

OFFERED BY COUNCILOR SHARON DURKAN



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING ON TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT OF BLOCKED BIKE LANES AND CROSSWALKS

- WHEREAS,** Under Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L. c. 89, § 11), pedestrians have the right-of-way in marked crosswalks, and drivers are required to yield to pedestrians crossing within them; *and*
- WHEREAS,** State law and traffic regulations also strictly prohibit drivers from entering a marked crosswalk unless there is sufficient space beyond it to accommodate the vehicle, regardless of whether a traffic signal permits them to proceed; *and*
- WHEREAS,** It is also illegal under Massachusetts General Law and City of Boston traffic regulations to stop, stand, or park a motor vehicle in a designated bike lane or path; *and*
- WHEREAS,** When vehicles obstruct bike lanes or crosswalks, they force cyclists into active traffic and compel pedestrians into the street, taking away their protected spaces, compromising their safety, and significantly increasing the risk of serious crashes; *and*
- WHEREAS,** Drivers routinely pull into crosswalks and park in bike lanes without fear of penalty, and without consistent enforcement and a lack of public awareness regarding the rules of the road, residents across Boston report feeling increasingly unsafe while walking and biking on city streets; *and*
- WHEREAS,** The City of Boston has adopted Vision Zero and Go Boston 2030, with the goals of eliminating all fatal and serious traffic crashes by 2030 and making it safer and more reliable for residents to travel throughout the city by foot, bicycle, public transit, or other modes of transportation; *and*
- WHEREAS,** A lack of predictable and consistent enforcement allows dangerous behavior to persist, jeopardizing the safety of our most vulnerable road users, deterring residents from walking and using alternative modes of transportation, undermining public trust in municipal transportation investments, and compromising the safety benefits intended by protected infrastructure; *and*
- WHEREAS,** Various enforcement mechanisms, including automated camera enforcement and increased ticketing, can be used to enforce statutory protections that motorists

consistently violate. These mechanisms should be paired with an evaluation of curbside management practices to ensure adequate loading space is available where necessary; *and*

WHEREAS, The City should evaluate whether existing staffing, funding, and other resources are sufficient to support consistent traffic enforcement, identify barriers to effective enforcement, and consider additional investments necessary to ensure that traffic safety protections can be thoroughly enforced; *and*

WHEREAS, Public education and awareness also have an important role to play in changing behavior, both by increasing awareness of the rules of the road and by evaluating and considering improvements to resident reporting mechanisms through 311 or the Boston Police Department, which could provide additional information to support more effective enforcement *and*

WHEREAS, Ensuring safe and fully accessible crosswalks and bike lanes requires a coordinated interdepartmental strategy between the Boston Transportation Department (BTD), the Boston Police Department (BPD), residents, and community advocates; ***NOW THEREFORE BE IT***

ORDERED: That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to examine how the City of Boston can strengthen compliance, enforcement, and accountability regarding blocked bike lanes and crosswalks to protect pedestrians and cyclists and make our streets more navigable for all.

Filed on: August 3, 2026