

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL MEMORANDUM

Date: April 4, 2019

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

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

Subject: **FEASIBILITY OF IMPLEMENTING A PILOT LOADING ZONE PROGRAM FOR
TRANSPORTATION NETWORK COMPANIES IN DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES**

SUMMARY

This report provides an update on research and planning conducted by the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) to determine the feasibility of implementing a pilot loading zone program for Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) operating in high demand areas in Downtown Los Angeles (DTLA).

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council DIRECT LADOT to report back to the Transportation Committee within 120 days on the progress of coordination with TNCs and the status of the TNC loading zone pilot program.

BACKGROUND

Curb space in Downtown Los Angeles has long been at a premium as drivers seek parking, commercial trucks vie for space to make deliveries, and taxis load and unload passengers. Competition for curb space has increased with the influx of TNCs, bike share, car share, bike corrals, parklets, and valet services. TNC use has grown substantially since their introduction to Los Angeles in 2012. According to a recent survey by the Pew Research Center, 36 percent of U.S. adults now use TNCs compared to 15 percent reported in late 2015. In 2015, 33 percent of adults had not heard of TNCs, but today that number is down to three percent. A byproduct of this increase in TNC use is more congestion in high demand locations as TNC drivers increasingly stop or double-park at unsafe locations in order to pick-up and drop-off passengers.

Council File (CF) 18-0718 acknowledges this challenge and directs LADOT to evaluate the feasibility of implementing a pilot TNC loading zone program in DTLA, provide recommended guidelines, and work with TNCs to determine potential locations.

DISCUSSION

Based on existing TNC regulations, an LADOT-administered loading zone pilot requires partnerships with TNCs Lyft and Uber to identify high demand locations for TNC services and encourage loading zone use

to establish a program that benefits the public, TNCs, and the City. LADOT spoke with both companies to discuss the feasibility of a partnership and program to designate TNC pick-up and drop-off locations to improve public safety, mobility, and accessibility in selected areas in Downtown.

Per Council direction, LADOT asked both Lyft and Uber to provide their busiest pick-up and drop-off areas to help identify pilot locations in Downtown. Without direct access to TNC trip data, LADOT relies on companies to provide this information. To date, Uber provided high-level, city-wide information on passenger drop-offs (attached heat map), and Lyft identified the following areas with the busiest activity in DTLA as effective proposed locations to pilot TNC loading zones:

- Staples Center/Microsoft Theater/L.A. Live/Convention Center
- Grand Central Market
- Financial District
- Little Tokyo

To ensure driver and passenger compliance with LADOT-established TNC loading zones, Lyft and Uber will need to geofence the pilot program areas. Geofencing allows TNCs to direct drivers and passengers within a given geographic area to a designated pick-up and drop-off curbside location. Without geofencing, both drivers and passengers are unlikely to travel longer distances to designated TNC loading zones. Introducing established TNC zones to a geofenced area enhances reliability and predictability for passengers and drivers to find each other, and reduces the potential for traffic conflict and congestion as drivers circle to find their passengers. Where possible, the pilot program may convert existing underutilized passenger loading zones, and relocate the zones to more convenient and optimal locations. LADOT will develop guidelines for the installation of TNC loading zones and designate these geofenced locations with the appropriate signage and painted markings at the curb.

LADOT will continue to work collaboratively with Lyft and Uber to identify DTLA locations with the heaviest TNC activity and pinpoint specific curbside locations in one or more areas to establish TNC loading zones. LADOT will assess existing programs both at private property locations within Los Angeles as well as in other cities and gather data to better understand the effectiveness of geofencing, and consider whether these zones should operate during specific times of day. Once both TNCs and LADOT identify optimal candidates for the TNC loading zone locations, LADOT will report its findings with recommendations to City Council for final approval.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

There is no impact to the General Fund.

SJR:KH;jh

Attachment



Uber provides access to transportation across Los Angeles.

Los Angeles, California

The color of each cell indicates the magnitude of Uber dropoffs in that area.



Data from October 26th, 2018, to January 26th, 2019. Completed trips only. Only areas with three or more dropoffs are shown. Basemap courtesy of OSM and Mapbox.