

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL MEMORANDUM

Date: September 24, 2026

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

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

Subject: Traffic Safety Education and Awareness Campaign

SUMMARY

As directed by Council File (CF) 23-0600-S121, this report outlines a traffic safety education and awareness campaign that incorporates the findings of both third-party Vision Zero evaluations. The education and awareness campaign will be funded using the \$500,000 transferred from Fund No. 59C/94, Account No. 94YG25 Vision Zero Corridor Projects to a new account entitled Vision Zero Educational Campaign, and any additional resources needed to execute the campaign.

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council NOTE and FILE this report.

BACKGROUND

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2015-16, the City of Los Angeles (City) committed to the Vision Zero initiative with the goal of eliminating traffic deaths within the City by 2025, with a particular emphasis on protecting road users that are the most physically vulnerable to injury or death from traffic crashes: people who walk and bicycle. The City's approach to achieve zero traffic fatalities consisted of prioritizing the areas with most need and following the "Four Es", which include Engineering, Education, Enforcement, and Evaluation. The focus on Education reflects a commitment to educate the public through safety campaigns that reinforce safe driving.

In 2022, the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) hired a consultant, Fehr and Peers, to evaluate the effectiveness of individual transportation projects implemented through the City's Vision Zero initiative. In 2023, the Office of the City Administrator (CAO) executed a contract with KPMG, LLP (KPMG) to conduct an independent evaluation of the City Vision Zero Program.

In April 2025, LADOT and the CAO published the findings of these evaluations in a joint report to Council in this file. Among these findings is a recommendation to increase education efforts to better complement ongoing engineering and street design work.

In December 2025, Council authorized the transfer of \$500,000 from Fund No. 59C/94, Account No. 94YG25 Vision Zero Corridor Projects to a new account entitled Vision Zero Educational Campaign, and directed LADOT to report with a proposed traffic safety education and awareness campaign that incorporates the findings of both third-party evaluations, including the planned use of educational campaign funds and any additional resources needed to execute the campaign.

DISCUSSION

During the initial years of the Vision Zero program, LADOT was awarded grant funding to conduct an educational campaign focused on the dangers of speeding. Since 2017-18, due to lack of staffing and resources to develop and manage a comprehensive awareness and education campaign, LADOT has not pursued additional grant funding for this effort and the City has not funded any additional education campaigns. With the exception of the initial years of the Vision Zero program, LADOT has focused its education resources on project specific engagement. LADOT currently receives \$1 million annually to conduct community engagement for Vision Zero street design projects. While these efforts include safety educational components, they are location and project specific and do not provide a broader public awareness campaign focused on shifting behavior to improve safety outcomes. LADOT is also currently executing a public information campaign as a required component of its speed safety camera pilot, focused on the safety benefits of the program, locations, and ticket information.

With the recently transferred funds dedicated to a public education and awareness campaign, LADOT will launch a new effort to raise awareness about traffic safety and educate Angelenos on how to protect themselves and others on the road. Rather than focusing on a specific project or program, this campaign will focus messaging on broad awareness about the prevalence and severity of crashes in the City of Los Angeles, and educate all road users about the primary factors that contribute to those crashes.

This report provides:

1. A summary of traffic safety education campaigns implemented by peer cities, states, and the federal government;
2. A brief history of LADOT's prior traffic safety education initiatives;
3. An overview of current and planned traffic safety education efforts underway;
4. A proposal for the strategic use of the proposed allocated \$500,000.

Based on best practices and to leverage the department's existing resources, LADOT will secure professional services to develop and execute a new traffic safety education and awareness campaign based on the findings of the LADOT 2024 Safety Study and CAO-led audit of Citywide traffic safety efforts.

Local, State, and Federal public education campaigns

Other cities that have adopted Vision Zero policies have also invested in coordinated traffic safety education campaigns to complement infrastructure investments and enforcement strategies. State and Federal agencies have also executed safety and education campaigns focused on reducing distracted and impaired driving.

- **New York City:**

New York City's Vision Zero initiative has featured recurring, citywide public education campaigns focused on speeding, failure to yield, and pedestrian safety. Most recently, in November of 2025, the city launched a paid advertising campaign to be featured on billboards, TV, streaming services, at sporting events and on social media in 12 different languages focusing on the consequences of traffic violence with the tag line "You can't rewind a crash." [The \\$3 million campaign replaces a previous effort of similar scope which began in 2022.](#)

- **San Francisco:**

[San Francisco's traffic safety campaigns](#) integrate education with corridor-level improvements, education and awareness around enforcement policies, grant-based training programs for specific travel modes such as motorcycle safety, and community-based outreach. The City has partnered with advocacy organizations, schools, and senior centers to tailor messaging to specific populations, including older adults and non-English-speaking communities.

