

RESOLUTION NO. 20200611-051

WHEREAS, in 2012, the City of Austin adopted the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan which encourages, among other planning principles, “complete street design that includes features such as traffic calming elements, street trees, wide sidewalks, and pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access throughout Austin, considering the safety needs of people of all ages and abilities”; and

WHEREAS, Council next approved Resolution No. 20131212-080, directing the creation and implementation of a comprehensive Complete Streets policy with inclusive guidelines for harmonious multi-modal transportation; and

WHEREAS, Council Resolution No. 20170622-033 directed the City Manager to explore an annual Downtown Ciclovia that would temporarily close Congress Avenue from 11th Street to Mary Street for several hours on a weekend day to encourage multi-modal transportation and the convivial activation of public space; and

WHEREAS, in partnership with the Downtown Austin Alliance and community stakeholders, the City of Austin contracted with an urban design consultant team in 2018 to help articulate and enhance the vision for Congress Avenue from the Capitol to Riverside Drive; and

WHEREAS, after robust community engagement, the Congress Avenue planning process identified protected bike lanes as a strategy for balancing mobility and connectivity options along this critical corridor; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, Council approved Resolution No. 20190619-186, initiating a shared streets pilot on Rainey Street to improve safety and mobility in this area on the weekends; and

WHEREAS, in response to COVID-19, Austin Transportation Department worked closely with Austin Public Health and Parks and Recreation Department to close one lane on Pleasant Valley Road over the Longhorn Dam and a portion of Riverside Drive between South 1st Street and Lee Barton Drive to accommodate increased demand and limited space for bikes and pedestrians who seek safe and socially-distanced spaces near urban trails; and

WHEREAS, Council approved Resolution No. 20200507-062 directing the City Manager to create a “Healthy Streets” initiative to facilitate safe, socially-distanced outdoor exercise and active transportation on neighborhood streets; and

WHEREAS, in May of 2020, the Council received a letter from thirty organizations, as well as a petition signed by 1,100 individuals, that advocated for the creation of temporary protected bicycle lanes on Congress Avenue north of Riverside Drive to the State Capitol; and

WHEREAS, such temporary infrastructure would allow individuals to bike more safely Downtown, particularly on the Congress Avenue Bridge where traffic speeds are high and bicycle riding on the sidewalk does not allow for social distancing and creates possible conflicts for pedestrians; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

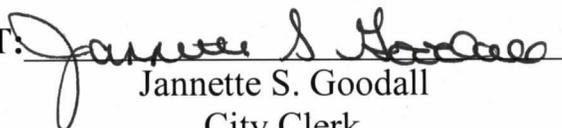
BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The City Council directs the City Manager to work with Downtown businesses and stakeholders to swiftly establish temporary northbound and southbound protected bike lanes on Congress Avenue north of Riverside Drive to the maximum extent possible considering the safety and access needs of all users as well as the project costs and available funding. Such stakeholders should include Downtown businesses, the Downtown Austin Alliance, Bike Austin, and the Downtown Austin Neighborhood Association. The City Manager is directed to complete this work no later than June 30, 2020.

The City Manager is directed to report to Council for it to consider options for how to wind-down or permanently retain this temporary activation when social distancing is no longer needed in response to COVID-19.

ADOPTED: June 11, 2020

ATTEST:


Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk