

# To the person who keeps reporting our charging cable to Alex311:

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Please stop. Eleven reports in eight weeks is a lot — three in a single day seemed excessive. Each one costs the City time and money. We get it: you don't like the charging cable.

## ONE THING WORTH KNOWING

Reporting us doesn't actually accomplish anything. The City has **no citation, no fine, and no enforcement mechanism** — beyond politely asking us to move the ramp and cable when it's out.

As you can see, we don't have another way to charge our car. It was like this when we bought the house a few months ago, and we can't stop without building a driveway. We use the ramp and put the cable away when we're done, to keep the sidewalk clear. Honestly, it stings to see this much attention on our small encroachment when there are dozens of unreported trip hazards, sidewalk encroachments — and even other charging cables — right here in Rosemont.

## If you'd like to keep reporting anyway, a few friendly tips:

- 1 **It isn't an ADA issue.** This is a temporary encroachment on the public right-of-way — like a planter outside a shop. The ramp preserves access; the 12:1 ADA slope rule is for *permanent* ramps.
- 2 **Please leave my family out of it.** Don't use my name or post photos of me and my daughter — these become public records. The City already knows who I am and how to reach me.
- 3 **Don't re-use photos.** A picture taken **July 1st** has shown up in several later reports; the City doesn't check the date, so they read as new. One recurring shot is even a white Tesla that isn't ours.
- 4 **Consider just talking to us.** One report mentioned tripping over the cover at night — we'd switched to night charging to bother fewer people, and have since added a motion-sensor light. If you can photograph me biking with my daughter for a report, you can say hello.

Honestly? We'd love for the City to create a **permit program** for this. Curbside charging is dramatically cheaper than public chargers when you don't have a driveway, and several peer cities already allow it. If you'd like to see our proposal — or my complete criminal record — scan below.



### See the proposal

Why curbside charging, and how a permit could work.

[curbsidealx.com](https://curbsidealx.com)



### View my criminal record

All 11 reports, laid out as a case file.

[curbsidealx.com/scofflaw/](https://curbsidealx.com/scofflaw/)

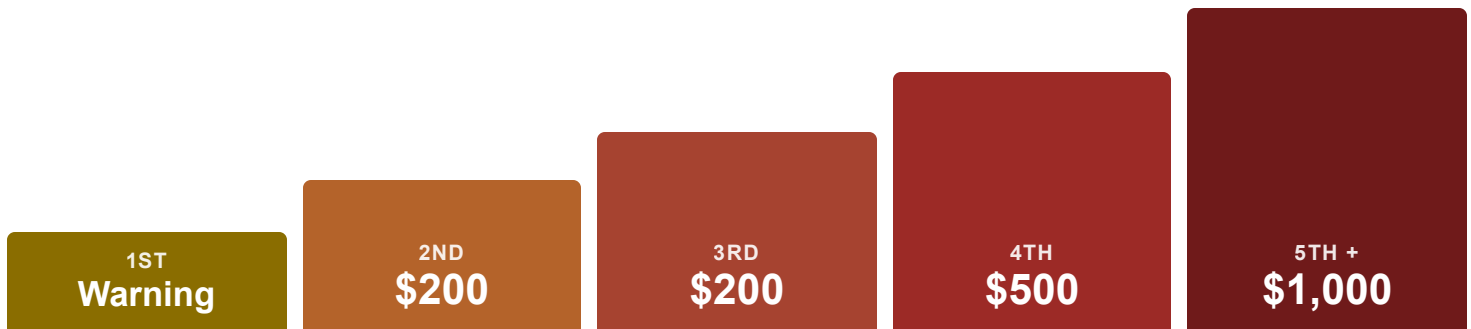
TO OUR NEIGHBORS — AND TO WHOEVER KEEPS REPORTING OUR CHARGING CABLE

# Our first sign didn't work. Now it gets real.

That sign said reporting us does nothing — ~~no citation, no fine, no enforcement~~. You kept reporting anyway. Fair enough — but **City Council is now weighing fines that would change that**. The vote was deferred — not dropped.

