

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

DATE: June 4, 2014

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

FROM:  Kirk Mukri, General Manager
Department of Transportation

SUBJECT: **SIGNAL CONSTRUCTION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FY 2014-15**

SUMMARY

The Department of Transportation (LADOT) received a \$6,000,000 appropriation for signal improvements in the recently adopted City budget for Fiscal Year 2014-15. The Department is recommending using these funds to construct 32 traffic signal projects ranging from new traffic signals to installation of turn arrows (see Attachment).

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECEIVE AND FILE

DISCUSSION

The projects proposed for this program are projects that have already been studied and authorized by LADOT District Offices, and are on the Department's list of 371 signal construction projects where outside funding (non-general fund) opportunities have not been identified or secured. The design of the projects has been or will be completed using existing engineering resources in the LADOT Signal Design Section.

Since the total cost of implementing all the projects on the list is well above \$6,000,000, the projects proposed for this first cycle of the program were prioritized based on the following categories, and are limited to locations where other funding sources currently do not exist:

- **PRIORITY ONE:**
 - Projects authorized at intersections due to an ongoing pattern of specific types of collisions; where the signal project is expected to remedy the collision pattern; or
 - Projects authorized as a result of litigation.

- PRIORITY TWO:

- Projects authorized at intersections for reasons other than crash experience, but where the signal improvement is necessary to prevent specific types of collisions that may be more likely than usual to occur due to limited visibility, adverse roadway geometry, or excessive speeding; or
- Projects authorized at intersections for reasons other than crash experience, but where recent changes in the California Vehicle Code or the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices have created compliance issues that need to be resolved; or
- Projects authorized at intersections based on criteria associated with pedestrian volumes, pedestrian safety, or school crossing; or
- Projects authorized at intersections for Priority Three criteria, but where there is also a noticeable number of pedestrians, accidents, or the intersection is adjacent to a school.

- PRIORITY THREE:

- Projects authorized at intersections for reasons other than safety, such as high traffic volumes, excessive left-turn delay, improved intersection capacity, or inadequate gaps in opposing/cross traffic where a signal is needed to help traffic get through the intersection; or
- Projects authorized at intersections for any other reasons not specified above.

The initial project breakdown includes 10 Priority One projects and 22 Priority Two projects. An additional six Priority Three projects have been included should there be funds remaining due to cost savings.

It should also be noted that several of the projects on the attached list of projects may be eligible for other funding sources during the upcoming fiscal year, so in the event that any of these projects are deleted from this program in order to be constructed with special funding, or if a cost savings is realized on the first 32 projects, a waiting list of 6 additional projects is also included, so that the \$6,000,000 can be completely expended. The initial list of 32 projects includes 21 new signalized intersections, 6 new left-turn, right-turn, or pedestrian signal projects, and 5 new Activated Pedestrian Warning Devices or Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacon projects. The projects on the waiting list are of the same types, but also include one project to upgrade the pedestrian push-buttons to "Accessible Pedestrian Signals", used by the visually impaired, at 15 signalized intersections citywide.

The ranking of the projects included in the first cycle of the Signal Construction Improvement Program for Fiscal Year 2014-15 was done with an emphasis on improving safety for all roadway users in the City of Los Angeles, including several projects specifically focused on pedestrian and equestrian safety.

BACKGROUND

The projects recommended for this cycle of the Signal Construction Improvement Program for Fiscal Year 2014-15 include the following project types:

