Multiuse lanes for freight distribution in Bilbao

KeyWords: Cooperation; Innovative operational solutions; Access rules and restrictions of urban areas; Land use and spatial planning; Infrastructure financing

Description:

‘Multiuse lanes’ is one of the initiatives developed in Bilbao by the local authority and local stakeholders to improve goods distribution in the city.

This initiative consists of the more efficient use of lanes in the city centre streets. In this approach, one of the road lanes will be provided for the loading and unloading of goods at certain time slots, and used for other vehicle activities during the rest of the day.

Benefits:

- Reduction of parking violations.
- Optimization of the distances travelled.
- Satisfaction of the carriers regarding legal vs. illegal parking. Therefore, fewer fines.
- Satisfaction of the residents and businesses.
- Reducing pollution by less parking in the second row and less traffic jam.
- Extension of parking space in peak hours.

Starting Point/Objectives/Motivation:

The main idea consists of using a lane of road space for differing activities at different times of the day, thereby better meeting traffic needs:

- Car parking: from 21.00 to 08.00
- Booking for loading and unloading (goods vehicles only): from 08.00 to 12.00
- Moving traffic (no parking, no loading or unloading allowed): from 12.00 to 21:00

The most critical aspect was to signal clearly to drivers that a three lanes road became a two lanes road, as the left hand lane was a multiuse lane.

Before the implementation the lane was illegally used by vans and private vehicles carrying out loading and unloading activities.

Some necessary characteristics of the road for inclusion in the project implementation are:

- The road must have two or more lanes in the same direction.
- The traffic density in a given time window permits the removal of a lane, without disturbing the traffic flow.
- It must be a commercial area with enough shops, a high footfall and enough deliveries to justify the implementation.
- Along the selected lane length, any bus stop or garage access must be retained.

Success Factors:

- The improvement of the urban freight distribution in Bilbao is possible through consensus and collaboration of all stakeholders, both private and public, and thus leading to greater efficiency in traffic flow and in loading and unloading activities.

Supported Strategic Targets:

- Better utilisation of infrastructure
- Acceptance and influence
- Highest safety and security
- Increased company profitability
- Conservation of resources
- Increased efficiency / productivity of logistics processes

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This project is based on a public and private partnership approach with the participation of the local Bilbao Council and the Regional Authority Euskadi Mobility and Logistics cluster as project leaders. The participants extend to other agents like trade associations (Asociación de Empresarios de Hostelería de Bizkaia, Bilbao Centre, Bilbao Denda and the Asociación de Comerciantes del Casco Antiguo), supermarkets (BM Supermarkets, Ercoreca Supermerkatuak y Eroski), specialized retailers and carriers (ADISBI, Azkar, Bizkai Izarra Zerbitzuak, VEN, Zubillaga y Medrano Wines), Bilbao Police and other entities (Instituto Vasco de Logística, Universidad de Deusto, JPIsla Logística) and technological companies (GK Gertek e Igarle). Moreover the Ministry of Development and Basque Energy Entity have helped to finance the project.

In Bilbao, the impact of multiuse lanes was very beneficial for residents and local businesses, and was fulfilling its objective of reducing negative externalities such as congestion. The solution can be transferred to other countries, regions or cities and to other actors or industries. The multiuse lane was implemented in accordance with the rules already existing in the city. It can be used for all kind of streets with similar conditions. There is a similar case in Barcelona, where the multipurpose lane extends for the total length of these lanes and converts the free parking spaces into loading and unloading space during limited time slots. In addition, during the peak hours, the lane is used as a priority bus lane.

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