

Staff Report on Street Takeovers - January 19, 2023 Commission meeting

LASD Response to Staff Report - January 13, 2023



AGENDA ITEM: 3a

January 19, 2023

DISCUSSION ITEM TITLE:

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Management Street Takeovers

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Los Angeles County Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission (Commission) routinely hears from the public regarding public safety concerns within the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's (LASD) jurisdiction. Several community members have contacted the Commission to voice their concern regarding hordes of people gathering at intersections throughout Los Angeles County to participate in reckless "street takeovers"¹ that significantly impact the public's safety. Some street takeovers have resulted in people dying. In 2022, various media coverage regarding street takeovers prompted the Commission to look into the issue. Commission staff recommends that LASD, in collaboration with appropriate departments and agencies, develop a Street Takeover Management Plan and publish quarterly reports on the progress.

BACKGROUND:

The gathering of people to illegally street race vehicles on public highways and similar settings dates back to the 1960s.² Since that time, individuals have modified various types of vehicles to increase the speed or performance of the vehicle's engine.³ Street racers use modified and sometimes standard vehicles to conduct street takeovers. People involved with street takeovers typically use social media and cellphone technology to setup⁴ a "flash mob" of hundreds of spectators at specific intersections, preventing the flow of traffic, to witness people driving at dangerously high speeds, doing donuts and/or performing stunts like drifting.⁵ Street takeovers have become a critical issue, which has resulted in property damage, bodily injury and loss of life.

¹ Hundreds gather at series of street takeovers overnight throughout Southland. By CBS on June 20, 2022. Retrieved from <https://www.cbsnews.com/losangeles/news/hundreds-gather-at-series-of-street-takeovers-overnight-throughout-southland/>

² Urban Dictionary. (2009). Street Racing. Retrieved from <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Street%20racing>

³ California Highway Patrol. (2022). Asian Pacific Islander Community Outreach-Illegal Street Racing. Retrieved from <https://www.chp.ca.gov/programs-services/programs/asian-pacific-islander-outreach-program/asian-pacific-islander-community-outreach-illegal-street-racing>

⁴ KGET. (2022). What is a street takeover and how is social media fueling the illegal activity? Retrieved from <https://www.kget.com/news/state-news/what-is-a-street-takeover-and-how-is-social-media-fueling-the-illegal-activity/>

⁵ KTLA. (2022). What is a street takeover and how is social media fueling the illegal activity? Retrieved from <https://ktla.com/news/local-news/what-is-a-street-takeover-and-how-is-social-media-fueling-the-illegal-activity/>

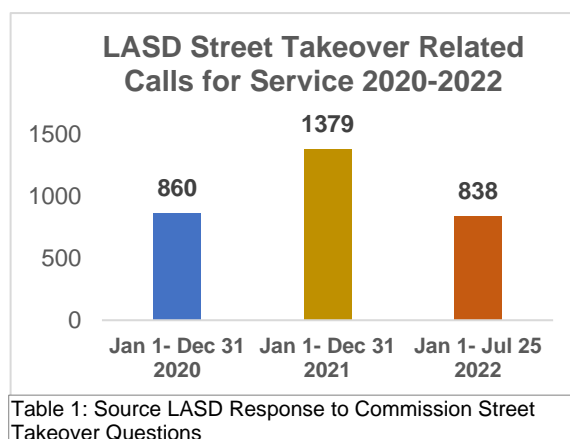
Street Takeover Prevalence in Los Angeles County

There are more than 6.3 million registered vehicles⁶ in Los Angeles County. In 2005, the Board of Supervisors (Board) adopted Los Angeles County Code Chapter 13.82-Street Racing-Motor Vehicle Seizure and Forfeiture⁷ in response to residents complaining about the nuisance and danger created by vehicles with modified exhaust systems in speeding contests in their neighborhoods. These events were so widely attended by spectators that the Board also adopted Chapter 13.46-Spectators at Illegal Motor Vehicle Speed Contests and Exhibitions of Speed,⁸ making it unlawful to knowingly be present as a spectator or where preparations are being made for such events. The penalties for violations of this ordinance constitute a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine not to exceed \$500, or imprisonment not to exceed six months in jail, or both.