- **New Traffic Signals (intersectional or mid-block)** - New signals will provide a clearer right-of-way assignment, less delay for the minor street traffic and pedestrians during the peak hours, and an improved level of safety for all roadway users. For the 22 locations recommended in this program (including the alternate project), there have been a total of 76 collisions during the last three years that may have been prevented with traffic signal control.
- **Left-turn or Right-turn Signals** - New left-turn arrows; which in most cases will be "protected-only" type, restricting drivers to only turn on the left-arrow, will provide regular, protected opportunities for drivers to make left-turns without having to worry about opposing traffic or even judging whether the gap is safe to turn or not. These "protected-only" left-turn signals are authorized where there is a documented pattern of left-turn accidents, or where there is restricted visibility or geometry issues which may make it more difficult than usual for drivers to determine when it is safe to turn. In some cases, "protected-permissive" left-turn signals are recommended where the visibility and geometry are sufficient, but where the accidents are found to occur mainly during the peak hours, and where severe congestion may lead to drivers accepting inadequate gaps to turn left after sitting through several light cycles. The "protected-permissive" left-turn signals will provide left-turn arrows only when vehicles start to back up in the left-turn pocket, followed by a traditional green light. There is one location with a proposed right-turn signal which is recommended to help reduce traffic congestion in the parking lot and to more efficiently clear traffic out of the shopping center at the east side of Topanga Canyon Boulevard and Clarendon Street. For the ten locations (including four on the alternate list), there have been a total of 42 collisions during the last three years that may have been prevented with left-turn or right-turn signals.
- **Pedestrian Signals** – There is one location where pedestrian signals are recommended next to the Orange Line Station in North Hollywood, in order to prevent pedestrians from crossing the west side crosswalk when the signals for northbound traffic change from green to yellow, and drivers making a northbound left-turn need to clear the intersection.
- **Activated Pedestrian Warning Devices (APWD) or Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB)** - In cases where traffic signal control cannot be authorized, but where the combination of moderate pedestrian volumes and roadway conditions indicate increased risk of pedestrian crashes, the installation of a marked crosswalk can be supplemented by pedestrian actuated beacons or flashing devices. These flashing yellow devices will increase driver awareness of pedestrians that are crossing the roadway. There is no documented history of pedestrian crashes at any of the five locations proposed during the most recent 3 years (although a letter has been received providing an anecdotal account of one

crash); however the data still supports the implementation of the flashing beacons as a preventative measure.

COORDINATION WITH COUNCIL OFFICES

The Department of Transportation has previously worked with Council Offices when authorizing the traffic signal improvements specified for each intersection, and has provided each affected office with a copy of the Department's "Traffic Control Report" authorizing the specific traffic control device(s) and explaining the problem they are intended to solve, and why they are technically justified.

Once the \$6,000,000 appropriation for signal projects was identified, the Department refined the signal projects list to identify Priority One, Two and Three projects that could be funded and will be providing the priorities to each Council Office, along with an invitation to meet and discuss the proposed projects. The Department will be meeting with staff from several Council Offices to ensure their awareness of the relevant safety issues. The Department continues to modify and update the project list to better meet the specific goals of the Council Offices.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Although the implementation of these signal improvement projects does not directly generate any revenue to the City of Los Angeles, the nature of the projects will likely reduce the potential for litigation at each location, protecting existing City funds.

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Attachment: Proposed Project List

ATTACHMENT

**LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
SIGNAL CONSTRUCTION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

FISCAL YEAR 2014-15

The Fiscal Year 2014-15 Proposed Budget includes a \$6 million appropriation for the new Signal Construction Improvement Program. This program was created to finance the design and construction of unfunded traffic signal projects that have been previously studied and authorized by the Los Angeles Department of Transportation. Projects are categorized into three priority groups based on safety and legal considerations. The following are the highest ranked projects as of June 1, 2014.

Priority	Council District	Location	Project Type	Cost Estimate
1	11	Lincoln Blvd. & Manchester Ave.	Add 2 protected left turn only signals	\$75,000
1	1	Hancock St. & North Broadway	New traffic signal	\$265,000
1	6	Columbus Ave. & Vanowen St.	New traffic signal	\$190,000
1	8,10	Adams Blvd. & Western Ave.	Add left turn signal	\$75,000
1	5	Marymount Pl. & Sunset Blvd.	Add protected left turn only signal	\$75,000
1	4	The Grove Dr. between Beverly Blvd. & Caruso Pl.	New midblock traffic signal	\$150,000
1	11	Brooks Ave. & Pacific Ave.	Add left turn phase	\$75,000
1	13	Las Palmas Ave. & Sunset Blvd	New traffic signal	\$265,000
1	4	La Brea Ave. & Wilshire Blvd.	Add protected left turn only signal	\$75,000
1	6	Montague St./Parthenia St. & Woodman Ave.	New traffic signal	\$300,000
SUB-TOTAL (Priority 1 Projects)				\$1,545,000

