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Bicycle lane on King Street in the works

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POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Sep 08, 2014

LAST UPDATED: 10:32 a.m. HST, Sep 08, 2014



Work to carve out a lane of South King Street reserved only for bicyclists is set to begin Monday and be open by the end of the year, city officials said.

What's being dubbed the King Street Cycle Track demonstration project will run from Ala-pai to Isenberg streets, city spokes-man Jesse Broder Van Dyke said.

Taking over what now is the mauka or left-hand lane of the busy, one-way thoroughfare, the track will create a protected area for bicyclists, he said.

Because it pushes out what largely has been a parking zone one lane over toward the middle of the street, the new track will require motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians to slow down, pay attention and learn to adapt.

All three groups of travelers will need to be most alert when approaching "conflict zones," the areas where motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians cross into each other's paths, typically at intersections and in front of driveways, Broder Van Dyke said. Those zones will be marked by green paint, as they are in similar situations in mainland cities, "just to make it easier for bikers and drivers to know where it is they've got to watch out," he said.

The goal of the King Street Cycle Track is to encourage Oahu residents to bike more, Broder Van Dyke said.

"A lot of people in Hono-lulu tell us that they enjoy bicycling and that they would be interested in doing it to commute (to work) but that they don't feel safe," he said. "And the cars moving by them at 35 mph is a big part of what makes them feel unsafe. So the idea of the cycle track is to protect the bikes by putting them between the curb and the parking."

For now the 10-foot protected bike lane will head in only one direction: eastbound, like the rest of South King, Broder Van Dyke said.

"But our goal in the long term is to make it into a two-way lane," he said. "It's going to be made 10 feet wide so it can be divided in half later and go in two directions."

New signal lights would have to be installed before the cycle track will be able to accommodate bikes going in two directions, he said. The city wants to first see how the demonstration project is working, and then get

community feedback before deciding whether to make the track two-way, he said.

No parking stalls along King are being removed, just pushed into the second left-most lane, Broder Van Dyke said.

The city is spending less than \$100,000 to put the project in place, and most of that is going to pay for the "bollards," the plastic poles that will partition the new track from the parking lane, and paint. Planning and installation are being done by city crews, Broder Van Dyke said.

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