

City of Austin Bicycle Advisory Council Recommendation
Recommendation Number 20220920-004: Bike Lane Blockage Program

Bike Lane Blockage Program

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Bicycle Advisory Council is to advise the City of Austin and other jurisdictions on all matters relating to the use of the bicycle, bicycle infrastructure, and individuals of all ages and abilities who utilize bicycles;

WHEREAS, the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan recognizes that “stronger enforcement of our parking regulations, whether a car has overstayed a meter, is parked in a travel or bicycle lane, or is illegally occupying an accessible space, is necessary to further help shift travel preferences from drive-alone trips to multimodal travel;”

WHEREAS, action items in the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan call on the City of Austin to “reduce the number of conflicts between parking and bicycle lanes,” “identify locations along the Bicycle Priority Network that do not have appropriate parking restriction signage and implement signage to prevent parking in bicycle facilities,” and create a “program to allow community enforcement of accessible parking violations;”

WHEREAS, in the last three months only 21% of Austin 3-1-1 bike lane blockage complaints have closed with a citation, with 67.5% of complaints being closed because the vehicle moved before parking enforcement arrived on the scene¹;

WHEREAS, on June 7, 2022, the Urban Transportation Commission recommended the Austin Mobility Committee and City Council “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 issued²”;

WHEREAS, in the aforementioned Urban Transportation Commission meeting, the commission further recommended that the Austin Mobility Committee and City Council “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 allowed³”;

WHEREAS, the Austin City Council Mobility Committee discussed the Urban Transportation Commission’s recommendation in a meeting on September 8th, 2022; AND

¹http://311.austintexas.gov/?q=%22bike+lane%22+&service_id=5dd44579cb81403c3a8c3477&utf8=%E2%9C%93

² <https://www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=385377>

³ *ibid.*

WHEREAS, this summer 3-year-old Elizabeth Grace Shambrook was killed while riding in a child seat on her mother's bike, when a truck was blocking the bike lane leaving her and her mother in the path of a semi-truck, which dragged Elizabeth Grace Shambrook 20 ft down the road⁴;

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED, the Bicycle Advisory Council supports the Urban Transportation Commission's recommendation to the Austin Mobility Committee and City Council to develop and implement a program that allows any individual using the 3-1-1 mobile application to provide photo evidence of a vehicle blocking a bike lane to receive 25% of the fines collected by the city for the citations issued, and alter relevant ordinances to ensure parking in the bike lane is only allowed if it is explicitly posted;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Bicycle Advisory Council recommends the Mobility Committee and City Council take action to ensure bike lane parking violations can be enforced using a photo and information submitted by an Austin 3-1-1 App user or Online Service Request user, and do not require a physical confirmation from code or peace officers;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Bicycle Advisory Council recommends the Mobility Committee and City Council direct City of Austin staff to approach bike lane parking violations as a public safety concern paramount to achieving Vision Zero and not as a traffic management issue;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Bicycle Advisory Council recommends the Mobility Committee and City Council create sanctions for City of Austin employees parking in the bike lane, including peace officers not responding to an emergency; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Bicycle Advisory Council recommends the Austin Transportation Department evaluate existing statutes and directives from the City Manager to determine if any of these actions may be taken by the department immediately.

Date: September 20th, 2022

Vote: 7-0 vote with members Johanson, Sobhani and Braun absent.

Attest: Christopher Parks, Staff Liaison



Curtis Rogers, BAC Chair



Les Case, BAC Vice chair

⁴ <https://chicago.suntimes.com/news/2022/6/9/23161361/uptown-child-bicycle-crash-semi>