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## L.A. Leaders Announce Transit Changes to Better Serve Transportation Needs of Women in the Region

*LA releases a first-of-its-kind study on gender disparities as the region marks the historic female leadership of its major transit agencies.*

Los Angeles, CA (July 30, 2021)

On Friday, LADOT released its landmark study, [Changing Lanes: A Gender Equity Transportation Study](#) and announced a new pilot program for “on-demand stops” for its DASH service. The pilot, which will debut in August for the Panorama City, Watts, Pico-Union, and El Sereno Community DASH routes, will allow riders to request a location to disembark along their route separate from established stop locations.

The study identifies barriers for women who depend on public transit as LADOT seeks to achieve gender equity across department operations as part of Mayor Garcetti’s [Executive Directive 11 on Gender Equity](#). Los Angeles City Council President Nury Martinez requested LADOT pilot key changes to transit operations to better address the needs of women. LADOT selected initial routes for the DASH pilot based upon ridership levels, route times, and the proportion of riders who identify as women.

“Our transportation systems need to work for everyone, but we can’t make our services more inclusive until we focus on improving the experience for women,” said Mayor Eric Garcetti. “By taking a careful look at where we fall short today, this study points the way toward a more equitable system moving forward.”

“When women are in leadership positions, we recognize situations where policies need to change because we have firsthand experience with the daily responsibilities women manage -- putting food on the table, riding the buses with our children, running the household, among countless others,” said Council President Nury Martinez. “DASH’s ‘on-demand stops’ program will be the difference between hauling your bags of groceries 10 blocks or 10 feet.”

“Representation matters,” said LADOT General Manager Seleta Reynolds. “Investing in community-based research with community-based organizations illuminated blind spots in transportation planning that have left women behind for decades. We cannot accept the status quo that leaves half the population stranded -- we can all rise together by understanding that changing lanes will change everyone’s lives for the better.”



“We are finally acknowledging the inequities that are baked into our regional transportation system, and that a system designed largely by white men for the commuting needs of white male office workers does not meet the needs of our increasingly diverse population,” said Councilmember Mike Bonin, Chair of the Los Angeles Transportation Committee. “This report represents a strong step forward in our ongoing regional work to rebalance LA’s transportation system under the leadership of Stephanie Wiggins at Metro and Seleta Reynolds at the Los Angeles Department of Transportation -- two dedicated and exceptional executives whom I am very proud to serve with and support.”

“Watts was one of the three pilot areas for this groundbreaking Changing Lanes study, and it revealed that the situation for women in Watts is dire -- from feeling unsafe while traveling, to lack of infrastructure like bus shelters and lighting, to not being able to afford transit costs -- our transportation network is not meeting the needs of women,” said Councilmember Joe Buscaino. “The City must urgently implement the changes and recommendations found in this report so that we can advance gender equity in public transportation.”

The analysis and changes arrive at a historic moment for female representation in transportation as the top leadership positions of the region’s two largest transit agencies are held by women.



Earlier this year, Metro announced the appointment of Stephanie Wiggins as CEO of Metro while Chair of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, Hilda L. Solis, began serving as Chair of the Metro Board of Directors earlier this month. Seleta Reynolds has served as General Manager of LADOT since 2014 and the Los Angeles City Council is led by Council President Nury Martinez. This is the first time that women



have held each of these leadership positions in the LA region simultaneously, shaping a field where women are underrepresented and underserved.

“Women have historically been underrepresented as it relates to leadership roles and design considerations in transportation,” shared Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Chair and Chair of Metro, Hilda L. Solis. “With two women of color at the helm of Metro, we are uniquely positioned to effect cultural and systemic change by focusing on meeting the needs of the most underserved transit riders and working towards truly equitable infrastructure.”

“As the first woman CEO of Metro I am committing to addressing gender disparity issues on our system,” said Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority CEO Stephanie Wiggins. “LADOT’s Changing Lanes report is going to change everything for the better. It will inspire Metro to advance our own Gender Action Plan so that we can be transformative for the entire county as well as help LADOT optimize their findings and recommendations from this report.”

LADOT commissioned Changing Lanes with the explicit objective of prioritizing equity in transportation planning and design. The study focuses on low-income, BIPOC women and communities in three Los Angeles neighborhoods— Sun Valley in the Valley region, Watts in the Central City region, and Sawtelle in the Westside region — chosen, in part, due to their high proportions of BIPOC residents and women workers living in zero-car households.

While BIPOC women face a multitude of barriers, Changing Lanes also reveals the critical role of income in determining women’s experiences of gender inequity. By gathering data pertaining to the unique experiences and needs of women navigating Los Angeles’ transportation system, LADOT has committed to addressing female residents’ needs at every stage of the planning and implementation process.

LADOT commissioned the report conducted by Kounkey Design Initiative (KDI) with support from Toole Design Group, UCLA-Affiliated Researchers, Cityfi, and Investing in Place. The report was produced in collaboration with community partners and co-authors Pacoima Beautiful and Watts Century Latino Organization.

The full results of the study are available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

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## About LADOT Transit

LADOT leads transportation planning, project delivery, and operations in the City of Los Angeles. We work together and collaborate to deliver a safe, livable, and well-run transportation system in the city and region. Our vision is for all people in Los Angeles to have access to safe and affordable transportation choices that treat everyone with dignity and support vibrant, inclusive communities.

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