



CITY OF KIRKLAND
Department of Public Works
123 Fifth Avenue, Kirkland, WA 98033
425.587.3800 www.kirklandwa.gov

To: Kurt Triplett, City Manager
From: Joel Pfundt, AICP CTP Transportation Manager
Kathy Brown, Public Works Director
Date: July 19, 2016
Subject: NO PARKING IN BIKE LANES

RECOMMENDATION:

City Council receives a briefing on an ordinance prohibiting parking in bike lanes in preparation for adoption of the ordinance at the September 6, 2016 City Council meeting.

BACKGROUND DISCUSSION:

The Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan calls for adding new, and improving existing, on-street bicycle facilities (Policy T-2.2), as well as making existing bicycle facilities safer (Policy T-2.1) and more convenient (Policy T-2.4). When cars park in bike lanes, or the area for biking is effectively narrowed, the result is less comfortable and safe for cyclists. In some cases, parked cars in the bike lane force people riding bicycles to move into the vehicle lanes. Bicyclists and drivers typically do not expect cars to be parked in bike lanes, and drivers do not always anticipate a cyclist's maneuver into or near the driving lane to avoid a parked car. These circumstances can create hazardous situations for all users of the City's transportation network.

Parking in bike lanes continues to be a routine complaint from people who ride bikes, although these complaints are generally confined to a handful of recurring areas. Currently, the Kirkland Police Department is unable to cite vehicles parking in bike lanes because the Kirkland Municipal Code (KMC) does not prohibit parking in bike lanes. So, these problem areas persist. Therefore, a change to the KMC is being proposed that will specifically prohibit such parking in order to improve the bicycling environment.

Proposed Ordinance

The attached ordinance would amend KMC 12.45.320 to make it illegal to park a vehicle in a designated bike lane. Violators would be cited with a \$45-fine.

The ordinance defines bike lanes as an on-street path or bike lane designated by official signs or markings. The City does not sign all bike lanes because the additional

signage significantly increases visual clutter and maintenance costs, while not significantly increasing awareness or effecting behavior. In unique cases, the City does include signage when needed.

The ordinance also includes an exception for “minor incidental encroachment from adjacent designated parking.” This exception is included to provide Police with discretion when enforcing the ordinance because, in some cases, the vehicle encroachment may be so minor as to not be a factor in the cyclist’s experience while using the bike lane. In other instances, the vehicle may not fit entirely within the adjacent on-street parking stall. An example of minor encroachment is shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Example of minor encroachment in the bike lane

Additionally, much like a vehicle travel lane or a sidewalk, bike lanes can be closed for special events or construction if a permit is issued by the City.

Examples of Vehicle Parking in Bike Lanes

The most common situation where people park vehicles in bike lanes are locations where there is no curb and gutter to define the edge of the roadway. This allows vehicles to park and block most of the bike lane, which forces the bicycle rider to choose between passing uncomfortably close to the parked vehicle and passing in the vehicle travel lane. Sections of 124th Ave NE, 132nd Ave NE and NE 80th St are in this category. Figure 2 below shows examples of this situation.



There are also a few locations where people habitually park their vehicles in the bike lane, forcing cyclists to weave into the vehicle travel lane. One location where this occurs is on a portion of eastbound NE 144th St between 124th Ave NE and 132nd Ave NE. This section is particularly uncomfortable for cyclists because they are riding uphill at a slower speed where there is a curve. Figure 3 shows an example of NE 144th St.



Restriping to Add Bike Lanes

In some cases the City restripes (rechannelizes) streets to remove on-street parking

and add bike lanes to meet the City's multimodal transportation policy goals. It is most frequently done as part of the City's pavement resurfacing program because new pavement means there is no need to remove the existing pavement markings, which is typically done by grinding, which in turn can damage the pavement. Rechannelizing streets is a low-cost way to maximize the multimodal capacity of the City's existing infrastructure because it does not necessitate costly street widening in order to add bike lanes. A recent example of a rechannelization projects that added bike lanes and removed parking is NE 144th/143th St from 124th Ave NE to 132nd Ave NE. This project was completed in 2015.

Adding bike lanes within an existing roadway surface is done in locations where adjacent land uses have other parking options available. To add bike lanes, there must be enough width to accommodate standard bike lanes or buffered bike lanes within the paved area, including roadway shoulders that people have used at times for parking. City staff does outreach to ensure neighbors are informed prior to implementation. This year 84th Avenue NE from NE 136th Street to NE 145th Street will be rechannelized to add bike lanes as part of the resurfacing program. This will result in a more connected network of bicycle lanes on Finn Hill.

