BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Urban Transportation Commission

Recommendation Number 20220607-002: Bike Lane Blockage Program

WHEREAS, creating a physical and cultural environment in which safe bicycle riding is critical to a successful transportation system. To wit,

- Widespread bicycle use is a critical component in the effort to reach the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan goal of 50/50 transit mode share
- In multiple studies and surveys, a key reason people give for not choosing to bicycle more often is the real and perceived dangers created by a lack of safe routes
- Separated, protected, and obstruction-free bike lanes are the number one method to ensure the safety of users of bicycles, scooters, and other active transportation methods
- The 10s of million of dollars allocated by 2020's Prop B active transportation bond is effectively wasted when bike lanes are blocked
- Getting more people on bikes more regularly effectively increases road capacity, reduces pollution, fights climate change, and increases joy

WHEREAS, the city of Austin and other cities already use both citizen input and photo evidence to initiate citations, including such examples as

- Austin Transportation, in partnership with Austin Police Department, trains volunteers to issue citations and warnings for illegally parked vehicles in designated accessible parking spaces
  - https://www.austintexas.gov/department/accessible-parking-enforcement-program
- New York City's successful Clean Air/Idling Truck program
  - https://jalopnik.com/bounty-hunters-seek-out-idling-trucks-in-nyc-for-a-cut-1848679863
  - https://www.cnbc.com/2022/03/31/make-87point50-in-3-minutes-by-reporting-idling-trucks-in-new-york-city.html
- Additional Legislative examples
  - https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4699482&GUID=0D2AA2FF-6328-4781-ABF1-8D789CB876A8
- Unmanned speed cameras
- Unmanned red light cameras
- Unmanned school bus camera

WHEREAS, there are multiple desirable and attainable outcomes from this program, including

- Fewer obstructed bike lanes, resulting in safer, more usable bike lanes, which encourages more widespread use of bike lanes by ordinary everyday bicycle and other micro-mobility users
- Additional bike lane users reduces overall congestion by taking some drivers off the road, and getting the city closer to its ASMP mode-share goals
- A new revenue stream for the city
- A more invested community of citizens, as they can both benefit from and understand how to improve their bicycling infrastructure

THEREFORE,
BE IT RESOLVED, the Urban Transportation Commission recommends the Mobility Committee and Council members, in order to make citations for blocking a bike lane a more effective and functional disincentive, pursue the follow actions:

- to alter any relevant ordinances requiring a posted sign explicitly making parking in the bike lane a citable offense, and instead to create as a default the reverse position of sanctioned parking in a bike lane ONLY where it is explicitly posted as allowed
- to create and implement any required ordinance and awareness campaign that no bike lanes are to be blocked by vehicle unless explicitly posted as allowed, including bike lanes demarcated by paint, flex posts, bollards, curbs, planters or any other system
- to engage in a city-wide awareness campaign to create a general common knowledge that blocking a bike line will result in a citation, except where explicitly allowed by posted signage.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Urban Transportation Commission recommends the Mobility Committee and Council members undertake to develop and implement a program which provides to any individual using the 3-1-1 mobile application and system to provide current photo evidence of a vehicle blocking a bike lane to receive 25% of the revenue collected by the city for that citation issued;

Date of Approval: June 7th 2022

Record of the vote: 7-0 vote with Commissioners Wheeler, Driscoll and Ramos absent

Attest: Christopher Parks *Christopher Parks*