From January 1, 2020 to July 25, 2022, LASD reported receiving nearly 3,100 calls for service that pertain to or reference activity that disrupts, impedes, or prevents the normal use of public roadways, intersections, and/or streets, which are also referred to as “street takeovers.” (Table 1)

Between 2020 and 2021, LASD data shows there has been more than a 60% increase in calls for service pertaining to street takeover related activities. This increase appears consistent with the media’s coverage of street racers dangerously drifting close to spectators who watch and cheer.

The frequent occurrence of street takeovers has impacted the community in many ways. On June 14, 2022, the Board approved a reward for information leading to the capture and conviction of the person(s) who murdered Javier Carachure Menchaca and Juan Antonio Orozco⁹ at a street takeover in the City of Compton. A month later, on July 9, 2022, thousands of people turned out for the grand opening of the Sixth Street Viaduct, a replacement bridge which includes pedestrian and bike lanes.¹⁰ By July 18, 2022, the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD)



⁶ Los Angeles Almanac. (2022). Motor Vehicles Registrations Los Angeles. Retrieved from <http://www.laalmanac.com/transport/tr02.php>

⁷ Los Angeles County Municipal Code. (2022). Chapter 13.82-Street Racing-Motor Vehicle Seizure and Forfeiture. Retrieved from https://library.municode.com/ca/los_angeles_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT13PUPEMOWE_DIV10MOVESEFO_CH13.82STRAOTVESEFO

⁸ L.A. County Municipal Code. (2022). Chapter 13.46-Spectators at Illegal Motor Vehicle Speed Contests and Exhibits of Speed. Retrieved from https://library.municode.com/ca/los_angeles_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT13PUPEMOWE_DIV4OFAGPUPE_CH13.46SPILMOVESPCOEXSP_13.46.010PR

⁹ Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Statement of Proceedings & Minutes. (2022). Motion: Establish the Reward Offer in the Murder of Javier Carachure Menchaca and Juan Antonio Orozco. Retrieved from [169761.pdf \(lacounty.gov\)](https://www.lacounty.gov)

¹⁰ Los Angeles Daily News. (2022). L.A.’s Sixth Street Viaduct opens to a crowd of thousands, connecting Downtown and Boyle Heights. Retrieved from <https://www.dailynews.com/2022/07/09/l-a-s-sixth-street-viaduct-opens-to-a-crowd-of-thousands-connecting-downtown-and-boyle-heights/>

responded to a three-car crash on the Sixth Street Viaduct that was a result of an illegal street takeover.¹¹ The following month on August 15, 2022, street racers and spectators took over the intersection of West El Segundo Boulevard and South Figueroa Street in South Los Angeles and a large “flash mob” of people ransacked and looted the nearby 7-Eleven convenience store.¹²

On October 27, 2022, LASD deputies broke up a street takeover in Santa Fe Springs where spectators had lasers, there was loud cheering and one spectator was seen firing a blowtorch into the air.¹³ Most recently, Elyzza Guajaca died after being struck by a vehicle during a street takeover on Christmas day 2022.¹⁴

Individuals who participate in street takeovers say they are not hurting anyone and are merely having fun. However, at least six people have died during street takeovers in Los Angeles County since February 2022¹⁵ and street racers usually try to evade law enforcement in a reckless, negligent manner, which heightens the risk for more property damage or bodily injury. These are only a few examples of how prevalent street takeovers have become and the impact it's had on public safety.

LASD Policy and Attempts to Eliminate Street Takeovers

LASD's involvement with street takeovers has been generally reactive: street takeover incidents are handled as calls for service are received. The LASD Risk Management Bureau Traffic Services Detail (TSD) and the California Highway Patrol (CHP) provide recommendations to LASD's patrol personnel regarding best practices when responding to street takeover calls. Currently, LASD does not have a specific policy addressing street racing or takeovers; however, it is in the process of drafting a policy and has requested funding for the creation of a task force.¹⁶ In the interim, the procedures and guidelines used by LASD when dealing with street takeovers include,¹⁷ but are not limited to:

