



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Urban Transportation Commission

Recommendation Number 20241112-003: Bikeway Parking Prohibition and Parking Modernization Ordinance

WHEREAS, the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan includes action items to "reduce the number of conflicts between parking and bicycle lanes" and "prevent parking in bicycle facilities,";

WHEREAS, the 2023 Bicycle Plan recommends "a city-wide ordinance that prohibits parking in all bicycle lanes," noting that it "will reduce parking signage needs and sign clutter and make educating the public easier, and behavior more consistent";

WHEREAS, the Urban Transportation Commission in [Recommendation 20220607-002E](#) and [Recommendation 20230711-004](#) proposed altering "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;"

WHEREAS, City Council [Resolution 20240404-40](#) directed the City Manager to "initiate amendments to City Code Title 12 (Traffic Regulations) and any other necessary Code or Transportation Criteria Manual (TCM) sections to prohibit motor vehicle parking in bicycle lanes and offstreet bikeways, by default;"

WHEREAS, on October 17th, 2024, Transportation and Public Works (TPW) Staff [presented](#) potential code changes to the City Council Mobility Committee that stated "a motor vehicle operator shall not stop, stand, or park in a lane or pathway that has been designated by official markings or signage for the specific use of bicycles" with potential exceptions and other modernizations to the parking regulations under Title 12;

WHEREAS, TPW staff presented the proposed changes to the Urban Transportation Commission on November 12th, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the 2023 Bicycle Plan speaks to the problem of vehicular parking in bike lanes, stating, "when a vehicle parks in a bicycle lane, it creates a dangerous situation requiring people on bicycles to merge into a traffic lane to get around the vehicle. Therefore, parking shall not be permitted in bicycle lanes;"

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Urban Transportation Commission recommends city staff approach code changes regarding parking in the bike lane with a public safety perspective, understanding that any vehicle parked in the bike lane creates an inherent safety risk for bicyclists and thereby:

- Limit exemptions to situations where a motor vehicle needs to park in the bike lane for the safety of all road users; and
- Limit the scope of exemptions to ensure widespread knowledge that parking in the bike lane is illegal except in rare and bona fide emergencies.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Urban Transportation Commission recommends that the City Council include the following amendments to the proposed exceptions to allow parking in the bike lane:

- “A government vehicle performing some type of repair or maintenance”
 - Alter to include that government vehicles may only park in the bike lane upon following the proper procedures for closing a bike lane as outlined in [City of Austin Standard 804S-1](#) and [Section 8.3.3](#) of the Transportation Criteria Manual;
- “An officer may direct a vehicle to park in a bike lane due to an emergency.”
 - Expand to include that any emergency vehicle operating under emergency conditions may park in the bike lane;
- “A temporary traffic control device”
 - Remove entirely, ensuring traffic control devices are only installed in a bike lane as permitted by [Section 8 of the Transportation Criteria Manual](#) (Temporary Traffic Control);
- “A vehicle temporarily stopped to collect solid waste, recycling, or yard debris”
- “A vehicle that may be rendered inoperable, for a specific time frame, to clear the lane”
 - Alter to include that an inoperable vehicle may park in the bike lane only when:
 - there are not two or more general travel lanes in the vehicle's direction;
 - or
 - the vehicle entered the bike lane due to a crash and was unable to exit.
- “Other authorized uses, marked by regulatory signage, where parking is permissible (i.e. existing neighborhood and non-profit agreements);”
 - Alter to include a sunset provision eliminating this exception on January 1st, 2028, allowing TPW time to fix legacy bike lane issues.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Urban Transportation Commission recommends that the City Council alter [Section 12-5-56](#) of the City Code to allow for citations to be sent via mail,

mirroring the existing statute in [Section 12-1-63](#) which allows citations to be sent via mail within 30 days to:

- “The owner's address as shown on the registration records of the Texas Department of Transportation; or
- If the vehicle is registered in another state or country, the owner's address as shown on the motor vehicle registration records of the department or agency of the other state or country analogous to the Texas Department of Transportation;”

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Urban Transportation Commission, consistent with Recommendation 20230711-004, recommends that the City Council expand the [Commercial Vehicle Loading Permit](#) program under Section 12-5-12 citywide and simplify the requirements of the program to “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.” Simplifications may include:

- Allowing all motor vehicles to legally unload in a general travel lane, when two or more general travel lanes are present, for 15 minutes without a permit;
- Simplifying or removing [prohibited delivery time restrictions](#) to ensure uniformity in the program city-wide and ensure consistent enforcement;
- Expand beyond motor vehicles classified as commercial vehicles to allow gig economy workers to participate in the program; and
- Lowering fees for the permit.

Motioned by: Commissioner Schumacher

Seconded by: Commissioner Brooks

Date of Approval: 11/12/2024

Record of the vote: 9-0

Attest: 
(Staff or board member can sign)