Under the ordinance now before City Council, the City could fine **us** for the charging cable — and it escalates fast, no matter the scale of the violation. These are the fines that are coming when Council acts:

The proposed penalty ladder, per violation:



The 2nd penalty is **waived** if you meet with City staff to discuss correcting the condition. And critically: the draft says **each day a violation "exists or persists" may count as a separate violation** — so this can add up very fast.

**Bonus:** there's no evidentiary standard — so we have no idea whether T&ES will consider Alex311 reports a source of truth, or need to do its own inspection.

## AND UNDER CURRENT LAW — TODAY

The City doesn't actually have to wait for Council. Under the code's catch-all penalty (§ 1-1-7), an unresolved violation could already be taken to court like a misdemeanor — **up to \$2,500 in fines and/or 12 months in jail** per proven offense, with each day it continues potentially charged as a separate offense. Jail, over a charging cable? Unlikely, we'd hope — but it is on the books.

## WHAT WE'RE ACTUALLY ASKING

The moment Council enacts this, every report could start costing our family real money — up to **\$1,000 a day**. We can't build a driveway overnight. So we're asking our neighbors: help us fix this the right way — back a curbside-charging permit — instead of fining us out of our own home. **Please hold off on reporting while we sort it out.**



See the fix — and add your voice  
[curbsidealex.com](http://curbsidealex.com)

How you can help → the next two sheets lay out our options. Please vote. →

# So — if you were us, what would you do?

Here is every realistic way to stop charging across the sidewalk, and what each one actually costs. (Yes, we've thought about all of them.)

▶ **CAST YOUR VOTE — ADD A TALLY MARK INSIDE THE BOX OF YOUR PICK. CHOICES CONTINUE ON THE NEXT SHEET →**

## 1 Build a driveway

Months of permitting and construction — then the cheapest charging there is (~\$1,128/yr). This was our first thought, but it doesn't happen overnight, and it's a lot of money to solve a cable.

**~\$10,000**  
UP FRONT

## 2 Drive to a public fast charger (L3)

Doable — but at roughly 5× the cost of charging at home, plus hours of errands every week sitting at a charger across town instead of in front of our house.

**~\$5,400**  
PER YEAR

## 3 Use the City's public L2 program

It doesn't exist on our street yet — and a real build-out would take years. Even then, at ~\$5,700/yr per driver, it stays **dramatically more expensive than charging at home** (~\$1,128/yr)

**~\$5,700**  
PER YEAR

DOESN'T EXIST YET

# ...or one of these.

## 4 Keep charging — and start paying fines

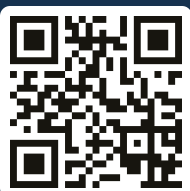
Once Council acts: warning → \$200 → \$200 → \$500 → \$1,000, and **each day may count as its own violation**. At our once-a-week charging, a sustained year could top **\$40,000** (worst case). We would rather not.

UP TO  
**\$1,000**  
PER DAY

## 5 Be kind while we fix it

Keep charging at home — the baseline — while we win a real **permit program**, the option every peer city (Seattle, DC, Cambridge) already offers residents without a driveway. Give us a little grace and hold off on the reports. Two minutes, below.

~\$1,128  
PER YEAR  
THE BASELINE



### Agree? Tell City Council.

Scan to send a ready-made note to Alexandria City Council in about two minutes, and see the full researched proposal.

[curbsidealex.com](https://curbsidealex.com)

# Let's fix this. What's the actual concern?

We're going to assume the best: that these reports are really about a **specific, fixable concern**. If so, tell us exactly what it is and we'll fix it — genuinely. That's what this card is for.

✓ ALMOST CERTAINLY YOU'RE HERE

## ☐ I have a specific concern — and it's fixable.

*e.g., ramp height, cable slack, a spot that catches a toe, the hours we charge. Be specific — the more detail, the faster it's fixed:*

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*...and only if we're honestly wrong about that, it might be one of these — tell us straight:*

## ☐ It's personal — I don't like the owners.

*We'd still rather be neighbors. What's going on?*

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## ☐ Rules matter more than the people here.

