



Salt Lake City Transportation Division 1700 South Reconstruction

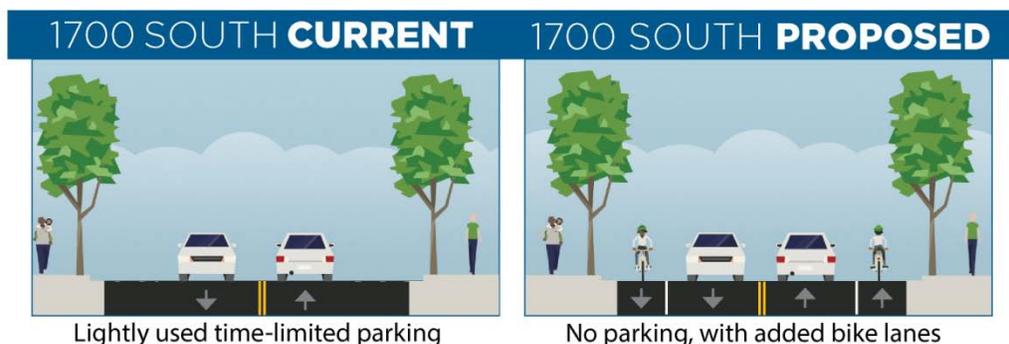
Recommendation for 1700 South Bikeway Configuration

June 2015

1700 South is currently being reconstructed this summer, with a final striping to be completed in the fall. The section of 1700 South from State St. to 500 East is a gap in the city's most continuous east-west bikeway south of 800 South, extending from Wasatch Drive to Pioneer Road; and is recommended for bike lanes in the 10-20 year horizon in the draft Ped/Bike Master Plan. This timing recommendation predates the decision to reconstruct 1700 S this year. This summary has been prepared to explain the analysis conducted by the Transportation Division prior to making a recommendation, and to summarize the actions that will be taken when the roadway is restriped.

This section of 1700 South is approximately 36' wide (curb to curb) with narrow park strips and many large street trees. Each direction has enough space for either parking or bike lanes, but not both. The reconstruction project will not widen the street, except slightly at some intersections to add turn lanes to enhance safety and operation of the street.

In March 2015, Salt Lake City Transportation Division asked for public comment on a proposed new striping design for 1700 South (500 East to State St.) that would remove parking from both sides of the street and add bike lanes. Decisions about striping design typically consider both technical analysis and community input.



Technical analysis

The Transportation Division's analysis shows that the street has many homes with tight parking, but nearly everyone has a driveway or improved alley access. Two homes currently have neither but could have alley access. The street is just barely wide enough for either bike lanes or parking, and even slight widening would not help this situation. The street is nearly flat, so a downhill grade for shared lane markings does not present a clear opportunity for an uphill bike

lane / downhill shared lane as has been successful on the part of 1700 S near Westminster College.

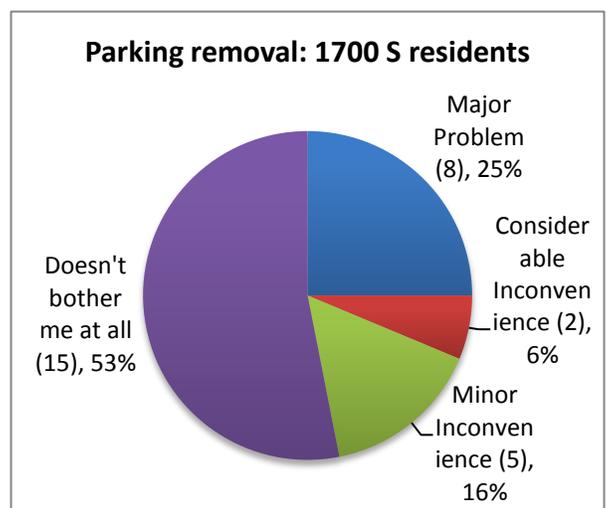
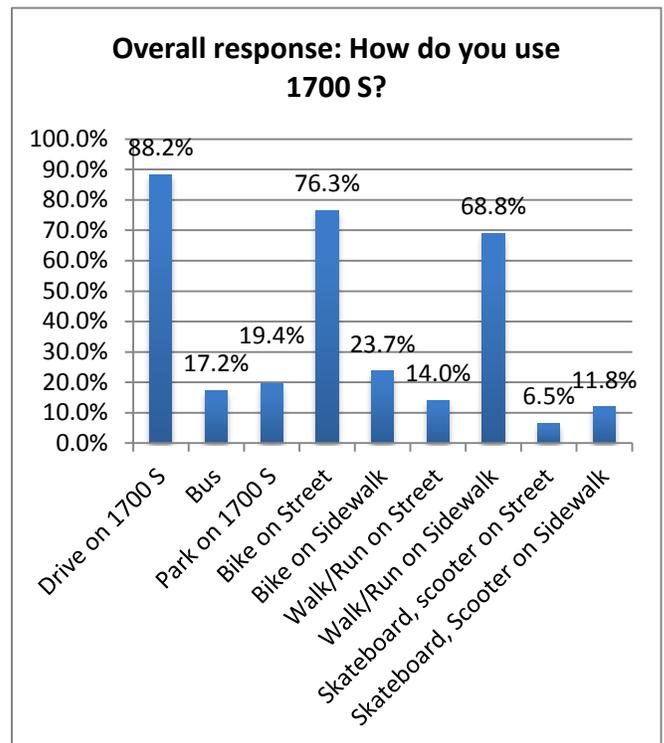
A formal parking utilization study was completed as a part of the technical analysis. Parking observed on the street has been light; a maximum of 8 cars were recorded at any one time in the approximately 115 parking spaces on the entire length between State St. and 500 E. Parking surveys were conducted at various times during the day, in March 2015. The data is consistent with light parking observed in March 2011 in 2-hour increments. Follow-up evening and late night counts were also taken on several dates in April, May, and June 2015, including one, in response to community input about parking at night, at 12:30 am: 4 cars. At most observation times, 2-4 cars were parked on these five blocks at any one time.

