

Date: August 5, 2020

To: Mayor and Members of City Council

From: Paula Boggs Muething, Interim City Manager

Subject: BUS-ONLY LANE ON READING ROAD BETWEEN WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT AND PADDOCK ROAD

Reference Document #201901035

The Council at its session on September 25, 2019 referred the following item for review and report.

MOTION, submitted by Councilmember P.G. Sittenfeld, WE MOVE that given the success of Cincinnati's first-ever Bus-Only Lane on Main Street in the Central Business District-the City Administration should plan to expand the Bus-Only Lanes project to other major corridors where such lanes would provide similar reductions in transit time for bus riders and alleviate congestion for car drivers; and, WE FURTHER MOVE that the City Administration prepare and provide an analysis to City Council detailing the feasibility of implementing a Bus-Only lane on Reading Road between William Howard Taft and Paddock Road.

Staff from the Department of Transportation and Engineering (DOTE) met with the Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority (SORTA) planning department to discuss a bus-only lane on Reading Road between William Howard Taft and Paddock Road. A bus-only lane corridor is a section of road that designates the curb lane for buses only or designates the curb lane for buses during peak traffic hours, such as 6 to 9 a.m. and 3 to 6 p.m.

The cost to open a bus-only lane on this portion of Reading Road is approximately \$300,000.

The cost includes pavement tattoos, new signs, additional line striping, staff oversight and signal retiming.

The foreseen challenges are:

Enforcement of a bus-only lane along this stretch of Reading Road will be an additional task for law enforcement.

Given the relatively short distance of the Main Street bus-only lane, enforcement of no parking is handled relatively well. However, given the longer distance of a Reading Road bus-only lane, enforcement would require a significant investment in law enforcement time.

Within the proposed bus-only lane corridor, Reading Road currently has two travel lanes in each direction.

Converting the curb lane to a bus-only lane would leave one travel lane in each direction for remaining traffic. DOTE staff requested that the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI) use their travel demand model to run a scenario with only one through lane in each direction on Reading

Road to determine how that would impact traffic. That model indicated that some drivers would select other routes. The alternate routes are often through neighborhoods. The unintended consequences of travel lane reductions (designating a bus-only lane) may affect the adjacent transportation network.

Currently there are dual left turn lanes from Martin Luther King Boulevard both east and westbound to Reading Road.

Implementation of a bus-only lane would require this intersection be restriped with only one left turn lane from Martin Luther King to northbound Reading Road and one left turn lane from Martin Luther King to southbound Reading Road.

Finally, a portion of the east side of Reading Road, between Glenwood Avenue and Avondale Avenue, currently allows off-peak parking (no parking between 7 a.m. and 9 a.m. for morning rush hour; no parking between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. for afternoon rush hour).

Implementation of a bus-only lane in this area would mean on-street parking would no longer be available here.

cc: John S. Brazina, Director, Transportation and Engineering