a contract extension to continue the program.

However, there were significant challenges to these red light camera programs statewide, including privacy concerns, difficulties in collecting penalties, changes in contractor fee payments, and the courts blanket dismissal of citations. Despite the benefits, the City Council terminated the program in 2011, following public criticism and a Controller audit finding that the program was not cost recoverable. Based on third party evaluations, the joint CAO and LADOT report to Council recommends that the City Attorney, LAPD, and LADOT report back with an evaluation of the City's previous red light camera program, including any

benefits, an analysis why the program ended, and any required legislative adjustments to effectively utilize photo red light cameras.

In the current 2025-2026 State Legislative Session, Senate Bill (SB) 720 authored by Senator Angelique Ashby aligns California's red light camera program requirements with the speed safety camera pilot requirements that protect privacy and equity. On October 13, 2025, the bill was signed by the Governor and chartered by the Secretary of State (Chapter 782, Statutes of 2025). These new requirements address many of the concerns previously reported with red light camera programs and creates a new opportunity for the City of Los Angeles to consider the safety benefits of implementing this technology.

New enforcement opportunities

The 2023-24 State Legislative Session approved several bills that expand the City's ability to impound vehicles and arrest drivers involved in street racing and street takeovers. Implementing these new enforcement laws is outside of LADOT's jurisdiction, but a summary of these bills that address moving violations is listed below:

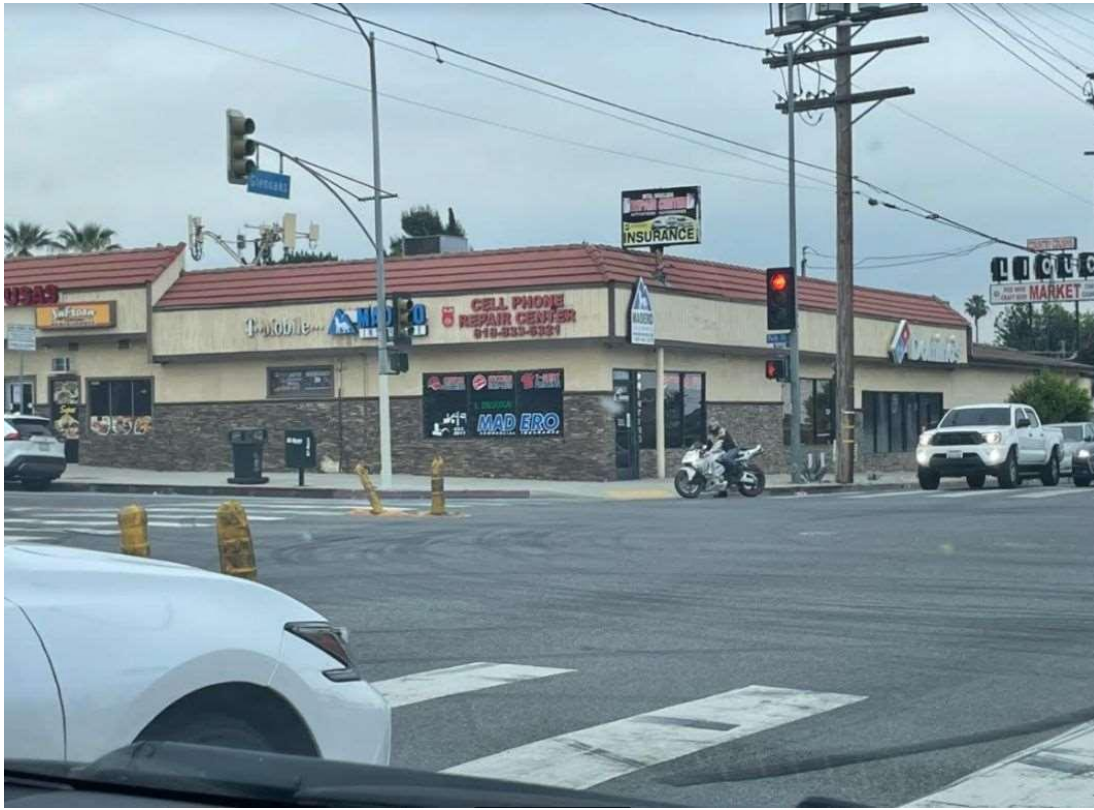
Assembly Bill (AB)	Summary
AB 1978	authorizes law enforcement to impound a vehicle without taking the driver into custody for obstructing or placing a barricade upon a highway, or an off-street parking facility for the purpose of facilitating or aiding a speed contest or exhibition of speed.
AB 2186	authorizes law enforcement to remove a motor vehicle used in an exhibition of speed in an off-street parking facility for no more than 30 days.
AB 2807	clarifies that vehicle sideshows are also known as "street takeovers." Also allows courts to order driving privileges revoked from 90 days to six months.
AB 3085	expands the list of offenses for which law enforcement may impound a vehicle pursuant to a warrant or court order, including engaging in a motor vehicle speed contest or an exhibition of speed upon a highway or off-street parking facility.

FISCAL IMPACT

There are no impacts to the General Fund as a result of the recommendations in this report.

LRC:DM:SR

Attachment 1



Glenoaks Boulevard and Polk Street after installation of hardening treatment



Bradley Avenue and Bledsoe Street after installation of hardening treatment



Foothill Boulevard & Yarnell Street after roadway reconfiguration with protected bike lanes



Bledsoe Street and Herrick Avenue a nearby intersection shows donut behavior moving