Community input

Community input on the proposal was divided between the two choices, with some residents asking for bike lanes, some residents adamant we keep parking, and some residents pointing out that the convenience of parking on the street is outweighed by the risk of having the car hit. A flyer was delivered in early March 2015 to approximately 165 addresses including all houses along 1700 S and two houses on either side of 1700 S. The flyer was also circulated at Ballpark and Liberty Wells Community Council meetings.

The flyer proposed to remove parking and add bike lanes, including the graphic above, and asked constituents for their input via an online survey, open to response for most of March 2015. Those who wished to respond by phone were asked the same questions in the survey by Transportation office staff. The online survey asked respondents questions such as how they use the street as well as their input on the proposed design.

The online survey garnered 92 responses including some via phone. 30 residents directly along 1700 S responded to the survey. Even among residents directly on the street, a slight majority indicated no concerns with removing parking to add bike lanes. Together with those indicating a minor inconvenience, this represents 69% of the residents of the street with little concern about removing parking. Ten households (31%) did indicate a major problem or considerable inconvenience with removing parking.



An additional 30 respondents live just off 1700 S; combined this is a response rate of about 37% of the 160 households to which flyers were distributed.

The residential community sentiment in general, including some responses of people who do not live nearby, supported the idea of parking removal, with 66 responses indicating a lack of concern (72%).

A meeting held with Salt Lake Community College facilities, parking, and parking enforcement staff resulted in a preference from SLCC for bike lanes over parking. SLCC has a private student parking lot, and students are encouraged to use it. Whittier Elementary was also contacted but has not responded with a particular concern.

1700 South does also have small businesses at the corners with 300 E, 400 E and 500 E. These businesses along 300 South typically have modest and visible off-street parking lots, although those may be supplemented by on-street parking. Following are two street corners that are typical of the corridor.



At the corner of 300 E, one business does not have visible off-street parking and has only apparently one small parking space in the rear. This store currently has no on-street parking directly on its frontage due to the approach to the corner; regardless of the bike lane decision, parking will be pulled back further from the corner due to the turn lanes at 300 E. The one spot behind the store is not currently signed or indicated for customer parking. Salt Lake City staff met with the owner, and learned that the business has an easement for four additional spaces on his neighbor's property, shared with residential tenants. He parks in one of these spaces himself but prefers not to use or direct his customers to use the other spaces. He currently tells his customers to park on the street. The owner indicated a preference for keeping parking, while still allowing bicycles to use the street.

The input about bicycles being able to use the street without bike lanes mirrors some input from the input survey. Many respondents indicated that they already bike on the street (76%) without bike lanes, although this does not indicate frequency or time of day. Biking on the street is different on a quiet weekend morning or in the evening than at rush hour.

Safety

In addition to parking use and convenience, another key consideration in this decision is safety, particularly for bicycling. Safety has two aspects:

1. real crash data
2. perception, which likely influences bicycle ridership.

A review of crash data before/after the very similar bike lanes on other sections of 1700 S is not conclusive, with a very few, similar crashes before and after. The number of crashes is small; thus the ability to do meaningful statistical analysis is limited.

Residents in the survey expressed concerns about safety as both drivers and bicyclists. We asked if bicyclists would be afraid to bike in a shared lane (42%), or if motorists would be afraid to hit a bike in a shared lane (28%). However, both of these represent a minority response, as 58% did not indicate a concern about biking in a shared lane, and 72% did not indicate a concern about hitting a bike in a shared lane when driving. At least one respondent suggested that 1700 South works just fine the way it is now.

