

# REPORT OF THE CHIEF LEGISLATIVE ANALYST

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DATE: February 14, 2020

TO: Honorable Members of the Rules, Elections, and Intergovernmental Relations Committee

FROM: Sharon M. Tso  Council File No: 20-0002-S21  
Chief Legislative Analyst Assignment No: 20-02-0187

SUBJECT: Resolution to increase grant funding for traffic enforcement

CLA RECOMMENDATION: Adopt Resolution (Rodriguez – Price) to include in the City’s 2019-2020 State Legislative Program SUPPORT and/or SPONSORSHIP for legislation or administrative action that would increase the State’s allocation of grant funds for traffic enforcement in order to reduce the number of traffic-related injuries and fatalities.

## SUMMARY

In 2015, the City of Los Angeles rolled out its Vision Zero Initiative, with the goal of reducing traffic fatalities by 20 percent by 2017, and eventually eliminating traffic deaths by 2025. Despite the resources allocated to Vision Zero, traffic deaths have remained high, with 244 people killed on City streets in 2019. Additionally, felony hit-and-run crimes have increased, despite a homicide rate that is the lowest since 1962. Enforcement is a key tool in reducing traffic fatalities, and the Police Department (LAPD) allocates significant resources, including grant funds, to traffic enforcement.

The Resolution recommends support and/or sponsorship for legislation or administrative action that would increase the State’s allocation of grant funds for traffic enforcement in order to reduce the number of traffic-related injuries and fatalities.

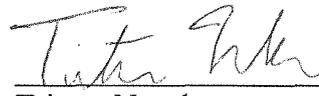
## BACKGROUND

Vision Zero is an initiative that was started in Sweden and has been adopted by cities around the world, including many major cities in the United States. The Vision Zero Initiative focuses on preventing fatal and severe crashes by addressing a set of contributing features, including roadway design, speed limits, driver behaviors, technologies, and policies. The Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) worked to identify a network of streets with the highest incidence of severe and fatal collisions. The streets in the High Injury Network (HIN) accounted for 65 percent of all fatalities and severe injuries involving pedestrians, despite covering just 6 percent of the City’s street miles. LADOT then worked with consultants to ensure that those streets had up-to-date Engineering and Traffic Surveys, which are required by the California Vehicle Code for speed limits to be enforceable with radar technologies.

One of the most important priorities of the Vision Zero Initiative is to ensure that cars are moving at safe speeds. Speeding contributes to traffic deaths at roughly the same level as drunk driving. Reducing speeding requires a multi-pronged approach which includes road design, speed limits,

and enforcement. While road design and safe speed limits are both important, enforcement is necessary to create the desired outcomes of Vision Zero.

In addition to General Fund revenues, the LAPD also uses grant funds, such as the Selective Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP) Grant for traffic enforcement. Grants like these are highly effective at reducing traffic collisions by dedicating resources to selective enforcement and education programs. These comprehensive programs have a long-lasting impact in reducing fatal and injury collisions. In 2019 the City was awarded \$5M in STEP funds, but more funds could be used to help increase traffic enforcement in order to make the streets safer for residents and visitors.



Tristan Noack  
Analyst

SMT:tcjn

Attachment: Resolution

WHEREAS, any official position of the City of Los Angeles with respect to legislation, rules, regulations or policies proposed to or pending before a local, state or federal governmental body or agency must have first been adopted in the form of a Resolution by the City Council with the concurrence of the Mayor; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, the City of Los Angeles rolled out its Vision Zero Initiative, with the goal of reducing traffic fatalities by 20 percent by 2017, and eventually eliminating traffic deaths; and

WHEREAS, Vision Zero is intended to make the streets safe for all users, including bicyclists and pedestrians; and

WHEREAS, despite the resources allocated to Vision Zero, traffic deaths have remained high, with 244 people killed on City streets in 2019; and

WHEREAS, a significant contributor to fatal traffic collisions is distracted driving; and

WHEREAS, enforcement is a key tool in reducing traffic fatalities, and the Police Department (LAPD) allocates significant resources to traffic enforcement; and

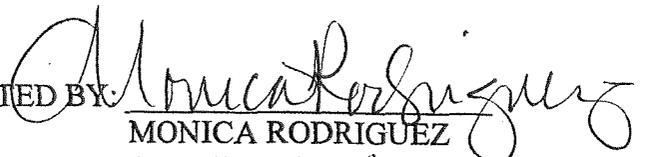
WHEREAS, felony hit-and-run crimes have increased, despite a homicide rate that is the lowest since 1962; and

WHEREAS, in addition to General Fund revenues, the LAPD also uses grant funds, such as the Selective Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP) Grant for traffic enforcement; and

WHEREAS, in 2019 the City was awarded \$5M in STEP funds, but more funds could be used to help increase traffic enforcement in order to make the streets safer for residents and visitors;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, with the concurrence of the Mayor, that by the adoption of this Resolution, the City of Los Angeles hereby includes in its 2019 - 2020 State Legislative Program SUPPORT for and/or SPONSORSHIP of legislation or administrative action which would increase the State's allocation of grant funds for traffic enforcement in order to reduce the number of traffic-related injuries and fatalities.

PRESENTED BY:



MONICA RODRIGUEZ  
Councilmember, 7<sup>th</sup> District

SECONDED BY:



FEB 11 2020