

Agenda Report Reviewed by:
City Manager: *[Signature]*

CITY OF SEBASTOPOL
CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA ITEM

Meeting Date: March 15, 2022
To: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
From: Mario Landeros, Interim City Engineer
Toni Bertolero, Engineering Consultant
Subject: Morris Street Bike Lanes
Recommendation: Provide Direction to Staff regarding Removal of Bike Lanes on Morris Street
Funding: Currently Budgeted: _____ Yes ___X___ No _____ N/A

Account Code/Costs authorized in City Approved Budget (if applicable) AK (verified by Administrative Services Department)

INTRODUCTION/PURPOSE:

The item is to request that Council discuss and provide direction to staff regarding the modification of bike lanes on Morris Street.

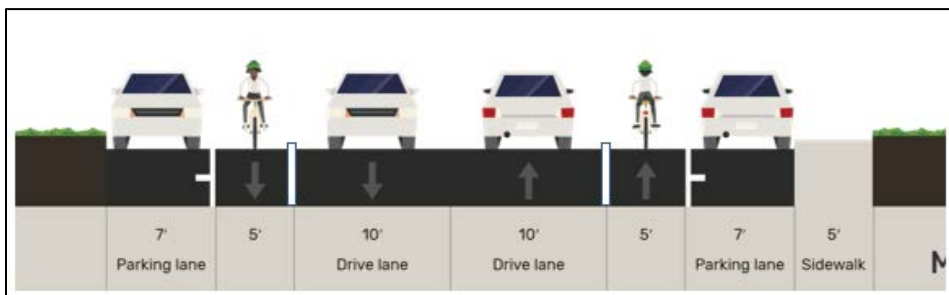
BACKGROUND:

The City and in particular, the Sebastopol Police Department, has received several complaints of wide vehicles parked on Morris Street and encroaching into the bike lane. Because of these complaints, staff was asked to respond by looking into signing and striping options on Morris Street and discuss the options at a Council meeting.

At their meeting of October 5, 2021, Council provided the following direction to staff:

- Evaluate and present in a comprehensive way at a future City Council meeting recommendations for the Morris Street with the consensus that the current seven foot unenforceable be eight feet for enforcement (no 7-foot parking lanes on east or west side of Morris Street);
- Dedicated class II bike lane be preserved; and
- Mayor Slayter’s concept cross section of a two-way Class IV bike facility be submitted to W Trans for their input. (A copy of the cross-section concept drawing is attached to this report.)

The existing cross section on Morris Street consists of two 10-foot lanes, two 5-foot bike lanes and two 7-foot curbside parking aisles as shown below (cross section looking north).



Following is a discussion of street width standards from several sources including a) A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets by American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), b) Urban Bikeway Design Guide by National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) and c) Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, Federal Highway Administration (MUTCD).

Regarding dimensional standards for **parking**, based on information provided in the MUTCD, *“The desirable dimensions of parking meter stalls are 8 feet by 24 feet with a minimum length of 20 feet,”* On Morris Street, the existing parking lane width is 7 feet and the minimum parking lane width required to legally ticket a parked vehicle due to extended width into the roadway is 8 feet. Enforcement for time limit restrictions could still be enforced with the existing 7-foot width.

Following are required **bike lane** (Class II) dimensions as presented in NACTO which is the most current design guidelines available for bicycle facility design. The document which uses ASHTO design guidance has been adopted by Caltrans.

- *The desirable bike lane width adjacent to a curbface is 6 feet. The desirable rideable surface adjacent to a street edge or longitudinal joint is 4 feet, with a minimum width of 3 feet. In cities where illegal parking in bike lanes is a concern, 5-foot wide bike lanes may be preferred.*
- *When placed adjacent to a parking lane, the desirable reach from the curb face to the edge of the bike lane (including the parking lane, bike lane, and optional buffer between them) is 14.5 feet; the absolute minimum reach is 12 feet. A bike lane next to a parking lane shall be at least 5 feet wide, unless there is a marked buffer between them. Wherever possible, minimize parking lane width in favor of increased bike lane width.*

The existing bike lane width on Morris Street is 5 feet and the combined parking and bike lane space is 12 feet.