- **California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS):**

The California OTS administers statewide education campaigns addressing impaired driving, speeding, distracted driving, and pedestrian and bicycle safety. Many of these efforts use state-owned and managed assets such as monitors at Department of Motor Vehicle service counters and changeable message signs on freeways such as "Click-it or Ticket".

- **US Department of Transportation (USDOT):**

US DOT offices such as the National Highway and Traffic Safety Administration and Federal Highway Administration have pursued intermittent national campaigns contingent upon administration priorities. Recent campaigns have focused on highlighting behaviors that lead to crashes such as distracted driving and driving under the influence.

Based on these existing and ongoing efforts, LADOT identified the following best practices to effectively raise awareness and educate the public about traffic safety:

- Develop consistent messaging with clear branding and visual identity
- Leverage publicly owned assets to reduce costs while expanding reach
- Partner with community organizations to enhance credibility and cultural relevance
- Hire consultant services to provide specialized expertise in marketing and creative content development
- Continue the campaign over an extended period of time to increase exposure

These best practices will inform LADOT's forthcoming safety education and awareness campaign.

Prior traffic safety campaigns

LADOT previously conducted a consultant-led traffic safety education and awareness campaign as part of the launch of Vision Zero in 2017 which included paid advertising using billboards, bus bench and bus tail advertising, radio placements in multiple languages, social media ads, and celebrity ambassadors. A paid media campaign featuring billboards, bus assets, street pole banners and traditional radio ran between April and July of 2017 with a budget of \$895,000. A paid social media campaign also ran for two months

between November and December of 2017 and included a \$65,000 social media campaign featuring video and static messaging in English and Spanish appearing on Facebook and Instagram, Youtube, Google Ads, and Pandora Radio. Combined, these efforts generated over 2 million impressions. While these efforts were viewed by a significant audience, they were short-lived and the impact of these campaigns in terms of public awareness was difficult to measure.

LADOT is currently advancing several traffic safety initiatives that include education and outreach components, but do not provide a broad centralized education and awareness effort. These include community outreach efforts on corridor safety projects on the City's identified Priority Safety Corridors. This engagement typically provides project-specific information through websites, mailers, public presentations, social media content, temporary demonstrations, and education tailored to corridor-specific issues such as speeding, unsafe crossings, and conflicts between vehicles and vulnerable road users. Public education and awareness efforts are also underway to increase awareness and understanding about speed safety cameras, as LADOT prepares to launch its pilot program in the Fall. The Department also continues to partner with community organizations to deepen engagement with specific populations such as students, seniors, and non-English-speakers.

These ongoing efforts can be expanded, augmented, and amplified through a new safety education and awareness campaign.

Proposed traffic safety education and awareness campaign

The proposed traffic safety education campaign represents a strategic opportunity to build on LADOT's existing efforts and align with Mayoral and City Council priorities to reduce traffic-related injuries and fatalities. By investing in a comprehensive campaign that leverages City-owned assets and community partnerships, LADOT can enhance public awareness about the frequency and severity of traffic crashes in the City, and a better understanding of traffic safety measures in order to promote safer driving behavior. Based on the findings of the 2024 Safety Study, LADOT will focus the educational component on the four primary violations involved in crashes that result in death or serious injury: unsafe speeds, yielding right of way, unsafe turns, and failure to comply with signals, signage or striping. Social media ad buys will be targeted to zip codes with the highest rates of fatal crashes.

The \$500,000 FY26-27 budget allocation would support consultant services, creative development, material production, translation, sponsored community events, and limited paid media where appropriate. LADOT will prioritize cost-effective strategies, including extensive use of City-owned assets and partnerships, to maximize public benefit. LADOT will focus these efforts on raising awareness of the prevalence of traffic crashes, the risks of unsafe driving, and the basic laws that apply to all road users. Based on the findings of the 2024 Safety Study, LADOT will focus the educational component of this campaign on the four primary violations involved in crashes that result in death or serious injury: unsafe speeds, yielding right of way, unsafe turns, and failure to comply with signals, signage or striping.

In order to launch this effort, and to increase broad awareness about traffic crashes, LADOT will create and distribute a media guide to reporters and local news stations. This guide can be created in-house

with current resources, and will support more consistent coverage of traffic crashes and help outlets provide accurate information about both the prevalence and the causes of traffic crashes.

In order to maximize reach with existing resources, and in line with observed best practices, LADOT will procure a professional consultant specializing in traffic safety education, public awareness campaigns, and behavioral change strategies. A consultant would:

- Develop unified campaign brand and messaging framework;
- Produce creative design and materials including video, images, copy, and event production;
- Determine strategic media placement using both earned and paid media to maximize visibility;
- Identify community organizations positioned to amplify our message in culturally relevant contexts;
- Set evaluation metrics and assess campaign effectiveness.

