



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Urban Transportation Commission

Recommendation 20230711-004: Bike Lane Blockage

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, on June 7, 2022, the Urban Transportation Commission issued a [recommendation](#) to 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 Issued”;

WHEREAS, the Austin City Council Mobility Committee [discussed](#) the Urban Transportation Commission’s recommendation in a meeting on September 8, 2022;

WHEREAS, on September 20, 2022 the Bicycle Advisory Council issued a [recommendation](#) supporting the aforementioned Urban Transportation Commission recommendation and further recommending that “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”;

WHEREAS, the aforementioned Bicycle Advisory Council recommendation noted that the current system of residents reporting incidents to 3-1-1 and then sending officers to respond was resulting in only 21% of bike lane blockage complaints closing with a citation and 67.5% of complaints being closed because the vehicle moved before parking enforcement arrived on the scene;

WHEREAS, an [analysis](#) of 3-1-1 complaints from April 8 - June 14, 2023, noted that the current system is still producing poor results with only 12.5% of complaints resulting in citations and 63% of complaints closed because the vehicle moved before parking enforcement arrived on the scene;

WHEREAS, on December 8, 2022, then Interim Director of Austin Transportation Richard Mendoza, and Austin Police Chief Joseph Chacon jointly authored a [memo](#) to the City Council which concluded that State Law allowed civilian enforcement of non-moving violations, such as parking enforcement; and

WHEREAS, on June 20, 2023, the Bicycle Advisory Council issued a recommendation with identical action items to the recommendation below.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Urban Transportation Commission recommends that the Mobility Committee and City Council adopt at least one of the following measures to improve the safety of bicyclists by ensuring bike lane parking violations are enforced:

- i. Develop and implement a program that allows bike lane parking violations to 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, regardless of whether the person submitting the photo and information receives 25% of the revenue collected by the city for that citation;
- ii. Develop and implement a Volunteer Bike Lane Enforcement Program either modeled off of, or as an expansion of, the existing Accessible Parking Enforcement Program where the Austin Department of Transportation and Public Works, in partnership with

Austin Police Department, can train volunteers to issue citations and warnings for illegally parked vehicles in bike lanes; and

iii. Designate multiple Transportation Mobility Service Officers on each shift who will travel by bicycle and primarily focus on issuing citations and warnings for illegally parked vehicles in bike lanes.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Urban Transportation Commission recommends that the Mobility Committee and City Council adopt the following supplementary policies to further enhance the safety of bicyclists:

i . 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;

ii. Direct the Austin Department of Transportation and Public Works to update city bicycle maps to indicate where parking in the bike lane is allowed, either by a lack of signage or by specific signage allowing vehicles to park in the bike lane;

iii. Expand the Commercial Vehicle Loading Permit program citywide and clearly indicate that it is the City of Austin's preference that commercial vehicles block general travel lanes, not bike lanes or sidewalks, when two or more general travel lanes in one direction are available; and

iv. 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, that the Urban Transportation Commission recommends that if the if the Mobility Committee and City Council do not adopt any of the recommended measures to improve the safety of bicyclists by ensuring bike lane parking violations are enforced, that the City Council direct the Austin Department of Transportation and Public Works, the Austin Police Department, and the City Attorney to research options to reduce illegal parking in bike lanes and report back to the City Council by the end of the calendar year.

Motioned by: Commissioner Schumacher

Seconded by: Commissioner Somers

Date of Approval: July 11, 2023

Record of the vote: 6-0 vote with Commissioner Wheeler absent and Commissioner Smith off the dias

Attest: Christopher Parks, Staff Liaison