
LEGISLATIVE ACTION ITEM

DATE: October 28, 2009
TO: Salt Lake City Council
FROM: Transportation & Mobility Subcommittee
RE: Proposal: Complete Streets Ordinance
CC: Cindy Gust-Jenson, David Everitt, Ed Rutan, Frank Gray, Tim Harpst, Karen Hale, Gordon Hoskins, Jennifer Bruno, Gina Chamness

The proposed legislative action item from the City Council Transportation and Mobility Subcommittee is the first formal step toward codifying in the *Salt Lake City Code* an Executive Order by then-Mayor Ross C. Anderson mandating that “all transportation facilities in the public right of way owned by Salt Lake City on which bicyclists and pedestrians are permitted by law ... shall be designed, constructed, operated and maintained so that users, including people with disabilities, can travel safely and independently.”

The City Council at its October 6, 2009, work session informally agreed to place the item on a City Council agenda for formal consideration. Council Members Luke Garrott, Jill Love, Soren Simonsen and Van Turner, who make up the Subcommittee, already have indicated support for the action item.

The item appears to have no effect on future budgets because the Executive Order, titled *Accommodation of Bicyclists and Pedestrians*, has been in effect since January 5, 2007.

The reason for making the order an ordinance is to clarify and confirm that it is City Council’s policy to accommodate people who walk or ride bicycles or use other forms of non-motorized transportation in Salt Lake City because all modes of transportation are necessary in an ecologically sustainable community.

If the City Council supports the legislative action item, it appears to have two choices to help implement the item: It can direct the City Attorney’s Office to prepare an ordinance codifying the Executive Order, or it can direct one of the attorneys under contract to the City Council to prepare an ordinance.

POTENTIAL MOTIONS

- I move that the City Council initiate the proposed legislative action to codify the Executive Order of January 5, 2007, titled *Accommodation of Bicyclists and Pedestrians*, as part of the Salt Lake City Code and direct the City Attorney’s Office to prepare an ordinance to enact the legislative action.

- I move that the City Council initiate the proposed legislative action to codify the Executive Order of January 5, 2007, titled *Accommodation of Bicyclists and Pedestrians*, as part of the Salt Lake City Code and direct City Council staff to assign legal counsel under contract to prepare an ordinance to enact the legislative action.
- I move that the City Council consider the next item on the agenda.

The basis for requesting full City Council consideration of the action item are the nine transportation policies that the City Council adopted on November 15, 1994, and included in adopting the 1996 Salt Lake City Transportation Master Plan.

The policies are:

- The Council considers neighbors, residential and commercial, as the building blocks of the community.
- The Council encourages the preservation and enhancement of living environments, particularly the downtown.
- The Council discourages through traffic on streets, other than arterial streets, in residential neighborhoods.
- The Council will focus on ways to transport people to their desired destinations, and not on moving motorized vehicles at the expense of neighborhoods.
- The Council will make and support transportation decisions that increase the quality of life in the City, not necessarily the quantity of development.
- The Council supports the creation of a series of linkages, the visions and incentives to foster appropriate growth in currently defined growth centers.
- The Council supports more public/private partnerships in which all who benefit from the capital improvements participate in funding those improvements.
- The Council supports considering the impacts on neighborhoods on at least an equal basis with the impacts on transportation systems and the *Transportation Master Plan* and related planning.
- All neighborhoods are to be given equal consideration in transportation decisions.

The Executive Order reads:

The benefits of bicycling and walking span across many aspects of our daily lives. The social and environmental benefits include healthier citizens and the improved health of our community through a substantial reduction in air pollution. A transportation system that encourages bicycling and walking can also save money, reduce traffic congestion, build community, and improve the overall quality of life. Therefore, Salt Lake City supports the concept of Complete Streets, requiring the accommodation of pedestrians and bicyclists throughout the planning process by providing the following policy.

All transportation facilities in the public right of way owned by Salt Lake City on which bicyclists and pedestrians are permitted by law, including, but not limited to streets, bridges, and all other connecting pathways, shall be designed, constructed, operated and maintained so that users, including people with disabilities, can travel safely and independently.

Therefore I enact this Executive Order:

1. General

1.1 Bicycle and pedestrian ways shall be established in the City's new construction and reconstruction projects in the public right of way, subject to budget limitations, unless one or more of the following three exemption conditions are met:

a) Bicyclists and pedestrians are prohibited by law from using the street or facility. In this instance, a greater effort may be necessary to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians elsewhere within the right of way or within the same transportation corridor.

b) The cost of establishing bikeways or walkways would be excessively disproportionate to the need or probable use. A Complete Streets Committee, consisting of the Transportation Director, Planning Director, City Engineer and Airport Director (if applicable), will determine whether the cost of establishing bikeways or walkways is excessively disproportionate on a project by project basis.

c) Scarcity of population or other factors indicate an absence of need, with consideration given to future population growth.

1.2 The design and development of the transportation infrastructure shall improve conditions for bicycling and walking through the following additional steps:

a) Planning projects for the long-term. Transportation facilities are long-term investments that remain in place for many years. The design and construction of new facilities that meet the criteria in the above stated exemption conditions should anticipate likely future demand for bicycling and walking facilities and not preclude the provision of future improvements. For example, a bridge that is likely to remain in place for 50 years might be built with sufficient width for safe bicycle and pedestrian use in anticipation that facilities will be available at either end of the bridge even if that is not currently the case.

b) Addressing the need for bicyclists and pedestrians to cross corridors as well as travel along them. Even where bicyclists and pedestrians may not commonly use a particular travel corridor that is being improved or constructed, they will likely need to be able to cross that corridor safely and conveniently. Therefore, the design of intersections and interchanges shall accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians in a manner that is safe, accessible and convenient.

c) Exemptions. Exemptions regarding the installation of bikeways and walkways shall be approved by the aforementioned Complete Streets Committee and be documented with supporting data that indicates the basis for the decision.

d) Designing facilities to the best currently available standards and guidelines. The design of facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians should follow design guidelines and standards that are commonly used, such as the AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities,

AASHTO's A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets, the Institute of Transportation Engineers recommended practice "Design and Safety of Pedestrian Facilities", and the U.S. Department of Transportation sponsored *Designing Sidewalks and Trails for access Part II: Best Practices Design Guide*.