Other memorable anecdotes:

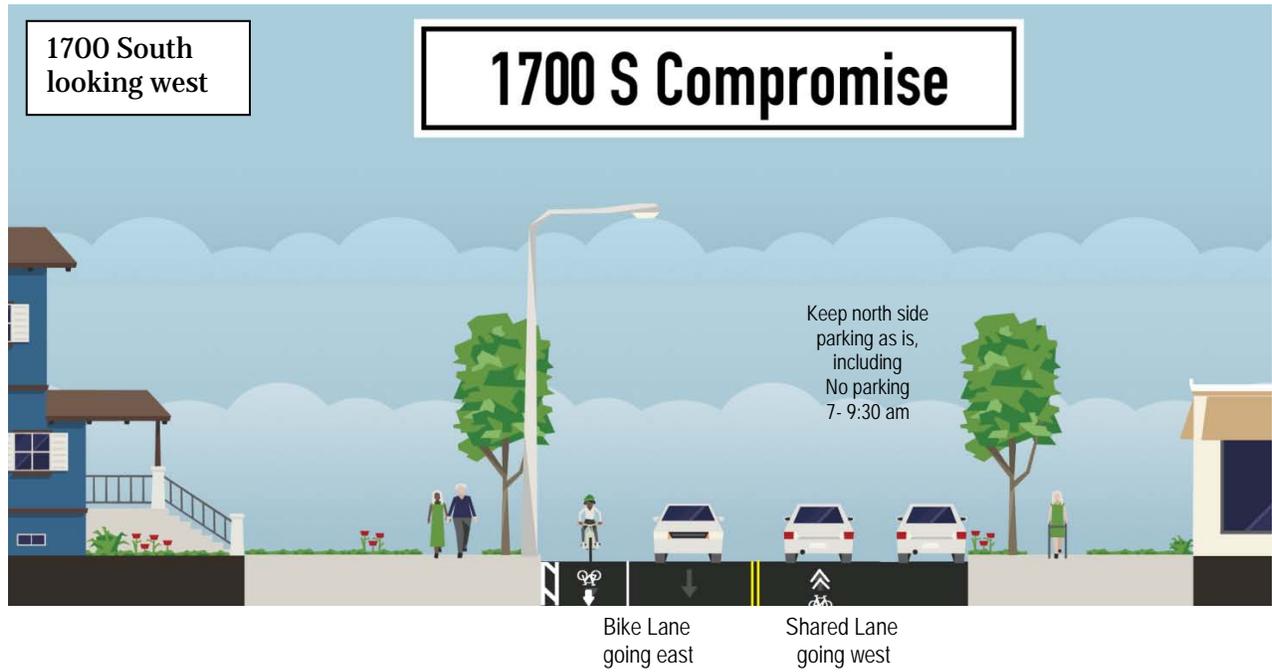
- One woman said her household does not have the luxury of automobiles for everyone in the household; she and her husband share a car and the other one bicycles. She is a nearby resident asking for bike lanes.
- One respondent indicated that he and his housemates have recently had their cars hit while parked on 1700 South overnight. He indicated that not having parking would be inconvenient, but so was having their cars hit / damaged.
- A couple respondents indicated bike lanes would be better for property values in the neighborhood.
- Another woman indicated that she is concerned to have parking near her house for when she arrives home later at night; she lives on a corner with a side street but would be concerned to compete with more neighbors for those spaces.

Recommendation

In balance, the staff team has found the considerations to be so evenly balanced between bike lanes or parking, to recommend a compromise design:

- Remove parking from the south side of the street, to add an eastbound bike lane.
- Keep parking on the north side of the street, and also keep the peak hour restriction (7-9:30 am). That is, keep north side parking exactly as it is now. Residents on the street are currently accustomed to this restriction, and it provides a de facto shoulder for bicycling during morning peak. A peak hour restriction also discourages using the parking lane for long-term car storage.
- Add bike lane signs and symbols, eastbound.
- Add bicycles may use full lane signs, westbound.
- Add shared lane markings in a water-based paint, westbound.

This also represents a compromise that is sensitive to hearing from more residents with a “major concern” on the north side of the street and a local business with minimal parking, also on the north side of the street. The design also reflects a very slight downhill grade, westbound.



Future Monitoring and Analysis

While this design appears to be the best compromise for the current situation, it may not be the solution for all time.

This design is flexible should the City in the future decide to further restrict parking and add a westbound bike lane. The centerline is in the same location with the compromise design as it would be for adding bike lanes. If a decision to add a westbound bike lane is made in the future, the shared lane markings could be water-blasted off the concrete road, and a bike lane stripe added.

The Transportation Division will monitor the parking and bicycle situation with additional surveys and analysis next year, after construction is completely finished and changed patterns of use established. The recommended design compromise works reasonably well precisely because parking is so lightly used; therefore bicyclists can use the parking shoulder most, if not all, of the time. If parking use on the street considerably increases, this may suggest a need to reconsider bike lanes or increase parking restrictions to minimize conflicts between motorists and bicyclists.

If bike lanes are not added based on next year's review, another review is recommended in 10 years, in keeping with the Ped/Bike Master Plan's recommendation that this street eventually include bike lanes.