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Priority	Council District	Location	Project Type	Cost Estimate
2	13	Echo Park Ave. & Laguna Ave.	New traffic signal	\$215,000
2	11	26th Ave. Walkway & Pacific Ave.	New midblock traffic signal	\$150,000
2	14	Ave 63 & York Blvd.	New traffic signal	\$265,000
2	5	3rd St. & La Jolla Ave.	New traffic signal	\$265,000
2	14	Fickett St. & Wabash Ave.	New traffic signal	\$240,000
2	11	Abbot Kinney Blvd. & Boccaccio Ave./Marr St.	Add Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacon	\$75,000
2	4	Hollywood Blvd., Lyman Pl. & Rodney Dr.	Add Activated Pedestrian Warning Devices	\$100,000
2	2	Chandler Blvd. & Lankershim Blvd. (North I/S)	Add pedestrian and left turn signals	\$85,000
2	15	130th St. & Figueroa St.	New traffic signal	\$265,000
2	7	Olive View Dr. 700' east of Roxford St.	Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacon w/LED signs	\$90,000
2	10	36th St. & Crenshaw Blvd.	New traffic signal	\$265,000
2	2	Tujunga Ave. & Woodbridge St.	New traffic signal	\$200,000
2	15	"R" St. & Wilmington Blvd.	New traffic signal	\$265,000
2	11	Mississippi Ave. & Sawtelle Blvd.	New traffic signal	\$265,000
2	13	Edgecliffe Dr. & Sunset Blvd.	New traffic signal	\$265,000
2	11	Coeur d'Alene Ave. & Abbot Kinney Blvd.	New traffic signal	\$265,000
2	8	Slauson Ave. & Verdun Ave.	Add Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacon	\$90,000
2	4	Camarillo St. & Forman Ave.	New traffic signal	\$300,000
2	9	56th St. & Figueroa St.	Add Activated Pedestrian Warning Devices	\$100,000
2	12	Chatsworth St. & Yarmouth Ave.	New traffic signal	\$265,000
2	15	Figueroa St. south of Redondo Beach Blvd.	New midblock traffic signal	\$150,000
2	6	Canterbury Ave. & Van Nuys Blvd.	New traffic signal	\$200,000
2	13, 4	Fountain Ave. & Myra Ave.	Add left turn signal	\$75,000
SUB-TOTAL (Priority 2 Projects)				\$4,455,000

TOTAL ESTIMATE (Priority 1 + Priority 2 Projects)	\$6,000,000
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ALTERNATIVE PROJECTS

If the actual project costs near the end of the fiscal year are projected to be less than \$6 million, it is recommended that savings be applied towards funding any newly identified Priority 1 and 2 projects that emerge during the course of the year. As an alternative, the following Priority 3 projects may also be considered for design and construction. These projects represent only a partial listing of numerous unfunded Priority 3 projects.

SELECT PRIORITY 3 PROJECTS				
Priority	Council District	Location	Project Type	Cost Estimate
3	3	Clarendon & Topanga Canyon	Add right turn signal	\$75,000
3	15	Western Ave. & Weymouth Ave.	Add left turn signal	\$75,000
3	4	Moorpark St. & Vineland Ave.	Add 2 left turn signals	\$150,000
3	2,6	Cleon Ave., Strathern St. & White St.	New traffic signal	\$300,000
3	Var.	15 signalized intersections citywide	Upgrade to accessible pedestrian signals	\$150,000
TOTAL (Priority 3 Projects)				\$825,000

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PROJECT CATEGORIES

Priority 1

- Projects authorized at intersections due to an ongoing pattern of specific types of collisions; where the signal project is expected to remedy the collision pattern; or
- Projects authorized as a result of litigation.

Priority 2

- Projects authorized at intersections for reasons other than crash experience, but where the signal improvement is necessary to prevent specific types of collisions that may be more likely than usual to occur due to limited visibility, adverse roadway geometry, or excessive speeding;
- Projects authorized at intersections for reasons other than crash experience, but where recent changes in the California Vehicle Code or the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices have created compliance issues that need to be resolved;
- Projects authorized at intersections based on criteria associated with pedestrian volumes, pedestrian safety, or school crossing; or
- Projects authorized at intersections for Priority 3 criteria, but where there is also a noticeable number of pedestrians, crashes, or the intersection is adjacent to a school.

Priority 3

- Projects authorized at intersections for reasons other than safety, such as high traffic volumes, excessive left-turn delay, improved intersection capacity, or inadequate gaps in opposing/cross traffic where a signal is needed to help traffic get through the intersection; or
- Projects authorized at intersections for any other reasons not specified above.