



Staff Report

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**CC - (1) Presentation and Discussion Regarding the Downtown-E Line Tactical Mobility Lane Pilot Project and Circulator Service; and (2) Direction to the City Manager as Deemed Appropriate.**

**Meeting Date:** July 13, 2020

**Contact Person/Dept:** Diana Chang / Transportation Department  
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**Fiscal Impact:** Yes  No

**General Fund:** Yes  No

**Public Hearing:**  **Action Item:**  **Attachments:**

**Commission Action Required:** Yes  No  **Date:**

**Public Notification:** (E-Mail) Meetings and Agendas - City Council (07/08/2020)

**Department Approval:** Rolando Cruz (07/06/2020) Charles Herbertson (07/06/2020)

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**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the City Council (1) receive a presentation regarding the Downtown-E Line Tactical Mobility Lane Pilot Project and Circulator Service; and (2) provide direction to the City Manager as deemed appropriate.

**BACKGROUND**

**North Culver Boulevard Closure Project**

With the reduced traffic resulting from COVID-19 and the need to accommodate outdoor dining to support the area's restaurants, the City has agreed and prepared a plan to temporarily close westbound Culver Boulevard from Canfield Avenue to Duquesne Avenue with the exception of one-lane width to serve the movements of public service vehicles including emergency vehicles and transit buses. Based on subsequent staff discussions and feedback from the City Council, the City determined that bicycles and scooters will also be allowed to use this westbound bus and emergency vehicle lane, creating a mobility lane. It should be noted that the City is also planning the closure of

Main Street between Culver Boulevard and the City's right of way south of Venice Boulevard, with the exception of an emergency lane. The Public Works Department will proceed with the planned road closures within the next 30 days.

### Tactical Transit Lane Pilot Projects

On May 18, 2020, City Council directed Staff to plan and implement tactical transit lane pilot projects to test and demonstrate the benefits of such infrastructure to maximize the use of the roadway and improve mobility. Given the importance of providing first/last mile connection between Downtown Culver City, Metro E-Line Culver City Station, and Helms District, staff considers this area to be the priority area to pilot the tactical transit lanes. The temporary closure of westbound Culver Boulevard with the exception of a EV/bus/bike lane triggered the idea that, as the next phase, it can be integrated with the tactical transit lane pilot project and expand the integrated project into the Downtown-E Line Tactical Mobility Lane Pilot Project (Pilot Project) that will provide bi-directional shared bike/bus mobility lanes on Culver Boulevard and Washington Boulevard from Duquesne Avenue all the way to Helms Avenue.

Staff is also exploring the Sepulveda Boulevard and Jefferson Boulevard corridors as other potential areas to pilot the tactical transit lanes and will bring recommendation to the City Council in the future. Such consideration will take into account needs of all modes of travel and associated City plans and policies, including the recently approved Bicycle and Pedestrian Action Plan.

## **DISCUSSION**

### Research Findings

Staff has conducted research on the shared bike/bus lane and tactical shared bike/bus lane projects. The research findings show that shared bike/bus lanes can improve mobility through facilitating the efficient movement of people, mitigating conflicts between bicycles and general traffic, and improving transit service travel time and reliability. Implementing tactical bike/bus lanes is a low-cost and potentially lower impact alternative to quickly provide dedicated facilities for transit and bicycles. A tactical bike/bus lane pilot project will help inform the Expo-Downtown Multi-Modal Connector Project envisioned by the 2017 TOD Visioning Study that included a dedicated two-way cycle track and dedicated bus lanes. This Pilot Project will allow the City to test shared bike/bus lane performance as a possible long-term alternative to the much costlier and difficult to implement concepts in the TOD Visioning Study. Staff, in the meantime, will continue to pursue grant funding for the design and construction of the Expo-Downtown Multi-Modal Connector Project.

### Proposed Downtown-E Line Tactical Mobility Lane Pilot Project (Pilot Project)

The proposed Pilot Project (See Attachment A) will design and implement mobility lanes on Culver Boulevard and Washington Boulevard from Culver Boulevard/Duquesne Avenue to Washington Boulevard/Helms Avenue for a minimum period of 24 months. These mobility lanes will provide lanes for buses, emergency vehicles, scooters, and bicycles in both directions on an ongoing basis, 24 hours per day. The Pilot Project will integrate with the closure of westbound Culver Boulevard by using the EV/Bus lane and will be shifted to the curb-side lane when outdoor dining is no longer needed to provide first/last mile connection with Metro E Line Station, major commercial and employment centers, and the Helms District. In addition to the future Microtransit service (to be launched in 2021), staff is planning to implement a Circulator service (to launch when the pilot mobility lanes are operational) that will leverage the mobility lanes to augment the mobility services in

this area. The Pilot Project will help improve the public mobility services and provide better facilities for cyclists.

