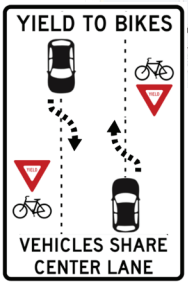
Traffic Changes Are Coming to Polk Avenue and W. Dahlia Street

Introducing Advisory Bike Lanes, a true shared road experience that prioritize equal usage for cyclists, cars, and pedestrians.

On November 13, 2023, the City of Louisville will be restriping Polk Ave. and W. Dahlia St., spanning from Pine St. to Cherry Ave. The new striping will include removing the double yellow line and replacing it with dashed bike lanes, called advisory lanes.



Advisory bike lanes, a proven approach in the United States and globally, are designed for use on narrow roads with low vehicular traffic, particularly in multi-modal corridors. They offer a dedicated space for bikes and encourage safe coexistence with motor vehicles.

Streets featuring advisory bike lanes will maintain a single center lane for two-way motor vehicle traffic, with the addition of dashed bicycle lanes. These advisory lanes offer flexibility to adapt to real-time traffic conditions, ensuring the safety of all road users.

This is a pilot project and the City will conduct extensive outreach to teach people how to share the road with advisory bike lanes and evaluate traffic speeds, safety, travel behavior, and perceptions before and after the project.

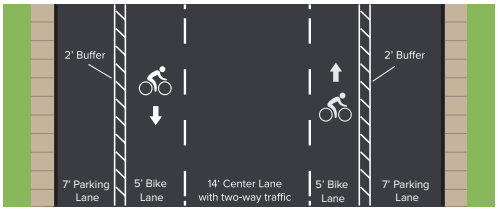
It's important to remember that advisory bike lanes are designed to prioritize the safety of cyclists, so drivers should exercise patience and caution when sharing the road with them. Always adhere to local traffic laws and be respectful of all road users to ensure a safe traffic environment.

City of Louisville

How It Works

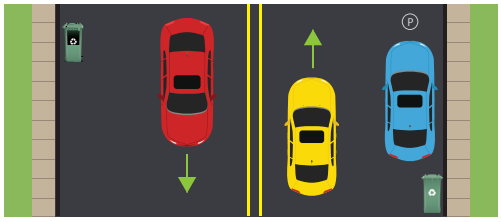
Before

After

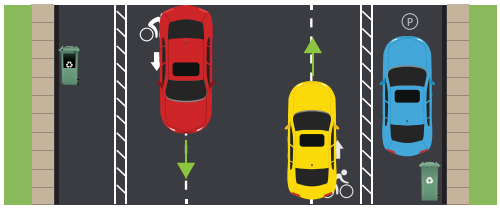


The road remains the same size but space is reallocated to create a safer environment for cyclists. A portion of the road is designated for parked cars and bicycles, with a single shared center lane for two way traffic.

Before - Two Vehicles, No Cyclists

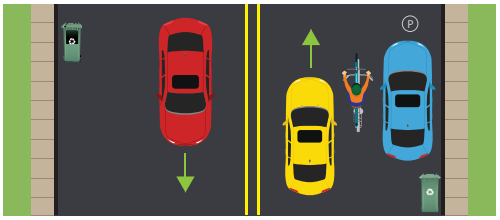


After - Two Vehicles, No Cyclists

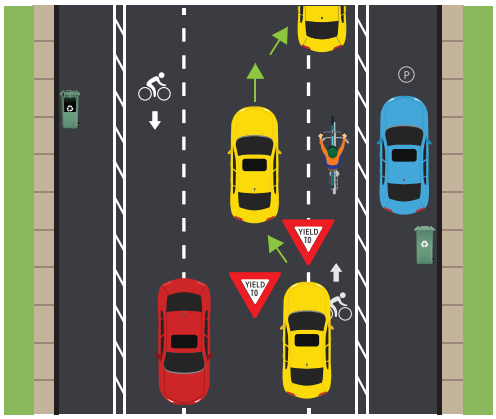


When no cyclists are present in the advisory bike lane, drivers should maintain their position on the right-hand side of the road, as they would on any other road without lane markings.