¹¹ FOX11 Los Angeles. (2022). 3-car crash reportedly caused by illegal street takeover on Sixth Street bridge. Retrieved from <https://www.foxla.com/news/sixth-street-bridge-becoming-a-hot-spot-for-illegal-street-takeovers>

¹² LA Weekly. (2022). Video: 7-Eleven Hit by Destructive 'Flash Mob' After Street Takeover. Retrieved from <https://www.laweekly.com/video-7-eleven-hit-by-destructive-flash-mob-after-street-takeover/>

¹³ KTLA. (2022). Police break up 3 street takeovers in L.A. area, including one involving a blowtorch. Retrieved from <https://ktla.com/news/local-news/spectator-fires-torch-as-sideshow-drivers-takeover-intersection-in-santa-fe-springs/>

¹⁴ FOX11 Los Angeles. (2022). Deadly LA street takeover: New video released as search continues for hit-and-run driver. Retrieved from <https://www.foxla.com/news/deadly-los-angeles-street-takeover-nursing-student-killed-investigation-details>

¹⁵ Yahoo!News. (2022). Inside L.A.'s deadly street takeover scene: 'A scene of lawlessness'. Retrieved from <https://news.yahoo.com/inside-l-deadly-street-takeover-120002964.html>

¹⁶ LASD Email confirming no policy on 11.18.2022 Retrieved from <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/StreetTakeoverReport-LASDEmailconfirmingnopolicy11.18.2022.pdf>

¹⁷ LASD Letter regarding Street Takeovers. 8.4.2022. Retrieved from <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/StreetTakeoverReport-LASDLetterStreetTakeovers8.4.2022.pdf>

- a. In order to employ a coordinated response to stop the illegal activity and disperse the crowd, deputies are instructed to wait for sufficient units to arrive prior to engaging the crowd. Crowd size is a governing factor whether to wait for other units;
- b. Absent exigent circumstances under LASD's vehicle pursuit guidelines, deputies are prohibited from pursuing vehicles involved in street takeovers solely for traffic violations;
- c. TSD assists stations with investigations of all traffic related fatal collisions; and
- d. TSD provides all formal traffic-related training, develops traffic-related policies and procedures, collects, and disseminates LASD's traffic statistics, and maintains communication with other traffic agencies.

LASD's procedure when dealing with street takeovers is to rely on the response time and availability of patrol deputies from the 23 LASD Patrol Stations.¹⁸ This is unlike the CHP and LAPD, which maintain small units specifically dedicated to street racing and street takeovers.

Overview of Other Agencies Policies and Efforts to Address Street Takeovers

Street racers and spectators are showing up throughout the nation in vast numbers, taking over streets and wreaking havoc in communities. State and local agencies have attempted to address street takeovers in various forms.

The CHP was created in 1929 to provide uniform traffic law enforcement throughout the State of California, with the mission of providing the highest level of safety, service, and security.¹⁹ CHP currently provides assistance to allied agencies such as LASD and LAPD²⁰ related to street takeovers, but they do not have a policy on street takeovers.²¹ CHP is aware of the aggressive driving and excessive speeds used by street racers during street takeovers and shares the community's concern. On October 8, 2019, CHP issued a press release advising that they had received a \$1.5 million federally funded grant for the *Regulate Aggressive Driving and Reduce Speed (RADARS) VI program* and that the goal of RADARS VI in part would focus on street racing and sideshow activities.²² On October 11, 2021, CHP issued another press release advising that

¹⁸ LASD. (2022). Patrol Stations. Retrieved from <https://lasd.org/stations/>

¹⁹ California Highway Patrol. (2022). About Us. Retrieved from <https://www.chp.ca.gov/home/about-us>

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ CHP email stating there is no policy. 12.4.2022. Retrieved from <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/StreetTakeoverReport-CHPEmailnopolicy12.4.2022.pdf>

²² California Highway Patrol. (2019). Grant Will Help CHP Address Speed, Aggressive Driving, And Street Racing. Retrieved from <https://www.chp.ca.gov/PressReleases/Pages/GRANT-WILL-HELP-CHP-ADDRESS-SPEED-.aspx>

the RADARS grant funds were used to conduct enhanced speed enforcement operations and collaborate with local law enforcement agencies to create street racing and sideshow task forces, and conduct social media campaigns to educate the public about street racing.²³

