

FACT SHEET

SB25-149 Equestrian Zones and Protections

www.communityequestrian.org



WHAT DOES EQUESTRIAN ZONES AND PROTECTION LEGISLATION DO?

1. Recognizes the substantial economic and social contributions of the horse industry in Colorado through a legislative declaration.
2. Establishes criteria for equestrian zones in developing suburban areas and representation on maps in local government comprehensive master plans to enable better integration with future development.
3. Provides design guidelines for equestrian compatible street crossings, trailhead parking, road designs and supporting signage which improve safety for all motorists and other vulnerable road users.
4. Establishes the Pass Wide and Slow doctrine, advising motorists to slow to 10mph and allow a minimum of 6ft clearance when passing equestrians.

WHY IS SB25-149 NECESSARY?

Colorado is horse country. With our rich history in ranching and agriculture, horses have been and remain a lifestyle for much of rural Colorado and draw many residents and visitors to our state to experience this unique connection to our heritage and outdoor recreation. As the metro area expands, it is expanding into areas occupied by the equestrian community. Too often safe setbacks, street crossings and trailer parking are not planned, trail connections are lost, forcing equestrians onto roads to get from home to riding venues. We have tragically had collisions resulting in injury and death to equestrians and their equines.

We can and must do better integrating these two worlds. The equestrian community is realistic and does not oppose development, they just want it done in a compatible way. This bill gives local governments the tools they need to accomplish this goal. Maintaining access to the horse experience in growing metropolitan areas benefits the public and supports a vast industry driven primarily through independent small business entrepreneurs.

WHO BENEFITS FROM EQUESTRIAN ZONES & PROTECTIONS?

The improvements to road safety benefit the entire public. Motorists are safer with signage that helps them better understand what to do when they encounter equestrians. Preserving trail connectivity and setbacks from roadways benefits pedestrians and cyclists alike. Keeping suburban areas equestrian friendly sustains the equestrian community and keeps it accessible to a growing population.

IS SB25-149 A STATE MANDATE?

No. This bill is intended to give local governments the ability to choose where, when and how to apply these guidelines. Today, much of rural Colorado simply doesn't have the growth and population to have these issues like our metro suburban areas do. But as growth comes to those communities and they find the need to employ these tools, we will have a statewide standard to follow that is recognizable and consistent throughout the state.



**30.5% OF HOUSEHOLDS
IN COLORADO HAVE
HORSE ENTHUSIASTS**

**TOTAL EMPLOYMENT
IMPACT IN COLORADO:
34,000 JOBS**

**CONTRIBUTION OF THE HORSE
INDUSTRY TO THE COLORADO
ECONOMY: 1.8 BILLION**

**DATA FROM AMERICAN HORSE COUNCIL 2023 ECONOMIC
IMPACT STUDY**

FACT SHEET

SB25-149 Equestrian Zones and Protections

www.communityequestrian.org

WILL THIS BE EXPENSIVE?

With the flexibility built into the bill for local governments to determine where, when and how to implement such improvements as signage and future road designs, the cost can be budgeted as needed. Assembling maps for inclusion into comprehensive plans is not a complicated or expensive process. There simply is not a substantial price tag associated with this bill.

DON'T WE ALREADY HAVE ADEQUATE LEGISLATION FOR EQUESTRIANS?

Not really. Equestrians are categorized as vulnerable road users under Title 42, but only very thinly. Our cycling community has established precedent with expansive legislation addressing their unique needs, and pedestrians have many protections as well. But equestrians are not pedestrians or cyclists, we need different protections and this bill addresses those through guidelines and policy.

WHO SUPPORTS THIS BILL?

Obviously, there is strong support within the equestrian community for the concepts this bill supports. We have discovered strong support outside of the equestrian community as well. Surveys and engagement have shown that an overwhelming percentage of the residents who choose to live in these suburban zones support the horse community and value their presence. They share an appreciation for the open spaces horse properties provide in their neighborhoods and the ambiance they bring.



WHY SUPPORT EQUESTRIANS

ENORMOUS SOCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL NETWORK OF COLORADO EQUESTRIANS

HORSES HEAL HUMANS THROUGH EQUINE ASSISTED THERAPY

YOUTH PROGRAMS PROMOTE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND RESPONSIBILITY

DIVERSE AND THRIVING RECREATIONAL AND COMPETITIVE RIDING PROGRAMS

HORSE ORGANIZATIONS AND SOCIAL CLUBS BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER



EQUESTRIAN ZONES PRESERVE VIEW SHEDS, GREEN SPACE, AND WILDLIFE HABITAT, MAKING OUR COMMUNITIES MORE LIVABLE

EQUINE TOURISM STIMULATES LOCAL ECONOMIES, PRESERVES CULTURAL TRADITIONS

RANCHING DRIVES THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF OUR RURAL COMMUNITIES

SUPPORTING EQUESTRIAN ZONES IN EMERGING METRO AREAS ENSURES ACCESS TO THE HORSE EXPERIENCE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS