



# RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

*No. 163*

**EFFECTIVE April 14, 2024**

WHEREAS, The City of Providence has firmly committed to promoting urban mobility, public safety, and environmental sustainability through the thoughtful development of inclusive transportation infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, The introduction of two-way protected bike lanes, including on South Water Street, has notably resulted in a 10% decrease in fatalities, a 21% decrease in total crashes per year, a 22% decrease in injuries per year, a 55-61% decrease in pedestrian injuries, and a 53-63% decrease in serious injuries, underscoring the significant impact of these lanes on enhancing public safety, as evidenced by an analysis of crash data from 2014-2023; and

WHEREAS, During his recent visit to Providence, in a question posted by reporter Bill Bartholomew, United States Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg emphasized the importance of such initiatives by stating, "the big picture is we want to make sure we move towards more accessibility and not less, more bike and pedestrian connectivity and not less...I've been talking a lot to the Mayor and his focus about safety...This is really about the safety of getting around our communities in a time when the biggest category contributing to the rise of roadway deaths in recent years has been bike and pedestrian fatalities. Bike infrastructure helps us fight that trend, "highlighting the critical role of bike lanes in combating the increase in roadway deaths; and

WHEREAS, On January 14, 2022, the South Water Street bike lanes were recognized as one of the Five Best New Bikeways in the United States by PeopleForBikes.org, a testament to the project's excellence and its contribution to reimagining urban spaces for safer, more sustainable transportation; and

WHEREAS, The transformation of South Water Street from a hazardous highway ramp into a pedestrian-friendly Complete Street has dramatically improved the area's safety and livability. This includes traffic calming measures that led to an 84-96% reduction in the rate of vehicles traveling over 30 mph, the installation of new pedestrian crossings connecting to Memorial Park, ADA-compliant designs, and enhanced bus islands, all contributing to a more inclusive and safer urban environment; and

WHEREAS, The successful realization of the South Water Street bike lanes stemmed from a broad and inclusive consultation process, involving multiple public meetings and direct feedback from local residents, businesses, and stakeholders. This collective effort addressed concerns from the former two way drag strip, ranging from safety and noise disturbances caused by loud music, street racing, ATVs, altered mufflers, droves of motorcycles, and other activities that detracted from the waterfront's tranquility, to ensuring the preservation of on-street parking vital for local businesses; and

WHEREAS, Avid supporters and neighborhood abutters have voiced their concerns over the safety and quality of life along the waterfront, which prior to the bike lane installation, was compromised by dangerous activities and noise pollution. The bike lanes have since fostered a safer, more serene environment, contributing significantly to the community's quality of life; and

WHEREAS, Any proposed dismantling of the South Water Street bike lanes runs counter to the principles and objectives of recent city initiatives, such as the groundbreaking of the Woonasquatucket Greenway project and the amendment to the Green & Complete Streets Ordinance, reflecting a city-wide dedication to sustainability, connectivity, and public well-being; and

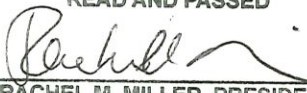

WHEREAS, Any attempt to remove these bike lanes not only undermines the Mayor Smiley's recent commitment to Vision Zero but also risks forfeiting substantial federal and city investments aimed at expanding the urban trail network, thereby affecting job creation, public safety, and overall connectivity.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Providence City Council stands firmly against the removal of the South Water Street bike lanes, recognizing their indispensable role in enhancing the city's safety, sustainability, and equitable transportation access; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Providence City Council will not and does not support the allocation of Capital Infrastructure Plan funds or any other city funds towards the dismantling of the South Water Street bike lanes, as such actions have not been sanctioned by the Council and directly contradict our city's strategic goals for its transportation infrastructure and environmental policies; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That, in accordance to the recently enacted Green and Complete Streets Ordinance amendment signed into law in December 2023, in which "any removal of complete streets features, or any new construction or improvement of off-road bicycle paths or multi-use trails" must be approved by the Green and Complete Streets Advisory Council, we call upon the Green and Complete Streets Advisory Council to oppose any efforts to remove the South Water Street bike lanes.

IN CITY COUNCIL  
APR 04 2024  
READ AND PASSED

  
RACHEL M. MILLER, PRESIDENT  
  
CLERK

Effective without the  
Mayor's Signature

  
Tina L. Mastroianni  
City Clerk