Strategic messaging placement

Developing a campaign brand, messaging framework, and supporting materials designed to raise awareness about traffic crashes, and educate Angelenos about safe driving behavior traffic laws will cost an estimated \$200,000 in contractual services. This will include audience research, concept design and testing, video production in development of a single 60-90 second campaign video establishing the campaign as well as multiple (8-10 second) video cutdowns and vertical shorts, additional still and video photography for development of an image library, animation and graphic support, material production such as reusable signs and temporary installations for events, and toolkits for community and media to ensure dissemination of unified safety messaging. The goal is to create enough reusable visual and creative assets capable of supporting a multi-channel campaign for at least several years and in multiple contexts.

In an effort to amplify messaging at minimal cost, LADOT will display traffic safety messaging on City buses, and other LADOT-managed assets. LADOT will also coordinate with the Bureau of Street Services (BSS) to display ads on bus shelters and with Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) to display messaging in airport terminals and ground transportation areas if feasible. LADOT and its contractor will work to identify any other opportunities to use digital signage and other City-controlled media platforms to expand campaign reach without cost.

Paid and earned media will expand campaign efforts beyond City-owned assets and keep messaging in the public eye for an extended period of time. In partnership with Metro, LADOT maintains signs at 142 Metro Bike kiosks directing the public to laspeedsafety.org which hosts the Departments evolving safety messaging. An additional paid media effort is estimated to cost approximately \$200,000 supporting event production and multiple strategic placements that coincide with projects, high-visibility events, as well as extended, multi-channel paid placements across outdoor media, social media, YouTube, radio, and video streaming.

City employee training modules

LADOT proposes to develop and launch two City employee training efforts - one focused on driver safety amongst City fleet users, and another for Public Information Officers (PIO) to ensure consistent messaging across all Departments and elected offices when issuing press releases, corresponding with media outlets, and communicating about City services;

A fleet and driver training module will improve driving habits for all employees. The standardized traffic safety training module will focus on safe driving practices, interactions with pedestrians and bicyclists, and compliance with updated traffic laws, and should be mandatory for all City employees as a requirement for operating fleet vehicles. This training can be ongoing and continuous and provides a trackable metric by the number of employees trained in safe driving practices. Based on similar City of Los Angeles trainings, this campaign component will cost approximately \$20,000 to produce the training module.

LADOT will also develop a media toolkit for all City PIOs, focused on using the appropriate language when discussing traffic safety, and on amplifying consistent messaging about traffic crashes and the risks associated with unsafe driving. This toolkit will also be provided to reporters who cover collisions in an effort to expand awareness and contextualize crashes in order to educate Angelenos and improve driving behavior. LADOT will produce this toolkit in house at no additional cost.

Partnerships

In order to amplify campaign messaging about traffic crashes and educate all road users, LADOT will partner with institutional and community based organizations. This will include but not be limited to LA Metro, LAUSD, local hospitals, senior citizen centers and advocate groups like the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), the American Automobile Association (AAA), street safety advocacy organizations, faith-based organizations, running clubs, and other influencers who can use and promote LADOT messaging. LADOT will also partner with City agencies such as the Recreation and Parks (RAP) and the newly formed Community Investment Department (CID) to leverage existing programs to connect with key constituencies such as youth, seniors, employers, and care providers. In addition to amplifying the campaign, this will support culturally relevant materials, events, and activations to raise awareness and create impactful engagement. LADOT anticipates this effort will cost approximately \$80,000 for sponsorships, materials, and event production.

Next steps & resources needed

With existing staff resources and the one-time \$500,000 allocation, LADOT will secure consultant resources to advance the tasks outlined above and listed in the table below.

TASK	ANTICIPATED COST
Media guide	\$0
City employee trainings.	\$20,000
Creative development for all campaign messaging and materials, including video, social and website content, and advertisements.	\$200,000
Paid media opportunities including press conferences and events, outdoor media, social media, YouTube, radio, and video streaming.	\$200,000
Strategic partnerships	\$80,000
City-owned asset campaign displays including buses, bus shelters, and airport property.	\$0

With current resources, LADOT expects to run the traffic safety education and awareness campaign for one calendar year. LADOT's Bureau of Communications and Media relations currently consists of one Public Information Director II, one Transportation Planning Associate, one Graphic Design Specialist, and as-needed part-time staff. For comparison, the NYCDOT communications division consists of more than 50 employees who in addition to standard communications work manage temporary art installations and activations, and respond to correspondence, customer service needs, and requests for translation/interpreter services - functions LADOT is not currently resourced to provide.

With additional or continued funding for consultant services in future fiscal years, LADOT can evaluate the effectiveness of this one-year campaign, and extend relevant messaging beyond the one-year time horizon. With additional staff, LADOT can expand the campaign itself, creating additional materials and expanding reach through more paid advertising and ensure ongoing education and awareness over an extended period of time.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

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

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