

Referred to Public Works and Gang Reduction Committee
Referred to Transportation Committee

CF 17-1311



EVALUATION OF THE STATE
OF STREET RELATED
INFRASTRUCTURE
PROGRAMS IN LOS ANGELES
Fall 2017

Objective: This project was tasked to look at the system in which street infrastructure related services exist, to identify ways the City can improve delivery of these programs, and to highlight innovative practices within the City and other jurisdictions that can be scaled for success.

Design: Using a multi-pronged research approach consisting of staff interviews, constituent surveys, site visits, bench marking, data analysis and a problem solving Lab, a set of recommendations is being presented for adoption and implementation.

Research: Twelve groups of stakeholders were identified as part of the investigative process, including internal city departments and external partners. Over 400 interviews were conducted to gain an understanding of the effectiveness of the current system. Concerns reiterated across multiple groups included 1) programmatic vs systems thinking 2) proactive vs reactive planning 3) strategic vs tactical practice 4) lacking communication across City departments and with constituents 5) preventative vs deferred activities 6) competitive vs collaborative nature 7) lack of coordination in cross-departmental programs 8) undoing and redoing of work due to misaligned goals and 9) underuse of data in program analysis and decision making

Data collected in the design and research phases led to six central themes: Planning, Data, Coordination, Communication, Alignment, and Customer Centricity. These serve as the basis for the recommendations and each recommendation is assigned to multiple themes.

Theory of Change: The City's street network is one of its largest assets. Every infrastructure program in the City has assets under, on, or over the street. The street is the binding element for multiple departments: homes would not have water, electricity, or sewer services without connections below ground. Cars, bikes, buses would not know traffic or parking rules without signals, signage, or meters on the surface of the street. People could not walk safely in the right of way without sidewalks, crosswalks, ramps and street lights. Each recommendation considers how the upkeep and upgrade of street related assets can be strengthened.

Key Recommendations:

(Tiered recommendations reference the scale of the recommendation, not the importance or timing)

Tier 1: Improvements to the City's Infrastructure Delivery Ecosystem

- 1.1: Improve coordination, strengthen overall alignment, optimize synchronization of street related programs, and enhance service delivery for constituents by bringing all transportation programs into the Department of Public Works to make the Board of Public Works the single oversight authority for all activities over, on and under the street for Council controlled departments
- 1.2: Address the lack of proactive strategic planning, comprehensive project management, data analyses, and interdepartmental program goals by creating an Office of Infrastructure Management that will serve as the citywide lead on all street related infrastructure programs to drive cross functional performance improvements

Tier 2: Improvements to Infrastructure Support Systems

- 2.1: Strengthen oversight over underground activities, optimize time-related street activities, strengthen City paving plans, preserve City street investments, and provide transparency to City partners, utility providers and the public by converting utility coordination from a manual process to an electronic system
- 2.2: Address lack of asset data, timing of maintenance activities, selection of appropriate preventative and deferred maintenance lifecycle activities and scheduling for asset upgrades by prioritizing strategic asset management activities across asset classes
- 2.3: Resolve consistent customer issues with closed status messaging, streamline intake process and ease of use, and provide better transparency tools by making enhancements to the LA311 CRM system
- 2.4: Preserve taxpayer investments in the City's street network by updating policies affecting street protections that could include establishment of a moratorium for newly reconstructed streets and a new Concrete Street Damage Restoration Fee
- 2.5: Establish guidelines for large, critical infrastructure investments by reinstating a Citywide Capital Improvement Plan
- 2.6: Bolster proper oversight and ensure best allocation of resources to prevent multiple agencies tending to the same asset by clarifying Bureau and department roles in overlapping programs

Tier 3: Improvements to Specific Infrastructure Programs

- 3.1: Strengthen the city's overall street network by updating the methodology for resurfacing and slurry seal programs to employ factors beyond the PCI score to prioritize paving and maintenance projects
- 3.2: Support succession planning, skills development, effective program management and best in class customer service by encouraging knowledge transfer and cross-pollination of process expertise across Bureaus/departments and offering regular training regimens to employees and leaders
- 3.3: Promote transparency with utility partners and the public by posting the entire projected annual resurfacing plan online with monthly updates of work completion in a user friendly format
- 3.4: Support timely and quality project delivery within Department of Public Works by streamlining contract processing time and strengthening contract language to consistently include performance metrics
- 3.5: Improve quality trench work by supporting permittees in assessing the performance of their subcontractors, educating them on city standards, non-compliant work and timeliness of repairs as indicated on the permit

A detailed explanation of each recommendation is included in Section 3 of the report, beginning on page 61