

RE: Agenda ITEM 7E – April 1, 2025

March 31, 2025

Dear Madame Mayor and Honorable Members of the City Council of Alameda

I would appreciate it if you could clarify for us exactly when the Council discussed its perceived need for removing curbside parking spaces from the City's dwindling pool of such spaces. We would like to know the exact instructions given to Staff to engage in the process that resulted in the drafting of their proposed Ordinance that is being considered in Item 7E. We don't believe that a vague instruction along the lines of Make Alameda Great Again by Reducing Greenhouse Gases (MAGA – Gas) would be sufficient to warrant the expenditure of time spent on producing their highly problematic proposed ordinance.

As far as we've been able to determine, a current, or even near-term, need for undertaking the proposed construction of curbside charging stations has not been demonstrated. In addition, Staff's apparent belief that it would be appropriate to commandeer such spaces required for their from the City's limited pool of unrestricted curbside spaces currently available certainly has not been validated by anyone, let alone the residents of our city.

We see that the process proposed above becomes even more egregious when we acknowledge that the Council has already authorized the elimination of nearly two hundred curbside parking spaces across the City. It is our understanding that nearly one hundred curbside parking spaces were eliminated to make room for bike lanes on Clement Avenue. In addition, twenty to forty, or more, spaces will be eliminated in the process of completing the Council-approved, or soon to be approved, modifications of Grand Street and Fernside Boulevard. Fifteen to twenty more spaces will be cannibalized by the construction of already approved traffic circles. And who can count the number of spaces being eliminated through the much-needed process of improving visibility at selected uncontrolled or semi-controlled intersections. The need for eliminating many of these spaces could be obviated by simply converting these intersections to four-way stops. And let us not discount the parklet effect on Park Street and Webster Street, and the blocking-off of a portion of Alameda Avenue.

One can quibble with the exact number of curbside spaces that have already been, or soon will be, lost as a consequence of actions taken by our City Council on the instigation by Staff.

The proposed ordinance includes specific conditions that have not been evaluated, let alone approved, by the Council. Note that it appears that the determination of the number and location of the restricted spaces is being delegated to the Director of Public Works and are not subject to input from the Council or residents of neighborhoods impacted by the parking restrictions.

A few other considerations that can be derived from reading the Staff Report and proposed ordinance include that in order to avoid being cited for illegal use of the restricted spaces a vehicle must be an EV connected to the charging unit though it need not be actively charging. This means that the EV drivers

can hook up to the chargers and then go home for the night, the weekend, or even take a trip to Greenland while being secure in the knowledge that their vehicles will be safely protected in an exclusive parking space routinely being patrolled by the APD. The flip side, off course, is that there will be many hours of each day and probably most of each night during which many of the restricted spaces will remain empty. Wasted curbside parking spaces. Valuable resources squandered. An asset that can help maintain the quality of life in many of our neighborhoods – wasted.

This activity by the way is intended to generate revenue for the City. The initial fine is to be set at \$45 per incident. But we can be sure that even though it's not in the current version of the ordinance, it will eventually be amended to allow for increasing the fine no less often than annually. And there might be added an escalating fee for repeat offenders.

It appears, however, that the real money will go to the bidder who gets the contract for constructing and managing the charging stations. And in return for undertaking this obligation the bidder(s) will receive, at no cost, the exclusive use of pieces of City property and will acquire the ability to purchase electricity which can then be resold at whatever they can get away with. Will they be subject to sales tax?

One additional point of concern is Staff's claim that their proposed project is categorically exempt from having to satisfy CEQA regulations which claim, we suggest, should be subjected to specific validation by the City Attorney. Such validation of the legitimacy of the claim of exemption should not be delegated to members of the staff who are not licensed to practice law. I believe that we, the residents of Alameda, deserve nothing less than the assurance that the laws and regulations intended to protect the environment and quality of life in our city are being properly enforced by the members of our City Council.

And finally, please note that the Staff report for tonight's Consent Calendar ITEM 5D which is intended to create a master contract governing the construction and management of the proposed project identifies it as "a **Pilot Program**". This suggests that their project should be looked at as an experiment and which implies that if the public is unhappy with the outcome, including any unintended negative consequences, that the charging-related structures will be removed at a time and cost to be determined. Please be aware that the designation as a **pilot project** is not mentioned in the 7E Staff report, nor in the proposed Ordinance, itself. (copied from Item 5D: "Recommendation to Authorize the City Manager to Negotiate and Execute Master License Agreements for the Public Electric Vehicle Charger **Pilot** Program. ...")

This is a complex issue that deserves public discussion with refinement of the details, some of which we may have described suboptimally above. But I think you get our point.

Thank you for taking the time to read these comments and for being willing to require a more diligent analysis before taking definitive action.

Jay Garfinkle