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DATE: April 5, 2023

TO: Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee

FROM: Bjorn Gripenburg, MCRP, Project Manager

SUBJECT: Receive Presentation and Provide Feedback on Bicycle Rack Design and Placement - Categorically Exempt from California Environmental Quality Act Pursuant to Section 15301(c)

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff will introduce and seek feedback on bicycle rack design and placement. This is a discussion item only.

### **BACKGROUND**

Over the years, staff has received considerable feedback regarding the need for more bicycle parking throughout the City (especially in downtown), as well as the preference for inverted “U” bicycle racks, which hold bicycles upright without placing stress on a wheel, allow one wheel and the frame to be secured to the rack with a single u-lock, and accommodate a variety of frame sizes and types.

In the early 2000s, the City standardized a decorative “post-and-ring” rack that was deemed compatible with the Petaluma Historic Commercial District’s Design Guidelines and aesthetics. Related to the feedback noted above, staff has received feedback that these racks are not as intuitive or visible, and do not accommodate as many frame sizes and types, as inverted “U” racks would.

In 2022, the City was awarded a \$33,290 Transportation Fund for Clean Air grant from Sonoma County Transportation Authority to purchase and install racks in the public right-of-way. Prior to purchasing racks, staff would like to engage the Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee (PBAC) and Historic and Cultural Preservation Committee (HCPC) on rack design and placement.

### **DISCUSSION**

*Bicycle Rack Design*

After researching best practices and soliciting quotes from several bicycle rack manufacturers, staff has identified three recommended rack designs (Welle Circular, Welle Flat Top, and Welle Series) for PBAC and HCPC feedback. Each of these racks meets the following best practices:

- 2" x 2" square tubing, which is harder to cut using handheld tools than round tubing
- Surface-mounted flanges, which are significantly easier and less expensive to install, relocate, and remove than in-ground racks, which are embedded in the concrete
- More points of contact and surface area to hold a variety of frame sizes and types upright and allow one wheel and the frame to be locked to the rack with a single u-lock

Specifications for each rack design are included in Attachments A-C. Staff welcomes PBAC's feedback on design and will engage HCPC on both design and color.

### *Bicycle Rack Placement*

Related to the feedback noted above, staff has heard that bicycle parking can be hard to locate, especially downtown. There are two ways to address this: 1) install additional racks on sidewalks, and/or 2) install on-street bicycle "corrals," which are clusters of racks installed between the edge of the curb and the travel lane (in the space typically used for on-street vehicle parking).

While sidewalk racks allow for more convenient access because they can be installed in close proximity to individual destinations, they can be difficult to find when obscured by parked cars and can create accessibility challenges or conflict with other sidewalk uses, especially on narrow sidewalks. On-street bicycle corrals are more visible from the street, keep sidewalks clear, and are easier to access for people with bikes, but less convenient for anyone visiting a destination not located directly adjacent to the corral. Corrals also present ongoing maintenance needs, as they must be hand swept to remove debris. If corrals are desired, staff recommends prioritizing locations adjacent to intersections and crosswalks where vehicle parking and parklets are already prohibited to minimize vehicle parking loss.

Staff welcomes PBAC's feedback on installing bicycle racks on sidewalks and/or in on-street bicycle corrals.

### *Next Steps*

Staff will seek feedback on bicycle rack design, color, and placement at a HCPC Study Session on April 11 at 4 PM. More information will be available at the City's public meetings webpage (<https://cityofpetaluma.org/meetings/>) when available.

Members of the public are encouraged to visit <https://cityofpetaluma.org/bike-parking> to suggest locations within the public right-of-way in commercial districts, parks, and other City-owned property where they would like to see bicycle racks installed. Requests will be reviewed by staff for feasibility and suitability. Submitting a request does not guarantee installation.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

The installation of bike racks would be categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301(c) - Existing Facilities.

## **CITYWIDE GOALS & PRIORITIES**

Increasing and improving bicycle parking supports several City Goals and Priorities by providing functional and sustainable infrastructure that meets the needs of residents (A City that Works for Everyone), reducing greenhouse gas emissions from transportation (Our Environmental Legacy), promoting visitation to Petaluma businesses (An Economy that Prospers), and promoting active lifestyles (A Safe Community that Thrives).

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A. Welle Circular Specifications  
Attachment B. Welle Flat Top Specifications  
Attachment C. Welle Series Specifications