



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council Members

THROUGH: Robert Goode, P.E., Assistant City Manager

FROM: Richard Mendoza, P.E., Director, Transportation and Public Works *J. J. Dale FOR R. MENDOZA*

DATE: October 3, 2024

SUBJECT: **Staff Response - Supportive Actions to Prohibit Motor Vehicle Parking in Bikeways (Resolution No. 20240404-040)**

This memo serves as an update regarding supportive actions to prohibit drivers of motor vehicles from parking in bikeways as required by Resolution No. [20240404-040](#). Transportation and Public Works (TPW) staff are specifically responding to the following components of the resolution: (a) recommended visual cues for unprotected bike lanes, including cost estimates, (b) suggestion for Transportation Mobility Service Officer (TMSO) e-bike fleets, also including cost estimates and recommended funding sources, and (c) updates on analysis for both the volunteer bike lane enforcement program and first-time offense forgiveness program.

Visual Cues for Unprotected Bike Lanes

Current City marking and sign standards for painted bicycle lanes call for an arrow marking every 250 feet and a bicycle symbol and arrow every 1,000 feet, and again after each intersection. Signage is installed as needed, with the goal of minimizing sign clutter but maximizing awareness of the on-street parking condition. This translates to a sign approximately every 250 feet in areas where parking demand may be high. These practices are supplemented through requests via Austin's 3-1-1 system where concerns for parking in bike lane issues prompt evaluation of additional markings and/or signs to manage persistent violations. Combined, this signage and marking configuration, with adjustments as needed, provides a cost-effective approach to installing and maintaining bike lanes citywide with consistent visual cues to all street users.

In anticipation of potential City code changes to prohibit parking in bike lanes, streets with legacy bike lanes that currently allow on-street parking are being evaluated for parking demand, speed, and volume of motor vehicles as well as other contextual factors. In some areas, modification of street space will be necessary to best manage on-street parking demand with parking-free bike lanes. TPW conducts public engagement to best understand proposed modifications with the communities served by these streets. Once street design changes are confirmed, visual cues consistent with the City's current practices used to mark and sign bike lanes and on-street parking will be implemented. Cost estimates depend on the

context of the street and the outcome of the public process and are anticipated to range from \$50,000 to \$250,000, including staff time as well as the fabrication and installation of signs and markings.

Electric Bicycle Fleet for Enforcement

TPW currently utilizes electric parking enforcement vehicles that are equipped with safety lights that convey to the motoring public that a non-standard activity is underway and to exercise caution. These vehicles can also ensure broad coverage of enforcement services to legacy bike lanes that are outside of the core downtown. In the downtown area, Mobility Service Officers patrol by vehicle and on foot, regularly monitoring bike lanes. At this time, TPW does not anticipate that a shift to bike enforcement would significantly enhance bike lane enforcement and does not recommend utilizing a bike fleet.

Volunteer Bike Lane Enforcement Program

Section 681.0101 of the Texas Transportation Code enabled the City of Austin to create the Accessible Parking Enforcement Program, as it relates to that chapter of code regarding people with disabilities. Without specific enabling legislation for appointing people to enforce bicycle lane infractions, the City may be at risk of legal challenges for any citations issued under a new program as proposed in the resolution. In addition, the parking enforcement officer role is demanding and at times situations may become confrontational with some parking offenders, requiring a high level of training to ensure consistency while maintaining decorum and professionalism. Volunteers may be exposed to unsafe conditions with insufficient protective safeguards that uniformed City employees have at their disposal. After careful consideration, TPW does not recommend volunteers for bike lane parking enforcement.

With the recent adoption of the FY2025 budget, City Council approved ten new Mobility Service Officers for TPW's Parking Enterprise Division. This action will allow TPW to dedicate staff daily to bike lane enforcement and effectively work towards achieving a higher level of driver compliance.

Bicycle Friendly Driver Training Program with Citation Forgiveness

Staff have researched existing programs in other cities, and early research on peer cities' programs do not indicate high participation rates or impactful outcomes. In addition, Municipal Court staff have stated that to accommodate a change that introduces the option for deferral of a first-time civil parking offense it will require significant reprogramming to backend software logic related to this case type. With Municipal Court's ongoing first phase of work to upgrade its case management software, it could take one to two years before any additional work could be delivered by their vendor. We plan to continue gathering information and aim to re-visit the potential for a program like this in the future.

Potential Code Changes and Next Steps

TPW staff will provide the next update at the October 17th Mobility Committee, focusing on proposed code amendments to City Code Chapters 12-3 and 12-5, and then will seek feedback from the Urban Transportation Commission Nov. 12th before bringing the code changes to City Council for adoption. TPW staff continue to develop other related concepts, such as public education campaigns, that could be launched after potential code changes are adopted by City Council. If you have additional questions, please contact me at 512-974-2488 or richardv.mendoza@austintexas.gov.

cc: T.C. Broadnax, City Manager

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