

LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT



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November 20, 2019

The Honorable Public Safety Committee
c/o Andrew Choi
Office of the City Clerk
Room 395, City Hall
Los Angeles, California 90012

Subject: Public Safety Committee Report relative to a Bicycle Registration Program; and, increasing the reporting of bicycle thefts

Honorable Members:

The Committee has requested the Department to develop recommendations for:

1. An effective mandatory or voluntary bicycle registration program, including outreach to retailers, schools, bicycle organizations, etc., to make registration readily available and to encourage people to record bicycle serial numbers.
2. Increasing the reporting of bicycle thefts, including outreach to inform people that such reporting is necessary and effective, and potentially allowing online filing of bicycle theft reports, including costs of such programs and potential funding sources.

Departments Response for Recommendation 1:

As requested, the Department investigated both mandatory and voluntary bicycle registration programs. In 2008, a mandatory registration existed in Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) 26.01, which required bicycle licenses to be obtained by anyone riding a bicycle in the City of Los Angeles. In March of 2009, the Department, under guidance from City Council, discontinued the program. Three months later, the City repealed LAMC 26.01.

In 2012, the Department published an Office of the Chief of Police Notice, *National Bike Registry Database*, dated April 11, 2012, which introduced "National Bike Registry," a private company which maintains a voluntary nationwide bicycle registration database based on the bicycle manufacturer.

To that end, the Department's recommendation, as is consistent with current law, will be to develop a voluntary bicycle registration program Department-wide, in partnership with City Council. This recommendation involved identifying a suitable partner to implement such program—allowing the community to voluntarily register their bicycles for free online or in person with any Los Angeles Police Officer. This initiative will enhance the Department's ability to locate owners of stolen bicycles and to ultimately return stolen property to the rightful owners.

The goal of utilizing an independent registration company is to encourage community participation to provide law enforcement additional options to identify the rightful owners of lost/stolen property.

Several agencies and cities across the county, state and world have partnered with independent bicycle registration programs in efforts to combat bicycle theft as a collaborative effort. The success of the program will be reliant on the participation of the community, bike shops, college campuses, bicycle organizations, Los Angeles Department of Transportation and our Department. To effectively involve and inform the community and involved entities, we recognize it will be necessary to assist in organizing community events to promote the partnership and shared responsibility amongst all involved.

The Department has identified a nonprofit bike registration company to allow for an easy way to identify the owners bicycle as "stolen." Simultaneously, the community member will now have easier accessibility to file a police report for bicycle theft, as a link on the registration partner's website will re-route the community member to the Department's Community Online Reporting Service (CORS) to generate an official theft/lost property report. The collaborative effort will encourage the community to report their bicycle stolen, ultimately resulting in accurate and up-to-date statistics on when, where, and how bicycle theft is occurring.

Additionally, one of the ways cities, police agencies and bicycle registration companies have been successful is utilizing social media to alert the community of any bike thefts that have just occurred. This alert allows the community to stay vigilant and notify law enforcement if the stolen property is observed in person or on an advertisement listing.

It will also be a future goal to bring the major universities that are in the Department's jurisdiction as sub-accounts within the program to most effectively combat bike theft as it is a chronic problem at the local schools. This challenge will be explored to facilitate any potential partnerships, much as it is already being done in other places.

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Departments Response for Recommendation 2:

“Increasing the reporting of bicycle thefts, including outreach to inform people that such reporting is necessary and effective, and potentially allowing on-line filing of bicycle theft reports, including costs of such programs and potential funding sources.”

The Department has accepted bicycle theft online reporting starting in July of 2018. The following shows the number of reports accepted, in-person and online, starting in July of 2018 through July 24, 2019.

Date Reporting	Online Bicycle Theft	In-Person Bicycle Theft	TOTAL
July 16, 2018- July 24 th , 2019	362	3,372	3,734

For online reporting, the Department recognizes the cumulative effects in multiple ways. Every report taken online represents one more additional bicycle theft that may have gone unreported if online-reporting was not accessible. Furthermore, with a bicycle registration program, a link can be added to the Community Online Reporting Service website to direct people to register their bicycles as stolen, increasing the probability of bicycle recovery. This is an additional avenue to shared responsibility with the community by allowing them to engage in self-initiated policing to proactively keep the community safe.

Finally, the Department notes that we have become more accessible to more of the community by leveraging technology. Community members have come to expect the ability to do everything from banking to video streaming from their computer or smartphone, and we are striving to provide access to our police services from those same platforms. As a Department with a strong commitment to data-driven policing, the additional insight from these reports helps us to guide our response and crime prevention strategies.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Commander Mike Rimkunas, Assistant to the Director, Office of Operations, at (213) 486-0110.

Respectfully,



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