In the first half of 2021, LAPD data reflected a reported 500 street racing sideshows in the City of Los Angeles, which was an increase of 205 sideshows compared to the same time in 2020.²⁴ On April 2, 2021, LAPD issued Transit Services Bureau Notice 8.1 on Street Racing Takeover Best Practices²⁵ with the purpose of preparing personnel to effectively and safely respond to illegal street takeovers and explain enforcement and/or disruption tactics. Some of the key operational response measures that LAPD identified included: Incident Commander should gather intelligence, establish objectives, assemble resources, isolate the area, and implement a coordinated response. The existence of such a policy contributed to LAPD's August 2022 two-day operation to crack down on illegal street takeovers where 40 arrests were made, 34 cars were impounded, 82 citations were issued, and LAPD shutdown numerous street takeovers before they started.²⁶

In February 2021, the City of Anaheim Police Department recommended that the City Council adopt an Ordinance prohibiting participation in or being a spectator at street racing or reckless exhibition events.²⁷ The City of Anaheim adopted the Ordinance prohibiting street races and reckless driving exhibitions and made a violation of section 14.070.010, punishable as a misdemeanor or an infraction at the discretion of the City Attorney.²⁸

In early August 2022, the reckless driving behaviors of street racers and the large crowd of spectators it draws led community members in the City of Compton to submit a proposal to use Botts' Dots (raised pavement markers named after Caltrans engineer Elbert Dysart Botts) at street intersections to stop the street racers tires from spinning (burning rubber) and reduce the

²³ California Highway Patrol. (2021). Grant Helps CHP Focus On Aggressive Driving Behaviors. Retrieved from <https://www.chp.ca.gov/PressReleases/Pages/GRANT-HELPS-CHP-FOCUS-ON-AGGRESSIVE-DRIVING-BEHAVIORS.aspx>

²⁴ Senator Henry Stern Representing Senate District 27. (2022). Assembly Passes SB 1472 – Ryan's Law to Protect California from Dangerous Speeding, Street Racing, and Side Shows. Retrieved from <https://sd27.senate.ca.gov/news/20220823-assembly-passes-sb-1472-ryan%E2%80%99s-law-protect-california-dangerous-speeding-street-racing>

²⁵ LAPD Best Practices on Street Takeovers. 4.2.2021. Retrieved from <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/StreetTakeoverReport-LAPDStreetTakeoversbestpractices4.2.2021.pdf>

²⁶ FOX11 Los Angeles. (2022). 40 arrests made in LA street takeover crackdown: LAPD. Retrieved from <https://www.foxla.com/news/lapd-la-street-takeover-crackdown-arrests>

²⁷ City of Anaheim. (2021). City Council Agenda Report: Ordinance Prohibiting Participating In, or Being a Spectator At, A Street Race or Reckless Driving Exhibition (Second Reading). Retrieved from https://local.anaheim.net/docs_agend/questys_pub/29095/29125/29126/29274/29278/Staff%20Report29278.pdf

²⁸ City of Anaheim. (2020). Ordinance 14.70.010-Street Races and Reckless Diving Exhibitions Prohibited. Retrieved from https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/anaheim/latest/anaheim_ca/0-0-0-78774

likelihood of doing “donuts” and tearing up streets and nearby property.²⁹ Despite the City of Compton spending over \$4,000 for the installation³⁰ of Botts’ Dots at intersections, the street racers evaded their preventive measures and conducted another street takeover on August 21, 2022.³¹ Then on August 29, 2022, LASD was in the City of Compton to prevent street takeovers by strictly enforcing Vehicle Code Laws and towing vehicles for violations such as speeding and having illegal modifications.³²