Community Outreach

In order to ensure that people are informed about the proposed no parking in bike lane ordinance, the City mailed an information postcard to 84th Ave NE residents and the residents of more than 200 homes along streets with existing bike lanes. The red ovals on Figure 4 show the locations where these postcards were distributed. This was based locations identified by staff where there was previously a shared shoulder or parking area converted to a bike facility, or there is currently a small undesignated area adjacent to the bike lane and a parked vehicle would likely impede travel in the bike lane.

Additional outreach has been done along NE 144th/145th to make sure residents and businesses along this recently added stretch of bike lanes are aware of the proposed ordinance. A press release was also distributed on June 29, 2016 to inform the community about the proposed ordinance. The press release was also published by local media outlets and distributed on social media.

Next Steps

Unless staff receive different direction from the Council, staff will bring the ordinance back for final action on September 6, 2016. If adopted by the City Council, the initial focus would be on educating the public on the importance of keeping bike lanes clear and safe. As part of this education effort, the City would send out information to the community about the new ordinance in the form of a press release, issue warnings instead of citations to violators, and inform cyclists of what they should do in order to report a problem.

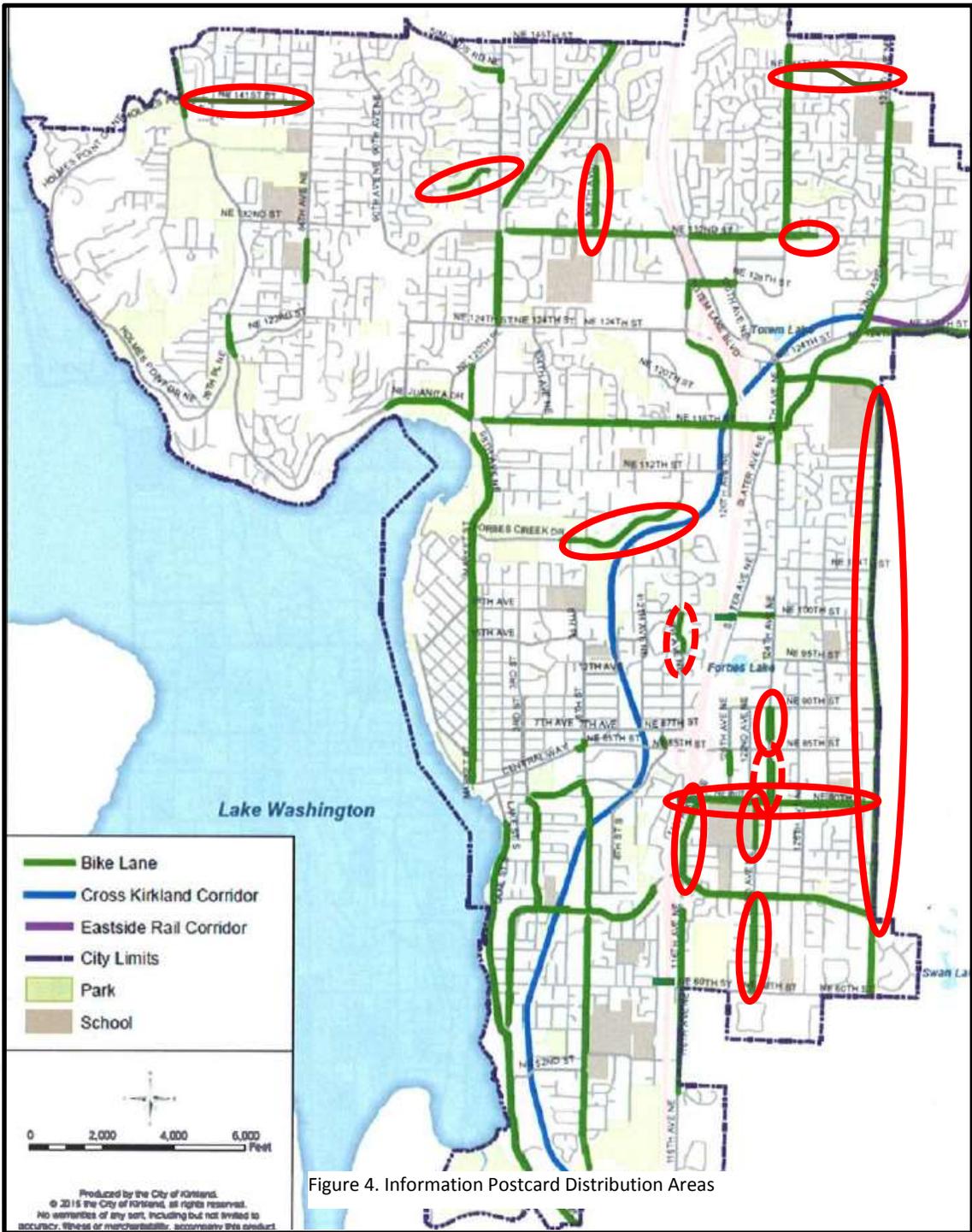


Figure 4. Information Postcard Distribution Areas

ORDINANCE O-4529

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF KIRKLAND PROHIBITING PARKING IN BICYCLE LANES.

1 The City Council of the City of Kirkland do ordain as follows:
2

3 Section 1. Section 12.45.320 of the Kirkland Municipal Code is
4 amended to read as follows:
5

6 **12.45.320 Stopping, standing, or parking prohibited in**
7 **specified places—Reserving portion of highway prohibited.**

8 (a) Except when necessary to avoid conflict with other traffic, or in
9 compliance with law or the directions of a police officer or official
10 traffic control device, no person shall:

11 (1) Stop, stand, or park a vehicle:

12 (A) On the roadway side of any vehicle stopped or parked
13 at the edge or curb of a street;

14 (B) On a sidewalk or street planting strip;

15 (C) Within an intersection;

16 (D) On a crosswalk;

17 (E) Between a safety zone and the adjacent curb or within
18 thirty feet of points on the curb immediately opposite the
19 ends of a safety zone, unless official signs or markings
20 indicate a different no-parking area opposite the ends of
21 a safety zone;

22 (F) Alongside or opposite any street excavation or
23 obstruction when stopping, standing, or parking would
24 obstruct traffic;

25 (G) Upon any bridge or other elevated structure upon a
