



DAVID E. RYU
COUNCILMEMBER, FOURTH DISTRICT

April 17, 2018

City Attorney Mike Feuer
Office of the Los Angeles City Attorney
James K. Hahn City Hall East
200 North Main Street, 8th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear City Attorney,

I am writing you today to urge your office to explore filing suit against Waze, owned by Google LLC, a subsidiary of Alphabet, for creating a dangerous condition in the public right of way. After numerous attempts to reach a resolution with Waze for the threats to public safety and infrastructure caused by their mobile technology, it has become clear that any and all legal options should be considered.

Wayfinding technology such as Waze has grown increasingly popular with drivers. In 2015, Waze reported that it had about 2 million users in Greater Los Angeles, one of the app's most popular locations. This new kind of wayfinding technology promises users a faster commute by giving real-time traffic updates and alternate routes to traditional arteries. To achieve this, it can wreak undue havoc on traffic plans, residential communities, and the safety of the residents of Los Angeles. Ironically, many of these "short cuts", end up causing more traffic in a race-to-the-bottom effort to cut travel times by using small cut-through streets, leading drivers to make unsafe turns and often unpermitted traffic directions.

From Hollywood Hills, Hancock Park, Sherman Oaks, to Los Feliz, neighborhoods are experiencing significant congestion and speeding on roadways that were not designed as major arterials. For example, the quiet neighborhood of West Sherman Oaks Hills has become inundated with traffic as Waze directs commuters off the 405 Freeway and through narrow residential streets. In one case, a street designed for local use is sustaining over 650 cars an hour. This Waze-led congestion has upended carefully

City Attorney
April 17, 2018
Page 2

crafted traffic plans for a thoughtless commuting free-for-all, trapping residents in their driveways and leading to numerous accidents. The problem has grown faster than our Department of Transportation can get a handle on it. Every week, I receive calls from residents concerned and fearful about their safety.

LADOT has tried mitigation strategies such as new traffic signage, but this congestion starts and ends with wayfinding technology. Regardless, Waze and Google LLC have repeatedly failed to fix significant safety concerns raised by my office. I fully support advances in technology, particularly those applied to improving traffic congestion and traffic safety, but in this case, we have allowed the private sector to change the use and capacity of public roads. Waze and Google's involvement in this matter is key to any lasting solution, and should be secured by any means necessary.

After many years of trying to bring Waze to the table, it has become clear that this company refuses any responsibility for the traffic problems their app creates or the concerns of residents and City officials. I request that you assist the City Council in seeking reasonable solutions for the dangerous conditions on a public right of way created by Waze.

Sincerely,



David E. Ryu
Councilmember, District Four