Angelino Heights was one of the first suburbs in Los Angeles³³ and has impressive Victorian landmarks that grab the attention of many individuals including that of people in the film industry. In 2001, the Fast and Furious franchise introduced a character who became enamored with the street racing world he was sent to abolish.³⁴ The franchise has continued making street racing films grossing over \$6.6 billion so far³⁵ and is currently filming their 10th movie that is scheduled for release in 2023.³⁶ Cody Walker (brother of franchise actor Paul Walker, who died in a single-car crash) and Sung Kang who appeared in multiple franchise entries have recently been featured in a public service announcement (PSA) for the Orange County District Attorney to warn viewers of the dangers of illegal street racing.³⁷ However, it is unknown if the franchise has contributed to the development of the PSAs, other forms of educational information on the dangers of street racing, or invested in communities that have been impacted by street racing. On August 26, 2022, residents of Angelino Heights gathered to protest against the filming of the newest movie in their community as they believe it has increased street racing and related dangers in their neighborhood.^{38,39} Residents say that street racers conduct illegal antics at all hours of the day and night, endangering lives and leaving circular skid marks from doing donuts

²⁹ ABC7. (2022). Compton installs city's first set of Botts' Dots in hopes of deterring street takeovers. Retrieved from <https://abc7.com/compton-botts-dots-street-takeovers-sideshows/12131018/>

³⁰ KTLA5. (2022). Compton hoping 'Botts' Dots' will stop street takeovers. Retrieved from <https://ktla.com/news/local-news/compton-hoping-botts-dots-will-curb-street-takeovers/>

³¹ ABC7. (2022). Street takeovers continue in Compton despite Botts' Dots meant to prevent them. Retrieved from <https://abc7.com/compton-street-takeovers-botts-dots-caught-on-video/12153290/>

³² LASDHQ Twitter. (August 29, 2022) Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/LASDHQ/status/1564292392601014272?s=20&t=LASiJ3crxclnAVhNcOF8A>

³³ Echo Park Historical Society. (2022). Angelino Heights. Retrieved from <http://historicechopark.org/history-landmarks/places-landmarks/angelino-heights/>

³⁴ IMDB. (2022). The Fast and the Furious. Retrieved from https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0232500/?ref_=ttls_li_tt

³⁵ Movieweb. (2022). These are the Highest-Grossing Movie Franchises of All Time. Retrieved from <https://movieweb.com/highest-grossing-movie-franchises/#:~:text=Looking%20back%20at%20the%20Fast,over%20%246.6%20billion%20so%20far.>

³⁶ Yahoo! Entertainment. (2022). How many 'Fast and Furious' movies are there? Here's the full list of film franchise. Retrieved from <https://www.yahoo.com/entertainment/many-fast-furious-movies-heres-100119857.html>

³⁷ People. (2022). Paul Walker's Brother Code, 'Fast and Furious' Star Sung Kang Appear in PSA Against Street Racing. Retrieved from <https://people.com/movies/paul-walkers-brother-cody-fast-and-furious-star-sung-kang-appear-in-psa-against-street-racing/>

³⁸ MSN. (2022). Residents fed up with street takeovers protest “Fast & Furious” filming in Angelino Heights. Retrieved from <https://www.msn.com/en-us/movies/news/residents-fed-up-with-street-takeovers-set-to-protest-fast-26-furious-filming-in-angelino-heights/ar-AA118U0u>

³⁹ Reddit. (2022). Flyer: Angelino Heights Street Racing Protest. Retrieved from https://www.reddit.com/r/LosAngeles/comments/wwylfp/live_in_angelino_heights_and_came_home_to_this_in/

and swinging in the intersection.⁴⁰ The Angelino Heights community protests of the entertainment industry filming a street racing movie with modified vehicles in their neighborhood reflects residents innovative approach at mitigating street takeovers. Angeleno Heights residents have become tired of the impact that street takeovers have on the quality of their lives and have banded together in hopes of curbing street takeovers and racing outside of their homes by installing several cameras.⁴¹

Legislative Efforts to Address Street Takeovers

California legislators often become aware of issues such as street takeovers from impacted individuals and concerned residents. In the State of California, legislation starts as a concept and transitions through the legislative process on its way to potentially becoming law.⁴² Several legislators have taken steps to author and draft bills related to street racing and/or street takeovers that recently made their way through the California legislative process. Below is a quick overview of recent California State legislation regarding street takeovers:

- Assembly Bill 2546 (AB2546), introduced by Assembly Member Adrin Nazarian, relates to motor vehicle sideshows like speeding contests on highways or exhibitions of speed on a highway. This bill was to expand the definition of a sideshow to include other public places open to vehicle traffic and private property.
- Senate Bill 1472 (SB1472)-Ryan's Law, introduced by Senator Henry Stern, relates to manslaughter due to speeding and reckless driving. This bill was to specify a list of circumstances that may, based on the totality of the circumstances, constitute gross negligence for manslaughter, including, among other circumstances, when a person has participated in a sideshow.

