

handed out at  
10/25/05 TPC mtg.

To: Members of the PBMVC + TPC  
From: Ald. Robbie Webber  
Date: October 25, 2005  
Re: Use of the right lane on the Square and implications for all traffic

For years, I have been concerned about the confusion caused by the restricted right lane on the Capitol Square. Because of its width, motorists perceive it as being two lanes instead of one. With the introduction of parking on the Square, this has been lessened, but not eliminated. The signage regarding restricted use is not at eye level, and there are no lane markings to reinforce the signage. Many users of the streets around the Square are not locals. They do not know where they are going, and the only way to get OFF the Square is a right turn. Because some users are now pulling into, out of, or looking for parking spots, drivers who may be aware of the restrictions on lane usage are now using the lane as well.

On the other side of this sheet you will find two random surveys of right lane usage on the Square. These were off-peak hours, and the weather was warm and sunny. These last two conditions affect the types of users the lane gets, but I offer no analysis as to what the counts might be at other times or conditions.

Casual users or observers of traffic on the Square will surely recognize that these are typical numbers.

My concerns are these:

1. Drivers are not aware of the restrictions on the right lane. This needs to be remedied, regardless of the configuration of the lane in the future. The "Buses, bicycles, and right turns only" signs are too high to be observed by the average driver. His/her eyes are focused on the stop light ahead and possibly the street signs or stores. Different placement of regulatory signs and/or lane markings would solve this problem.
2. There appears to be little or no enforcement of the restrictions on this lane. The lack of adequate signage and complete lack of enforcement could endanger federal transit funding we receive because this is a high capacity transit corridor.
3. Because of the number of private vehicles using this lane, bicyclists are often intimidated into riding too far to the right. This can lead to them being cut off by right turning vehicles or squeezed between passing cars and parked cars. Bicyclists that ride in the proper position – on the left side of the restricted lane to allow right turners to pass on the right – are often tailgated.

**I would suggest that as part of the Parking on the Square discussion, we request that Traffic Engineering add lane markings to indicate the restrictions on the lane and also change the location of the signage so that drivers are likely to see it.**

**Observation # 1**

**Wednesday, September 28, 1:25-1:55 PM**

**Corner of E Main and S Pinckney**

Motor vehicles counted were in right lane approaching the corner

Bicycles counter were approaching corner on E Main as well as those turning onto S Pinckney from King St.

Cars in right lane that turned	18
Cars in right lane that continued onto Pinckney	23
<i>Includes 2 taxis and a delivery truck pulling out of spot in front of Walgreens</i>	
Buses	13
Bicyclists	24
<i>Includes 1 wrong-way bicyclist going from Pinckney to Main</i>	

**Observation # 2**

**Friday, October 14, 3:05-3:35 PM**

**Corner of W Mifflin and N Carroll**

Motor vehicles counted were in right lane approaching the corner

Bicycles counter were also only those approaching corner from W Mifflin, none counted coming from State St, farther north on Carroll, or farther west on Mifflin.

Note that right lane in this position should be ONLY buses and bikes since no turn is permitted onto State Street for private vehicles.

Cars and other non-bus motorized traffic	52
<i>Includes: one fire truck, one car that made an illegal turn onto State St, one motorcycle, one Sheraton van that turned onto State St, and several small delivery trucks/vans</i>	
Buses	23
Bicycles	25