Before - Two Vehicles and a Cyclist



AFTER: Two Vehicles and a Cyclist



When a cyclist is present, drivers must slow down and yield to the cyclist. If there is no oncoming traffic and it is safe to do so, a driver may move left into the center lane to pass the cyclist. Once clear, the driver then moves back to the right.

To learn more about the project visit LouisvilleCO.gov/AdvisoryBikeLanes

FAQ: Advisory Bike Lanes

Why is the center yellow line being removed?

The advisory bike lane design emphasizes flexibility in accommodating various traffic conditions. The absence of a center line allows vehicles, including bicycles and motor vehicles, to adapt to real-time traffic situations. Driving over a double yellow line is illegal and can result in fines and penalties.

Why not install regular bike lanes?

There is not sufficient space to have residential parking, two lanes of traffic, and two traditional designated bike lanes.

How are advisory bike lanes better for cyclists?

Advisory bike lanes are designed to improve cyclist safety and used correctly, they provide a designated space for cyclists while promoting caution and awareness among drivers.

What about e-bikes?

Advisory bike lanes enhance the safety for all cyclists, including e-bikes which are required to follow Colorado state law. For information about Colorado state statutes regarding the operation of bicycles, e-bikes, and other human-powered vehicles visit bit.ly/COTitle42.

Are the speed cushions staying?

Yes, the speed cushions will remain in place. They are part of the road's traffic calming measures and will not be affected by the introduction of advisory bike lanes.

Why was Polk/Dahlia chosen for the introduction of advisory bike lanes?

- The Polk/Dahlia corridor is heavily used by cyclists and pedestrians, particularly in the vicinity of Fireside Elementary School.
- Polk/Dahlia serves as a crucial connection between Pine St. and Cherry St., both of which already have traditional conventional bike lanes in place. This project enhances the continuity of cyclist-friendly infrastructure in the area.
- Comprehensive traffic studies have indicated that the Polk Dahlia corridor meets the required traffic volume and speed conditions suitable for the implementation of advisory bike lanes.
- The existing width of Polk/Dahlia does not allow for the inclusion of traditional bike lanes without negatively impacting road capacity for motor vehicles. Advisory bike lanes provide a safer alternative for cyclists while maintaining traffic flow.

Do advisory bike lanes lead to confusion?

Currently Polk/Dahlia does not have a designated space for cyclists and can be confusing because bicycles are often unpredictable when weaving in and out of parked cars to avoid motorists. When properly designed and accompanied by education and outreach, advisory bike lanes can reduce confusion and enhance safety. However, just like any road change, there may be an adjustment period. In addition to other outreach, public works staff will be on-site during the implementation to help users navigate new traffic patterns.

How do I drive on a street with advisory bike lanes?

If you're familiar with driving on a narrow street without lane markings, you already know how to navigate a road with advisory bike lanes. When no cyclists are present in the advisory bike lane, drivers should maintain their position on the right-hand side of the road, as they would on any other road without lane markings. If a cyclist is present in the bike lane, vehicles must slow down and yield to the cyclist. When there is no oncoming traffic, and the driver determines it is safe, the vehicle can move to the center of the road to pass. Once clear, the driver then moves back to the right.

How was this decided?

- Public works staff held a public meeting on July 26, 2023, to hear public concerns and feedback about traffic safety on the Polk Dahlia corridor.
- Speed cushions were identified as an immediate solution and installed in September 2023.
- Staff researched other solutions and presented Advisory Bike Lanes at the October 16, 2023, City Council Meeting.
- City Council approved an amendment to the 2023 Pavement Marking contract to include restriping Polk Ave. and W. Dahlia St. with the new traffic pattern.

Who do I contact if I have questions?

Please visit LouisvilleCO.gov/AdvisoryBikeLanes or email PWorks@LouisvilleCO.gov for more information.

KEY BENEFITS:

- Further reduces the speed of motorized traffic
- Prioritizes multi-modal, accessible, and sustainable transportation
- Provides a well-defined and predictable area for bicycles on both sides of the street
- Preserves the availability of residential parking
- Creates a buffer between bicyclists and parked cars to minimize the risk of door-related accidents
- Allows for easy snow removal

To learn more about the project visit LouisvilleCO.gov/AdvisoryBikeLanes