On September 27, 2022, Governor Gavin Newsom announced that he signed SB1472 into law.⁴³

RECOMMENDATION/CONCLUSION:

On September 7, 2022, the Commission hosted the Street Takeovers: Impacting Public Safety conference. The panel of subject matter experts included California Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian, LASD Sergeant Michael Downing, CHP Officer Chris Baldonado, and Street

⁴⁰ CNN. (2022). From burning rubber to street racing, residents are 'Furious' about the influences of a movie franchise on the safety of their Los Angeles neighborhood. Retrieved from <https://www.cnn.com/2022/09/03/us/los-angeles-street-racing-elam/index.html>

⁴¹ Yahoo!News. (2022). Only On: Angeleno Heights residents taking steps to curb street takeovers outside their homes. Retrieved from <https://news.yahoo.com/only-angeleno-heights-residents-taking-013912568.html>

⁴² California Legislative Information. (2016). Legislative Process. Retrieved from <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/bil2lawx.html>

⁴³ Office of Governor Gavin Newsom. (2022). Governor Newsom Issues Legislative Update 9.27.22. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.ca.gov/2022/09/27/governor-newsom-issues-legislative-update-9-27-22/>

Racing Kills (SRK) Executive Director Lili Trujillo. The panel discussed measures to monitor and eliminate public safety concerns associated with street takeovers. The Commission accepted written public comments prior to and during the conference and took live questions.

On September 22, 2022, LASD joined representatives from the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office, CHP, LAPD, and community representatives from SRK at Irwindale Speedway to urge street racers to end the dangerous and illegal practice of racing on public streets and instead consider racing at venue designed for that purpose like Irwindale Speedway, Auto Club Speedway or Apple Valley Speedway. The group also advised street racers that if they are caught, their car will be impounded and they will receive a citation.^{44,45,46} LASD later released a YouTube Public Service Announcement video on *Street Racing*, reiterating to street racers to use safe and legal racing venues such as Irwindale Speedway.⁴⁷

After reviewing and analyzing data and the documents used to produce this staff report, and for the reasons above-mentioned, the Commission should adopt the recommendations below to *Request the Initiation of the Los Angeles County Street Takeover Management Plan*, and is outlined below:

1. LASD should develop a Street Takeover Management Plan in collaboration with the Office of Inspector General, District Attorney's Office, Department of Public Health's Office of Violence Prevention, Department of Public Works, California Highway Patrol, Los Angeles Police Department, Los Angeles County Highway Safety Commission, Los Angeles County Youth Commission, representatives from Los Angeles County contract cities and representative(s) from street racing prevention community-based organization(s) and provide a written report back to the Commission within 90 days on the status of that plan;
2. LASD should submit a written quarterly report to the Commission on street takeover related public safety activities that includes, but not limited to:
 - a. Street takeover traffic statistics
 - b. Brief overview of street takeover related crimes

⁴⁴ LASD. (2022). Street Racing. Retrieved from <https://lasd.org/street-racing/>

⁴⁵ ABC. (2022). In efforts to curb street takeovers and racing, LA County law enforcement offer safe alternative. Retrieved from <https://abc7.com/street-takeovers-los-angeles-county-alternatives-irwindale-speedway/12252081/>

⁴⁶ Whittier Daily News. (2022). LA Sheriff, District Attorney, CHP and LAPD urge drivers to end street racing. Retrieved from <https://www.whittierdailynews.com/2022/09/22/la-sheriff-district-attorney-chp-and-lapd-urge-drivers-to-end-tragedy-haunted-street-racing/>

