



**METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION**

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Memorandum

TO: Planning Committee

DATE: November 7, 2008

FR: Deputy Executive Director, Policy

W. I.

RE: Release of 2009 Draft Regional Bicycle Plan

Background

In 2001, MTC developed the first Regional Bicycle Plan which, was adopted as part of the 2001 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). This plan defined the first regionally significant bicycle route network, developed a funding strategy to complete this network, and identified programs to assist local jurisdictions to become more bicycle-friendly.

2009 Regional Bicycle Plan Update Findings

The 2009 Bicycle Plan update was developed in conjunction with the MTC's Regional Bicycle Working Group (RBWG), Congestion Management Agencies (CMA), transit agencies, city staff, the Bay Area Bicycle Coalition (BABC) and members of the public.

The Plan includes: (1) An updated analysis of bicycle trip making, (2) collision data, (3) a summary of county bicycle planning, (4) examples of state of practice and other advances in bicycle planning and engineering technology, and (5) the need to provide links for bicycle access to transit along with bicycle parking.

Bay Area Bicycle Use

High gas prices and a growing awareness of climate change have resulted in more people riding to work and other trips in recent years. Bike to Work Day has recorded a 40 percent increase in participation from 2007 to 2008. Transit operators have reported bicycle parking at transit facilities are filled to capacity and have had major challenges to accommodate the increasing number of commuters who want to bring their bicycles on board trains and buses. Bicycle retailers have reported a surge in commuter bicycle sales this past summer.

Regional Bikeway Network and Bicycle Plan Recommendations

The focus of the plan is an updated inventory of the Regional Bikeway Network (RBN). The 2,140 miles of on-and off-street bicycle facilities connects to towns and cities in all nine counties, major activity centers, transit and the Bay Trail. For the first time MTC conducted a detailed inventory with the assistance of CMA and transit agency staff to map the beginning and end of each segment along with detailed cost updates of the projects.

The RBN is about halfway complete today. With the Commission committing to complete the aggregate remainder of the network in Transportation 2035, the region is well on its way to accomplishing the goal of connecting the Bay Area by bicycle.

While the RBN comprises a small part (10 percent) of the total highway and local streets and roads network when complete, 90 percent of Bay Area residents will be located about 1 mile from a portion of the network when completed. In addition, roughly half of the RBN projects intersect with Priority Development Areas (PDAs). The RBN provides access to regional transit including BART, Caltrain, Amtrak, San Joaquin and Altamont Commuter Express and multimodal terminals such as ferry terminals.

The majority of the bikeway projects tend to be on-street facilities, about 1/3 of network consists of grade separated paths which benefits not only cyclists but also pedestrians who are able to share the paths for transportation and recreation.

Collision Analysis

From 2000 to 2006, the number of reported collisions between motor vehicles and bicycles in the Bay Area ranged between 2,300 and 2,800. While the number of cyclist fatalities has remained relatively constant, cyclists are overrepresented in fatal collisions. Bike to work trips average 1.4 percent of all trips but 2.5 times that proportion of traffic fatalities were bicyclists. Without reliable data on the number of work and non-work trips, it is difficult to gauge the rate of collisions involving cyclists. However, more people riding bikes can lead to safer conditions. The likelihood that a given person bicycling will be stuck by a motorist varies inversely with the amount of bicycling.

State Complete Streets

In 2008, there was greater attention to bicycling with state legislation that considers bicyclists in transportation. In October, the California Complete Streets Act of 2008 was signed into law that “requires cities and counties to include complete streets policies as part of their general plans so that roadways are designed to safely accommodate all users, including bicyclists, pedestrians, transit riders, children, older people, and disabled people, as well as motorists.” This law complements Caltrans existing Deputy Directive 64 (DD 64) which considers the needs of non-motorized travelers. DD64 was recently updated to function as more of a complete streets policy. These laws and policies support MTC’s Routine Accommodations Policy, adopted in 2006, which requires projects to consider bicycles and pedestrian in planning and design.

Plan Implementation

Staff will work with the Regional Bicycle Working Group (RBWG) to develop criteria for the new Regional Bikeway Program under T-2035. The RBWG could also offer technical assistance to develop funding guidelines for the new Safe Routes to School and Safe Routes to Transit programs under the Climate Action Program.

Additional recommendations found in the bicycle plan include:

1. Ongoing implementation of MTC’s Routine Accommodations Policy
2. Complete the Regional Bicycle Network and reassess criteria for projects on the network
3. Identify and develop ongoing bicycle facility operations and maintenance funding

4. Multimodal integration - Assist transit agencies to integrate bicycle access to stations and vehicles through station area planning and other means.
5. Monitor implementation of the regional bicycle network
6. Data Collection - Continue to collect and analyze collision data and improve the safety of cyclists on roadways. Improve data collection for cyclists by implementing a system of bicycle counts.

Next Steps

The draft plan will be released after the November 14th Planning Committee. Comments on the bicycle plan will be accepted through January 2009 and can be directed in an e-mail to: BikePlan@mtc.ca.gov or by calling 510-817-5757. The plan is posted on MTC's website.

The Final Regional Bicycle Plan will be adopted along with the final Regional Transportation Plan – Transportation 2035 in March of 2009.

Therese McMillan

Attachment: Regional Bicycle Plan for the San Francisco Bay Area- Introduction

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