*It's covered and no one's been hurt — but make the case:*

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**Whichever it is, we'd rather talk than trade 311 reports.**

The whole story — and the permit fix we're pushing for — is at [curbsideallx.com](https://curbsideallx.com). You know where we live.

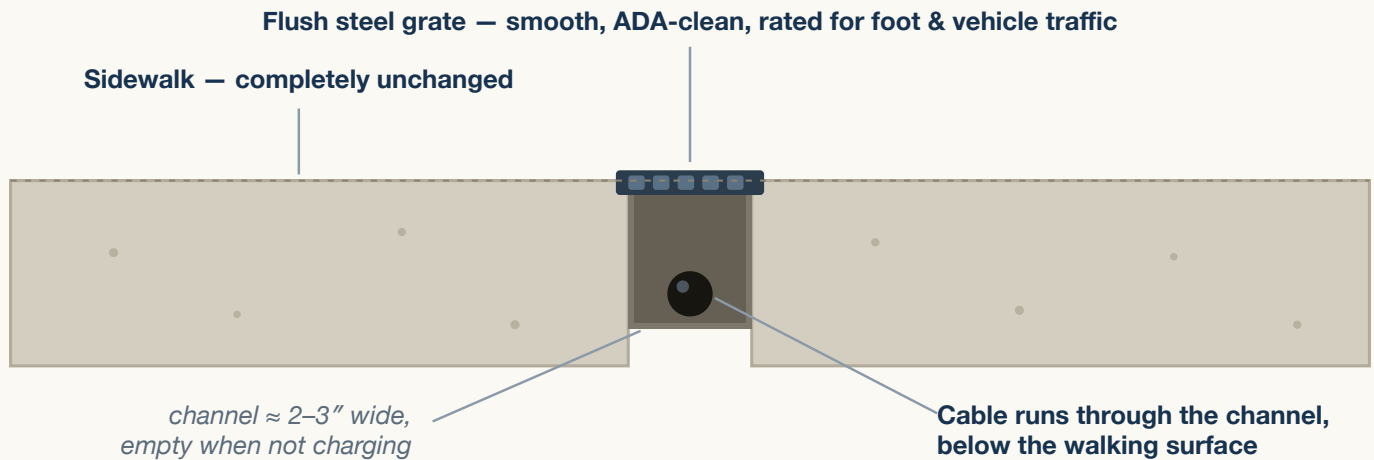
**[curbsideallx.com](https://curbsideallx.com) · — Your neighbors at 1 West Oak**

FOR EVERYONE ASKING "ISN'T THERE A BETTER WAY?" — THERE IS.

# It's called a trench drain.

A trench drain is ordinary sidewalk hardware: a narrow channel set into the concrete with a flush steel grate on top — the same thing that keeps driveways and pool decks from flooding. Run the charging cable **through the channel** instead of over the pavement, and the sidewalk stays a sidewalk.

## CROSS-SECTION · WHAT A PEDESTRIAN WALKS OVER



## Why it's perfect here

- ✓ **Nothing on the surface.** The cable sits below grade under a grate that's flush with the concrete — zero trip hazard, even mid-charge.
- ✓ **ADA-clean.** No ramp, no slope, no surface change — wheelchairs, strollers, and nighttime dog-walkers roll straight over it.
- ✓ **Invisible when idle.** No cable in it? It's just a grate, like any utility cover on any sidewalk.
- ✓ **Proven, boring hardware.** Off-the-shelf channel drain rated for foot and vehicle loads — a few hundred dollars installed, not a \$10,000 driveway.

## THE CATCH

Cutting a channel into a public sidewalk is an **encroachment on the right-of-way** — under current code, this careful, engineered fix is **exactly as illegal as the cord it would replace**, and there is no permit we can apply for. The safest version of this is still against the rules. That's the problem.



**Think the City should permit the good solution?**

Tell City Council — the site drafts the note for you in about two minutes, and lays out the full engineering case.