⁴⁷ YouTube. (2022). LASD Street Racing-Keep it safe. Keep it legal. Keep it on the track. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5-O5g81mWcU>

- c. Collaborative efforts with other traffic/law enforcement agencies
- d. Brief overview of street takeover elimination measures employed

GUEST SPEAKERS:

- Michael Downing, Sergeant, LASD
- Aaron Percy, Traffic Investigator, LASD
- Chris Baldonado, CHP
- Lili Trujillo Puckett, Executive Director, Street Racing Kills

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COC:tj



OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

HALL OF JUSTICE

ROBERT G. LUNA, SHERIFF



January 13, 2023

Brian K. Williams, Executive Director
Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission
World Trade Center
350 South Figueroa, Suite 288
Los Angeles, California 90071

Dear Mr. Williams:

LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT RESPONSE TO CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT COMMISSION STAFF REPORTS

Thank you for the Civilian Oversight Commission's staff reports regarding the Conditions of Confinement in our custody facilities, and management of "Street Takeovers." These two issues are of great concern for the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) and the communities we serve. The Department concurs in the Commission's overall goal that there can and should be more transparency on these issues, and that the Department will endeavor to comply with their request for periodic data disclosures.

CONDITIONS OF CONFINEMENT

The Civilian Oversight Commission (COC) recommends that the Department, along with the Department of Health Services Correctional Health Services (CHS), develop a written quarterly report on LASD's Conditions of Confinement, including information specified by the COC. The Department will explore the feasibility of providing a quarterly report, however, there are some challenges with including some of the COC's recommended information for the report, which are included below.

Below is a list of areas the COC recommends for inclusion in the proposed quarterly report, along with a response from LASD on what information is available and can be provided and what information is not readily available.

211 WEST TEMPLE STREET, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012

A Tradition of Service
— Since 1850 —

COC Recommendations for Proposed Quarterly Report:

- Include LASD's efforts to reduce the jail population.

LASD RESPONSE: LASD utilizes methods such as; raising the minimum bail admittance from 25K to 50K, accelerating releases for all inmates by 30 days using CA Penal Code 4024.1, coordinating with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and State Hospitals for state inmate prison transfers, lowering release thresholds for non-violent, non-serious, non-sexual charges, and collaborating on felony bail deviation for the release of medically vulnerable individuals due to COVID-19 in an effort to reduce the jail population. The Department collects such information, and it can be included in the proposed report.

- Include any processing delays and overcrowding issues and efforts to resolve them.

LASD RESPONSE: LASD continues to reassess the above efforts and develop other strategies to reduce our current jail population, address overcrowding, and streamline processing procedures. The Department collects such information, and it can be included in the proposed report.

- Include any changes in the plan to resolve overcrowding in the jail system.

LASD RESPONSE: Ongoing reassessments are conducted to identify appropriate housing and to mitigate any unnecessary operational delays. The Department collects such information, and it can be included in the proposed report.

- Include number of grievances received related to processing delays and overcrowding, and conditions of confinement.

LASD RESPONSE: Currently, LASD's databases do not specifically capture grievances related to "processing delays" or "overcrowding in the jails" however the Department has submitted a funding request for a more modern jail management system, which can include these data points.

- Include number of Custody Facility Town Hall meetings conducted by facility, the issues derived from each meeting, and the status resolutions documented.

LASD RESPONSE: As of October 31, 2022, Custody Division has held 3,659 Town Hall Meetings in 2020, 4,044 in 2021, and 3,074 in 2022. This statistical information is available. Specific issues addressed in Town Hall Meetings can be made available.

- Include LASD and CHS efforts to mitigate transmission of communicable diseases.

LASD RESPONSE: LASD continues to seek guidance and implements recommendations provided by the Centers for Disease Control and the County's Department of Public Health. The Department collects such information, and it can be included in the proposed report.

- Include data on the number of incarcerated people with communicable diseases, including by communicable disease type, demographic data, and facility location.

LASD RESPONSE: This information is not captured by LASD and is only available from CHS. CHS has not yet been consulted on this.

- Include data on the number of vaccinations administered, by disease type and demographic data.

