



PRESS RELEASE

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Second Annual Bike Count Shows Big Jump in Cyclists

Coordinator says bicycling in Salt Lake City is easy, money-saving and "cooler" than ever

SALT LAKE CITY – Salt Lake City's investments in bicycle infrastructure, including approximately 50 lane miles of new on-road bikeways and locally designed "green shared lanes" in the downtown area, are paying off with a one-year 27 percent increase in the number of bicyclists, according to the City's second annual bicycle count.

"The City's bike count reflected a tremendous increase in bicycling," said Becca Roof, Salt Lake City bicycle and pedestrian coordinator. "Our results compare very favorably to other cities. For example, New York City has been heralded for its gains in bicycle commuting, yet saw only a 14 percent increase from its 2010 to 2011 April count numbers."

Roof says the one-year boost may be attributed to a mix of factors including Salt Lake City Mayor Ralph Becker's commitment to bicycle infrastructure, higher gas prices and a growing "hip" factor for bicycling among urban twenty- and thirty-somethings.

The count, which uses volunteers to collect data, surveyed 16 locations during the second week of September. The 27 percent increase was calculated by comparing the 12 locations that were included in both the 2010 and 2011 counts. The weather was similarly sunny and seasonably warm for both years' counts.

Andrew Coffey, a senior political science major from the University of Utah interning with Salt Lake City through the Hinckley Institute of Politics, coordinated the 2011 survey. Coffey, who is not a regular bicyclist himself, said he was impressed at the strength of the local bicycle community turning out to help with the data collection.

"Even during the count, our returning volunteers remarked that they were seeing more bicyclists than last year," Coffey said.

Coffey directed 60 volunteers in staffing the count and used his statistics background to analyze the results.

The top locations for bicycling were near the University of Utah and in the heart of downtown. Also, Coffey noted that the Jordan River Trail posted a considerable amount of bicycle traffic.

The area with the biggest jump in number of bicyclists—a 109% increase—was on 1700 South at 900 West. Most of the 1700 South corridor from 1700 East to Redwood Road received new or redesigned bikeways in 2011 in conjunction with a resurfacing project. This work was designated as part of the City's implementation of the Complete Streets ordinance.

To find out more about bicycling in Salt Lake City, and view a recently updated citywide bikeways map, go to www.slcgov.com/bike/.

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