

A G E N D A



Recommendation for Council Action

Austin City Council	Item ID	29742	Agenda Number	52.
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Meeting Date:	1/23/2014	Department:	Transportation
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Subject

Approve an ordinance amending City Code Title 12 to prohibit vehicles stopping, standing, or parking in designated transit priority lanes, to provide for vehicle removal; to establish a penalty; and to provide for emergency passage.

Amount and Source of Funding

Fiscal Note

A fiscal note is not required.

Purchasing Language:	
Prior Council Action:	
For More Information:	Robert Spillar, 974-2488, Gary Schatz, 974-7189, Gilda Powers, 974-7092
Boards and Commission Action:	January 14, 2014 - Was not reviewed by the Urban Transportation Commission due to lack of a quorum.
MBE / WBE:	
Related Items:	

Additional Backup Information

Council has previously given to the City Traffic Engineer the authority to establish specially designated lanes for use by public transit. The Austin Transportation Department (ATD), in coordination with the Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Capital Metro), is implementing Austin's first transit priority special use lanes along Guadalupe and Lavaca Streets from approximately West Cesar Chavez Street to Martin Luther King Jr., Boulevard. These special use lanes are necessary to provide safer and more efficient use of the corridor by the approximately 60 buses per peak hour starting in early 2014. An important management element in establishing effective special use lanes (and specifically transit priority lanes) includes prohibiting unwanted uses of these lanes. In the case of the Guadalupe and Lavaca transit priority lanes, the use sought to be removed from the lane is any on-street parking, stopping or standing within the lane or non-transit use of the lane if not otherwise allowed by designation (e.g., right turns from the transit priority lane and bicycles in some discrete locations).

Under current law, ATD can implement "No Parking, Stopping, Standing" with Tow-Away provisions for special use lanes. City ordinance, however, only allows this infraction to result in a parking citation of \$25.00. This is not a

significant deterrent to dissuade some service commercial delivery drivers, vehicle for hire operators, and similar operators who view these citations as a cost of doing business. This is evidenced by the observation of delivery trucks simply stopping in existing travel lanes to make deliveries without regards to the mobility of the street. ATD has introduced technology (electronic smart EZ-Park Meters) for delivery vehicles that allow them to park in designated areas of the roadway thus minimizing impacts on mobility. Parking fees generated by the EZ-Park meters assists the Transportation Department in managing the right-of-way and mobility within downtown. For the Guadalupe and Lavaca Transit Priority Lane, ATD specifically worked with businesses along the corridor as well as with major delivery companies to make accommodations for their delivery needs on adjacent streets. However, for designated special use lanes, such as transit priority lanes, it is critical that the parking regulations associated with the lanes are put in place. Similarly, it is important that other regulatory signs such as the "Transit Only" signs are observed. A significant financial penalty for violation of the special use lane is needed to dissuade parking, stopping or standing within the lane and also to dissuade unauthorized use of the lane. A new violation category "violation of a designated special use lane" with significant penalty that is issuable by either a parking enforcement officer or commissioned peace officer is the proposed deterrent to assure that the designated special use transit lanes run safely and efficiently.