

## **SPEECH 1 on 2/15/23:**

Good Evening Members of the City Planning Commission,

My name is Jaron Rosenau. I'm here today to urge you to consider adding language to the city's Land Development Code that would require curb cuts in front of every sidewalk situated bike rack. Currently, many of our sidewalks lack these essential curb cuts, making it difficult for cyclists to park their bikes safely and fluidly. This not only creates an inconvenience for cyclists but also discourages sustainable transportation in our city.

The lack of curb cuts minimizes the incentive to bike because it's not a fluid process to dismount a bicycle and hop a curb to get to a bike rack. This can cause frustration and discourage people from using bicycles as their primary mode of transportation. It's also not safe, especially for individuals with limited mobility, the elderly, or children.

Furthermore, since bike racks are installed on sidewalks that prohibit riding bikes, retrieving a bike from mid-block bike parking, and then being required to walk a bike to a corner is not an adequately thought through design. This results in cyclists having to awkwardly navigate a bike rack on the sidewalk without the convenience of an accessible curb cut, making it more difficult and dangerous to maneuver their bikes. The lack of a curb cut also encourages illegal riding on the prohibited sidewalk. For example, currently, when I retrieve my bike at a bike rack situated on the sidewalk, I am forced to walk my bike onto the street, which can be both dangerous and inefficient. I have to pause and stand still next to moving cars as I mount my bicycle and then proceed to start pedaling. Having curb cuts would allow me to stay on the sidewalk and easily move onto the street with my bike in one fluid action, reducing the inconvenience and danger to both myself and other road users.

Including language in the Land Development Code that requires curb cuts in front of bike racks would not only make it easier and safer for cyclists to park their bikes, but it would also encourage more people to choose biking as a sustainable mode of transportation. By providing this necessary infrastructure, we can create a more bike-friendly city, reduce traffic congestion, and encourage safe and fluid riding.

In conclusion, I strongly urge you to consider the importance of curb cuts in front of every sidewalk situated bike rack and anywhere else that bicycles are being parked off of a bike lane and include this language in the city's Land Development Code. It's time we prioritize sustainable transportation by taking care of these small issues that keep people from choosing to ride a bike.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

## **DISCUSSION 1 on 2/15/23:**

Commissioner Shean: I have a question for Jason if he has thoughts on whether this violates any current code or policy. It sounds like a great idea.

Planning Manager Jason: Yeah the bicycle parking and access standards are actually in the LDC Chapter 4.1 now, and there is a curb cut requirement in the code presently. Now it is possible that it may not be applied consistently or maybe there is room for interpretation of that standard but it is certainly and clearly there. It says Curb cuts are required to be installed to provide safe convenient access to bike parking areas. It might be helpful if Jason wanted to chat about that so staff can have understanding of specific scenarios where a curb cut would have helped to understand how the code language that is there now might have been a barrier to making that happen. It is in the code.

Commissioner Woods: Was there I don't know when that was put in but it is possible that there are many examples of non-compliance just because, I can't remember the technical term, but it is allowed to remain non-compliant because "grandfather" in but there is another term for it. There could be several places where bike racks were there before this requirement. Do you remember when it was put in?

Planning Manager Jason: I believe it was fairly recent within the last couple of years. I can double check on the timing of that.

Commissioner Smith: I can think of several in front of Grass roots, in front of, so that would be along 2nd street. And I am presuming that this is a curb cut close because at the library the curb cut is at the sidewalk and the bike rack probably doesn't start for 10 feet down the sidewalk and it is a very long bike rack that goes to the steps of the library. And at the other side the curb cut is at the crosswalk and the covered parking is not, it would be pretty hard to get on a bike. I am saying all the places that I can think of, Common Fields just put in 10 new bike racks and they are, maybe near where you can drive in, but they are not. Anyway there are lots of places that I've seen around the city.

Commissioner Shean: I was going to ask Jason if the code language means you have to have a curb cut like would a curb cut for vehicles suffice or if the bicycle lane is adjacent to a sidewalk would they have to put a curb cut in a midblock segment to reach the bicycle rack.

Planning Manager Jason: That may be an area of interpretation, what I read to you was verbatim from the code. So curb cuts in general are things that the public works department is going to regulate in terms of access to the public street and how that interfaces with say bike lanes that are on the street. So there is probably some room to refine how that gets applied and understand in case where we do have existing vehicle driveways or corner ramps at the street, how that would be applied.

Commissioner Shean: I would address the commenter, and let him know that we can not, we do not have means to say everyone who has a bike rack has to now put in a curb cut. We do not have the funds to do that ourselves, if it is an existing curb cut that existed prior to the code then

there is nothing that we can do about that. As new racks go in, as Jason was saying, they will have curb cuts accessible.

Commissioner Woods: What do people think about this scenario, so let's say someone has a business and they want to install more parking but doing so would require that they pay for a new curb cut so they decide they don't want to add the parking because parking is required. What do we feel about setting up that scenario where the thing we wanted, which is more bike parking, is thwarted because they have to spend the extra money to do the curb cut.

Commissioner Laird: There is definitely a balancing act there.

Commissioner Woods: Is the language or could the language be that if it is a new development versus a renovation or add-on, because it seems like there are only certain things that trigger when there is a land division or land planning action.

Development Review Engineering Supervisor Matt Grassel: I wanted to bring up that I think that code standard is applied more to private site development and the commenter might be talking more about right of way bike parking and so there is a little bit of a difference there and there is also some hurdles for bike ramp and right away is it ADA accessible, is it ADA accessible ramp, is it just a bicycle ramp, and what requirements that it may trigger so we need to be conscience of that and probably have to designate them somehow as only a bike ramp otherwise they would have to meet all the ADA requirement if they were a ramp that is for that use so we need to be considerate of that. And I think those standards may just be for on site rather than for public right of way.

Commissioner Laird: Are you referring to bicycle parking lots that would be within the right of way, not accessing the public right of way.

Development Review Engineering Supervisor Matt Grassel: So downtown there is bicycle parking often in the right of way. There are bike racks in the right of way and those bike racks are in the public so they are not subject to the same development standards as a private site is what I am getting at.

Commissioner Laird: Okay thank you. One thing I would be curious about is some discussion of relative costs, if adding the curb cut is doubling the cost of the bike rack, that is a much greater burden than if it increases it by 10% or something. There might be some relative discussion of costs there for typical projects where the relative costs there.

Commissioner Price: There is also the thought of public versus personal good. Having somebody at the most, have to walk half a block. So you are going from the end of the block where there are cuts, on a sidewalk walking to a mid bike rack, is a calming effect. Just like we try to do with traffic, this is an area of pedestrian and vehicular interaction. We want to be sure that we don't try and push things in a way that would make the pedestrian experience significantly worse in those areas. I've ridden a lot of bikes a lot of miles and I understand the

bicyclists needs but I also understand that it's generally if you are on a bicycle a half a block is not an excessive amount of distance either in the public space where it is getting off of it at the corner may be a better pedestrian / vehicular transition point.

Commissioner Smith: What I was thinking is all the bike parking places that I have mentioned have public parking right up against the sidewalk where those bike racks are. And I am making this up, well it appears to me from the Common Fields view point, they have gotten the bicyclists to quit parking where they now have cars. So now instead their bike rack is out on the sidewalk, and that would be true for the library, that would be true for Grassroots. Would we lose two, would having a ramp [mean] that you couldn't have a car there or you would have to have space. And having lost a bike downtown, locked, bicyclists I don't know what kind of locks they have now but it is really hard to have your bike where you can't see it.