26 highway or within a highway tunnel;

27 (H) On any railroad tracks;

28 (I) In the area between roadways of a divided highway
29 including crossovers;

30 (J) At any place where official signs prohibit stopping; or

31 (K) On any on-street path or lane designated by official
32 signs or markings for the exclusive use of bicycles; except
33 when such stopping, standing or parking causes only
34 minor incidental encroachment into an on-street path or
35 lane designated for the exclusive use of bicycles by official
36 signs or markings.

37 (2) Stand or park a vehicle, whether occupied or not, except
38 momentarily to pick up or discharge a passenger or
39 passengers:

40 (A) In front of a public or private driveway or within five
41 feet of the end of the curb radius leading thereto;

42 (B) Within fifteen feet of a fire hydrant;

43 (C) Within twenty feet of a crosswalk;

44 (D) Within thirty feet upon the approach to any flashing
45 signal, stop sign, yield sign, or traffic control signal located
46 at the side of a roadway;

47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83

(E) Within twenty feet of the driveway entrance to any fire station and on the side of a street opposite the entrance to any fire station within seventy-five feet of said entrance when properly signposted; or

(F) At any place where official signs prohibit standing.

(3) Park a vehicle, whether occupied or not, except temporarily for the purpose of and while actually engaged in loading or unloading property or passengers:

(A) Within fifty feet of the nearest rail of a railroad crossing; or

(B) At any place where official signs prohibit parking.

(b) Parking or standing shall be permitted in the manner provided by law at all other places except a time limit may be imposed or parking restricted at other places, but such limitation and restriction shall be by city ordinance or county resolution or order of the secretary of transportation upon highways under their respective jurisdictions.

(c) No person shall move a vehicle not lawfully under his or her control into any such prohibited area or away from a curb such a distance as is unlawful.

(d) It shall be unlawful for any person to reserve or attempt to reserve any portion of a highway for the purpose of stopping, standing, or parking to the exclusion of any other like person, nor shall any person be granted such right.

(e) Unless otherwise specified by state law or city ordinance, the penalty for prohibited stopping, standing or parking in specified places shall be forty-five dollars.

Section 2. This ordinance shall be in force and effect five days from and after its passage by the Kirkland City Council and publication, as required by law.

Passed by majority vote of the Kirkland City Council in open meeting this _____ day of _____, 2016.

Signed in authentication thereof this _____ day of _____, 2016.

DEPUTY MAYOR

Attest:

City Clerk

Approved as to Form:

City Attorney