For **vehicle travel lane widths**, AASHTO suggests that “local” roads be between 9 and 12 feet wide, that “collectors” be between 10 and 12 feet wide, and that “arterials” be between 10 and 12 feet wide. In the General Plan, Morris Street is classified as a local street, although functions more as a collector street. Currently, Morris Street has 10-foot travel lanes.

DISCUSSION:

Two changes have recently occurred resulting in a more permanent change to Morris Street and RV parking:

- Council adopted a parking ordinance that will limit RV parking between 10:00 p.m. and 7:30 a.m.; and
- Council is working with SAVS (Sonoma Applied Village Services) to develop a new site for an RV Pilot Program at 845 Gravenstein Highway North.

Given the two changes described above, RV parking on Morris Street will no longer be a constant conflict with bicyclists, motorists and pedestrians since parking will only occur at night (10:00 p.m.-7:30a.m.) when commercial clientele on Morris Street is less active.

Staff considered various options for Morris Street. Because the conflicts generally occur on the east side of Morris Street where recreational vehicles currently park, staff recommends limiting changes only to the east side of Morris Street. This will minimize the changes to the street that motorists and bicyclists will see and will be less costly to implement.

For all options, since the Parking Ordinance for Oversized Vehicles has been adopted and will require installation of parking limit signs on Morris Street, the cost of the installation of the signs (estimated at \$8,000) is not included in the costs below since that cost of the signs is already absorbed in the newly-adopted parking ordinance.

Staff studied four options for striping changes on the east side of Morris Street described as follows:

1. Remove the “outermost-curb-side” bike lane line and repaint bicycle pavement marking to delineate a narrower bike lane resulting in an 8-foot parking lane, 4-foot bike lane, and 10-foot travel lane.

*Evaluation. Option 1 provides for the minimum 8-foot parking lane needed to allow the Police Department to ticket vehicles for encroaching into the 4-foot bike lane area in addition to parking outside of the designated parking time zones. It would also result in a substandard bike lane. Because this option results in a substandard bike lane width, **Option 1 is not recommended.** Estimated cost of this option is \$7,300.*

2. Remove the “outermost-curb-side” bike lane line and do not restripe the line, resulting in a combined 12-foot bike lane and parking lane.

*Evaluation. Option 2 meets the minimum standard for a combined bike lane and parking lane, however, there are some challenges with this option. First, without the designated bike lane lines, this causes the potential for parked vehicles for intruding into the bike area. Second, it is more difficult for the Police Department to ticket oversize vehicles without the designated lane lines to determine if the vehicle is within its parking area or intruding into the bike area. Because of this lack of guidance, **Option 2 is not recommended.** Estimated cost of this option is \$3,600.*

3. Remove both bike lanes and paint new bicycle lanes one foot further into the travel lane resulting in an 8-foot parking lane, 5-foot bike lane and a 9-foot travel lane.

*Evaluation. Option 3 provides for the minimum 8-foot parking lane needed to allow the Police Department to ticket vehicles for encroaching into the 5-foot bike lane area in addition to parking outside of the designated parking time zones. However, in moving the bike lane one foot into the travel lane, the travel lane is reduced to a 9-foot travel lane which technically is acceptable for local streets, but not desirable given that Morris Street functionally operates as a collector street. The center travel lane line could be removed in order to allow vehicles to encroach into the center of the street without crossing the line. Because of the narrowing of the vehicle travel lane, **Option 3 is not recommended.** Estimated cost of this option is ranges from \$12,000 to \$18,000, depending on whether the center travel lane line is removed or not.*

4. Maintain the existing striping with 7-foot parking lane, 5-foot bike lane and 10-foot travel lane.

*Evaluation. Although Council direction for no 7-foot parking lane, staff is reviewing this option given the new information pertaining to the parking ordinance and the new RV parking site. Option 4 would only allow the Police Department to ticket vehicles for parking outside of the designated parking time zones, but not for parking in the bike lane area. With the new parking ordinance and RV parking site described earlier in this report, RV parking on Morris Street will no longer be a constant conflict with bicyclists, motorists and pedestrians since parking will only occur at night (10:00 p.m.-7:30a.m.) when commercial clientele on Morris Street is less active. For this reason, **Option 4 is recommended.** There is no added cost for this option. Staff will monitor the situation after the parking ordinance and the RV site are both implemented and if parking of oversized vehicles on Morris Street continues to be a problem, the options above can be revisited.*

W-Trans is assisting the City with traffic engineering support and will be making a brief presentation of the options at the Council meeting. The Police Chief was involved in the staff recommendation described in this report.