LASD RESPONSE: This information is not captured by LASD and is only available from CHS. CHS has not yet been consulted on this.

- Include data on the number and demographics of pregnant people in-custody.

LASD RESPONSE: The demographics for current pregnant inmates are: Hispanic (12), African-American (5), White (5), Other (1), Total (23). This information is available.

- Include data on the number of in-custody births and outcomes, pregnancy terminations or miscarriages, and postpartum mothers (including access to baby bonding time);

LASD RESPONSE: This information is not captured by LASD and is only available from CHS. CHS has not yet been consulted on this.

- Include LASD efforts to release pregnant and postpartum people to the Office of Diversion and Reentry (ODR) or other community-based programs.

LASD RESPONSE: The LASD Community Transition Unit actively monitors and provides case management to our pregnant inmate population by visiting each individual on a weekly basis, offering services, and connecting them with ODR. The Department collects such information, and it can be included in the proposed report.

- Include data on the number and demographics of pregnant people released to the ODR or other community-based programs.

LASD RESPONSE: There were twenty-five ODR releases, and thirteen non-ODR community-based releases, related to pregnancy, for calendar year 2022. The Department collects such information, and it can be included in the proposed report.

Additional COC Recommendations:

- Request that LASD publish on the LASD public website, in accordance with Assembly Bill 2761, the annual In-Custody Deaths reports that LASD agreed to develop in collaboration with CHS and submit to the Commission by no later than the 2nd week of February of each year, effective 2023.

LASD RESPONSE: The Department has created the mechanism to track and post the required AB 2761 information on the Department's public website and is currently being posted.

- Request that LASD publish on the LASD public website the annual Homicide Investigations report and submit to the Commission by no later than the 2nd week of February of each year, effective 2023.

LASD RESPONSE: Department agrees that such a report can be prepared and will work with the commission on the precise contents, but respectfully requests additional time in which to provide the information.

MANAGEMENT OF STREET TAKEOVERS

The Civilian Oversight Commission (COC) recommends that the Department initiate a Los Angeles County Street Takeover Management Plan. Below is a list of the COC's recommendations for inclusion in the plan, along with updated information and responses from LASD.

- **RECOMMENDATION:** LASD should develop a Street Takeover Management Plan in collaboration with the Office of Inspector General, District Attorney's Office, Department of Public Health's Office of Violence Prevention, Department of Public Works, California Highway Patrol, Los Angeles Police Department, Los Angeles County Highway Safety Commission, Los Angeles County Youth Commission, representatives from Los Angeles County contract cities and representative(s) from street racing prevention community-based organization(s) and provide a written report back to the Commission within 90 days on the status of that plan;

LASD RESPONSE: LASD is currently evaluating the feasibility of creating a Street Takeover Task Force to address this emerging crime trend, which would include collaborating with the above stakeholders and creating a plan. Some challenges for the Department include funding for the potential task force. Current efforts to address Street Takeovers have been conducted through the California Office of Traffic and Safety (OTS) Grant Program, which allows for 3-4 street racing/takeover operations per grant period. Street Takeover operations under this grant are conducted by Risk Management Bureau's Traffic Services Detail (TSD). Additionally, some contract cities such as Industry, Bellflower, Paramount, Palmdale, and Lynwood, have approved the hiring of additional deputies on overtime, to help mitigate the street racing/takeover problem in their cities.

- **RECOMMENDATION:** LASD should submit a written quarterly report to the Commission on street takeover related public safety activities that includes, but not limited to; a. Street takeover traffic statistics, b. Brief overview of street takeover related crimes, c. Collaborative efforts with other traffic/law enforcement agencies, d. Brief overview of street takeover elimination measures employed.

LASD RESPONSE: The Department believes that the creation of a Street Takeover Task Force will provide the means to create a report on Street Takeover statistics, crimes, collaboration, and the measures employed. Additionally, the Department currently does not have the means to track this unique crime for statistical purposes, however the development of a specific designated statistical (stat) code has been proposed.

Should you have questions regarding our response please contact Chief Jason A. Skeen at (213) 229-3001.

Sincerely,



ROBERT G. LUNA
SHERIFF