#### Proposed Downtown Circulator Service (Circulator)

The proposed Circulator (See Attachment B) will take advantage of the full lengths of the mobility lanes created by the Pilot Project and will provide services between Sony, City Hall, Downtown Culver City, Metro E Line Station, and the Helms District. This service will enhance the first/last mile connection services to/from the Metro E Line Station, accommodate work and lunch/dinner trips, and alleviate the demands for parking in the area. The service is currently planned to be Monday through Sunday from the morning to the evening, with a frequency of 10 minutes during the peak hours and 20 minutes during the off-peak hours. For the first year of service, staff is proposing to use open-air, low emission (CNG or electric) trolley type vehicles for maximum air circulation, attractive and fun riding experience, and special branding. The vehicle would accommodate 15-30 passengers (10-15 passengers to allow for social distancing). Staff will also explore the use of autonomous vehicles for this service in the future.

#### Expo-Downtown Multi-Modal Connector Project

Earlier this year, Public Works staff submitted an application for a Metro grant to fund design of the Expo-Downtown Multi-Modal Connector project as recommended by the 2017 TOD Visioning Study and the Connector's 2017 Feasibility Study including a two-way cycle track and dedicated bus lanes. As planned, staff will also continue with the ongoing work in preparation for a grant application for the bi-annual Active Transportation Program (ATP) that will be submitted this September for the Connector's construction. However, the planned construction schedule will be adjusted to ensure sufficient period for the Pilot Project of bike/bus lanes including its design, implementation, and assessment of its success.

#### Proposed Pilot Project Timeline

Planning of the Pilot Project will include multi-modal traffic review using available data collected as part of the General Plan update, and other operational and capital projects. The planning phase will also benefit from the five-year collisions analysis that was recently conducted for the Bicycle and Pedestrian Action Plan and the Local Road Safety Plan to ensure addressing safety concerns and enhancements of safety conditions. Other elements that must be considered as part of the review include the parking supply and demand, curb-side loading zones, and valet parking. This is in addition to the assessment of other needed changes to lane configurations and traffic control devices including signals design and operation. Due to the duration of the Pilot Project, a general environmental review is also advisable. Planning and design of the Pilot Project is expected to take about six months.

The 2017 TOD Visioning Study and Connector's Feasibility Study included a comprehensive public consultation process that resulted in a community expectation for dedicated bicycle facility. The duration of the planning and design of the Pilot Project will be used to reconnect with the community and work towards a consensus in favor of the Pilot Project. Following the planning, design, and consultation phase, the Pilot Project will be implemented which is expected to take additional four months subject to availability of resources. A minimum period of two years is recommended for the Pilot Project to allow for the planning, design and construction phase, as well as sufficient duration for deployment of the Project including its assessment and any adjustments that may be needed along

the way.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)

Staff will bring this item to the BPAC at a Special Meeting to be held on July 10<sup>th</sup> in order to obtain initial feedback from the Committee and participating community members. Staff will provide a verbal report of this feedback at the July 13<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting.

**FISCAL ANALYSIS**

Funding toward the anticipated costs for consulting services and design of the Tactical Mobility Lane Pilot Project is being sourced from local transportation dollars. These funds were previously budgeted in the Transportation Department's FY2019/2020 Adjusted Budget for special transit project feasibility studies and will be carried over into FY2020/2021 in account 20370100.619800. Construction of the Pilot Project will include changes to signage, pavement markings, and signals design and operation. Staff will return to Council for consideration of the construction costs that will be estimated as part of the Project design.

The Circulator Service Pilot Project is estimated to cost \$165,000 for a six-month example period (January 2021 to July 2021) to cover the leasing of two trolley vehicles and operating expenses for labor and fuel. Funds are being sourced from Prop A Local Return operating dollars allocated to the Transportation Department for specialized transit services. These funds were previously budgeted in the Transportation Department's FY2019/2020 Adjusted Budget for specialized transit projects and will be carried over into FY2020/2021 in account 20370100.619800.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Proposed Tactical Mobility Lane Pilot Project Area
2. Proposed Circulator Service

**MOTIONS**

That the City Council:

1. Receive a presentation on and discuss the Downtown-E Line Tactical Mobility Lane Pilot Project and Circulator Service; and
2. Provide direction to the City Manager as deemed appropriate.