



living streets alliance

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23 February 2011

FACT SHEET ON PROPOSED BICYCLE PARKING CODE UPDATE

Prepared by Living Streets Alliance

Living Streets Alliance believes that if the City of Tucson is serious about maintaining and enhancing its bicycle friendly reputation -- as well as encouraging and supporting bicycle usage as a viable alternate mode of transportation -- increasing bicycle accommodations, not decreasing them, is the proper path.

Background: The City of Tucson is currently revising its land use code through a Sustainable Land Use Code Integration Project. One of the major sections of the project reviews “Mobility and Transportation and Alternative Fuels.” In this section, current bicycle parking requirements were reviewed and analyzed.

Results: There are two major outcomes of the review process.

1) The Planning Commission recommends that bicycle parking requirements be loosened to allow bicycle parking within 75 feet of main entrances, as opposed to the current 50 feet required. This goes against national standards, established by the American Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals, which recommend all bicycle parking be within 50 feet of the main entrance of businesses.

2) The Planning Commission recommends that minimum bike parking requirements be based on minimum car parking requirements. The current code bases bicycle parking quantity requirements on the square footage of the business, which means that bicycle parking quantity requirements will not be diminished if/when car parking quantity requirements are.

Living Streets Alliance Recommendations:

- **Bicycle parking should remain within the national standard of 50 feet maximum from a store entrance.**
- **Minimum bicycle parking requirements should remain based on the square footage of a store footprint.**

Why does this matter? Clearly visible bicycle parking shows that both individual businesses and the City of Tucson recognize bicycles as a legitimate form of transportation. Other reasons include:

Safety – The farther a bicycle rack is from a visible entrance, the more likely it is to be in an area with little to no visibility. This makes it easier for bicycles to be vandalized or stolen, and – more important – decreases the sense of safety a rider feels. This is particularly important for vulnerable populations and for women riding alone.

Visual Appeal – If a bicyclist arrives at a destination and can’t find a proper bike rack, the bicyclist is going to lock to whatever is most convenient (i.e. closest to the entrance of their destination). This could end up being a parking meter, a tree, a street sign, guardrail. The farther bike parking is from the entrance, the less likely it is to be used.

Recognition – As mentioned above, good, visible bicycle parking shows that a business recognizes bicycles as a legitimate form of transportation. The City of Tucson states that it supports bicycles and has

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made a dedicated effort to obtain the “Platinum” (highest) status of bicycle-friendliness by the League of American Bicyclists. This simply means that the city needs to utilize national standards by bicycle parking. The proposed changes to the bicycle parking requirements would do exactly the opposite.

Sustainability – If the updated code is trying to loosen minimum car parking requirements and in doing so encourage use of alternative modes of transportation, it follows that other codes should complement this goal. Shouldn’t there be **MORE** bicycle parking, if there is less car parking.

Health – Safe, secure bicycle parking encourages bicycle use, which has fitness benefits in a city that, like the rest of the country, is suffering from increased rates of obesity. A countywide initiative funded by a recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention grant supports active transport as a way to reduce obesity in our community.

Supporters – City of Tucson Bicycle/Pedestrian staff members and the Bicycle Advisory Committee recommended to the Planning Commission that the 50-foot standard and bicycle parking based on store square footage remain.

The U.S. Department of Transportation policy statement on bicycle and pedestrian accommodations issued in 2010 by U.S. Secretary Ray LaHood concludes:

“Increased commitment to and investment in bicycle facilities and walking networks can help meet goals for cleaner, healthier air; less congested roadways; and more livable, safe, cost-efficient communities. Walking and bicycling provide low-cost mobility options that place fewer demands on local roads and highways. . . . While DOT leads the effort to provide safe and convenient accommodations for pedestrians and bicyclists, success will ultimately depend on transportation agencies across the country embracing and implementing this policy.”

For additional information, read these articles by Tucson Velo:

<http://tucsonvelo.com/news/new-rules-require-less-bike-parking-can-be-placed-further-away/5487>

<http://tucsonvelo.com/news/contest-taking-a-stand-on-bike-parking/6018>

Living Streets Alliance is committed to promoting a healthier community by empowering people to transform our streets into vibrant places for walking, bicycling, socializing and play.