[curbsideallx.com](https://curbsideallx.com)

— Your neighbors at 1 West Oak

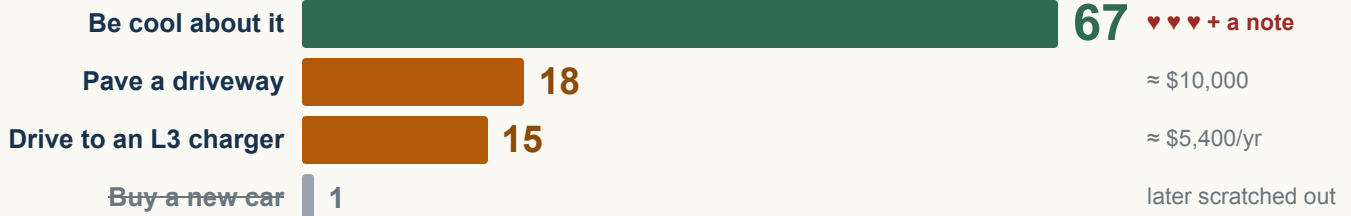
100 VOTES · THE NEIGHBORHOOD HAS SPOKEN

# Most neighbors vote for kindness!

*I hope our erstwhile harassers will abide by this non-binding neighborhood opinion vote.*

FINAL TALLY · WHAT SHOULD THE FAMILY AT 1 W OAK DO?

STOPPED AT 100 VOTES



First, a warning for people considering this: if you have feelings and faith in your fellow humans, you may not want to put up signs asking for public input. After a week, the initial tally was 28 in favor of the kindness option, and 3 for driveway, 2 for drive to L3. That felt pretty good.

After Labor Day weekend, the total was 67 in favor of kindness, 18 for driveway, and 15 for drive to L3. (I stopped at 100 votes.) There was also 1 vote (someone later scratched it out) suggesting we buy a new car. (Very helpful, thank you.) Notably, there were no suggestions on the feedback section, so that didn't work. This felt less good.

*Someone very nicely also wrote "Sorry someone is making this hard for you" and we got three hearts on the kindness area in addition to tick marks. This felt good.*

Big thank you to everyone who participated, even if I don't agree with many of you. Big extra thank you for those who stopped by to chat or otherwise engaged, and we appreciate all the sympathy.

As a bonus, we learned that there are at least five examples of this kind of charging setup in Rosemont. I cannot reveal their locations, because we do not want them to be targeted as well. But this reinforced my belief that this is relatively common and then confused me as to why our house is the only one being reported.

The votes for the driveway option and L3 charging options are genuinely mystifying. Each of them would cost our family thousands of dollars. It is kind of depressing that so many people think their irritation should be worth that kind of disruption to a family's finances.

## Here is what we do with money when we don't have to spend it on a driveway:

- Our elder daughter (2nd grade) likes the STEM camps over the summer, but they're a little more expensive. They are worth it. She asked me what came before the Big Bang the other day.
- Our smaller daughter (pre-K) was afraid of water, but with lots of swimming lessons and patience, she is close to jumping off the side of the pool all by herself.
- I am pretty sure I can build a treehouse for the girls in this Ash tree.
- I hear college is expensive. I would love for them to be able to go where they want and not have to join the Navy to pay for it like I did. (To be fair, Top Gun played a role there.)
- My wife needs expensive jewelry and luxury gifts or she will leave me. Haha, I am kidding. I think.

I am not sure what I expected from this. I think I was hoping most people would vote for kindness and the people reporting us would feel ashamed about the stress they've caused us and think "hm, this really is the only option for them, so I'll stop threatening them fines (or jail!?)". We did get the votes for that, but not as decisively as I wanted.

Mostly, this has convinced me even more that **the city should authorize some kind of cross-curb charging**, because the affordability of EVs for people without driveways depends entirely on a collective promise of every single person in the neighborhood to be cool with it.



**If you agree, visit [CurbsideALX.com](https://CurbsideALX.com) and email city council!**

The site drafts the note for you in about two minutes — and lays out the whole case, including what this has cost us.

[curbsidealx.com](https://curbsidealx.com)

— Your neighbors at 1 West Oak