DISCUSSION OF CONCEPT CROSS-SECTION PLAN:

Due to the cost and other challenges with the plan, the concept plan was not included as one of the options studied. Following are comments on Mayor Slayter’s concept cross section design for two-way Class IV bike facilities:

- The proposed dimensions (5-5-3-11-11-9) are appropriate to accommodate two-way cycle track.
- This layout will eliminate parking on the west side of Morris Street.
- The 3-foot buffer on the west side will require some type of raised element such as a bollard to separate the contraflow bike lane from the vehicle lane. Breaks in the raised bollards would occur at the intersection crossings and interface with driveways.
- Green painted bike lane markings should be applied in the conflict zones such as crossing Laguna Parkway and McKinley St and driveways.
- Additional signage would be needed to warn drivers in the eastbound direction on Laguna Parkway and McKinley St as they approach the cycle track.
- The most southern section of Morris Street where there are three vehicle lanes could accommodate the cycletrack as there is no parking on this section. However, it should be noted that the restriping will push the northbound through lane against the eastern curb line. The recommended cross section on the south end is 10-3-10-10-11.
- The southern terminus of the cycletrack at Sebastopol Ave would work well with the existing trail system as the signalized crosswalk on the west leg of the intersection connects with the Joe Rodota Trail to the South. This interface between the cycletrack terminus and the pedestrian crossing would need enhanced connectivity either with striping or reconstructed sidewalks to accommodate bicycle activity. These changes would need to be coordinated with Caltrans.
- The northern terminus of two-way bike facility would potentially be located at the intersection of Morris Street/Johnson Street/Eddie lane. This Northern terminus would require a crossing point to connect cyclists to Eddie Lane/trail as well as disperse bikes into directional lanes on Johnson Street. Crossing point will need to be determined based on sight distance review. Most likely location is the northeast corner of Morris/Eddie Lane. Signing and striping enhancements would be needed to ensure use and visibility of the crosswalk.
- The wide 9-foot parking on the east side may encourage more use of public right of way space for private RV use. The current alignment effectively results in the bike lane acting as a buffer between private RV use and vehicle traffic. With the cycle track proposal, there no longer will be a buffer and the potential RV activity may spill out into the NB travel lane causing potential safety conflicts with vehicles.

GOALS:

This action supports the following City Council Goals and General Plan Actions:

- Goal 2 – Maintain, improve and invest in the City’s infrastructure (such as circulation).
- Objective 2.2.3 - Continue to explore opportunities for dedicated bicycle and pedestrian thoroughfares within the City.
- Objective 2.2.5 - Continue the City of Sebastopol’s commitment to the reduction of Greenhouse Gas emissions.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

As of the writing of this staff report, the City has not received any public comment. However, if staff receives public comment from interested parties following the publication and distribution of this staff report, such comments will be provided to the City Council as supplemental materials before or at the meeting. In addition, public comments may be offered during the public comment portion of the agenda item.

W-Trans reached out to Eris Weaver of the Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition. Ms. Weaver’s preference is either Option 3 or 4 so that a 5-foot bike lane can be maintained. Staff evaluated Option 3 but as discussed earlier, it is not recommended because this results in an undesirable travel lane of 9 feet which is too narrow for Morris Street.

PUBLIC NOTICE:

This item was noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and was available for public viewing and review at least 72 hours prior to schedule meeting date.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Assuming Option 4 is selected, there is no fiscal impact. As previously stated, the cost of the installation of new parking limit signs on Morris Street is part of the implementation of the new parking ordinance for over-sized vehicles.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Sebastopol City Council discuss the bike lane striping options described in this agenda report and provide direction to staff. The staff recommendation is Option 4.

Attachment:

- Concept cross section design by Mayor Slayter

44'-0" TOTAL WIDTH OF MORRIS STREET

