

COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN
ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Department Liaison:
San Mateo County Office of
Sustainability
455 County Center, 4th Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063
Phone: (888) 442-2666
www.smcsustainability.org

October 19, 2023

Supervisor Ray Mueller
Hall of Justice
400 County Center
Redwood City, CA 94063

RE: Safe Shared Streets Video Pilot Program

Dear Supervisor Mueller:

The San Mateo County Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) recommends that the County support and fund a **Safe Shared Streets Video Pilot Program**.

As your BPAC, our charge is to advise you on matters related to cyclists and pedestrians using the streets and pathways of unincorporated San Mateo County. We are guided by the Unincorporated SMC Active Transportation Plan, the C/CAG SMC Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, the C/CAG SMC Countywide Transportation Plan, the San Mateo County Safe Routes to School Program, the SMC Community Climate Action Plan, relevant sections of the SMC General Plan, and the SMC Trails Master Plan.

The goal of the Unincorporated SMC Active Transportation Plan is to improve walking and bicycling conditions and encourage more people to use active transportation. In order for people to make the choice to leave the car at home and ride a bicycle, or to let their children ride on our streets, they need to feel that it is safe to do so. Unfortunately, the July 10, 2023, San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury found:

- “The number of bicyclists in San Mateo County has not increased since 2002”
- “Without greater focus on bike safety, the number of riders will remain low, because people will avoid bicycling when they don’t feel safe”

This Grand Jury emphasized “San Mateo County, and its cities and towns have a responsibility to make it safe for drivers and pedestrians, as well as bicyclists”

Surveyed riders and potential riders report that near misses are what keep them from riding more, or riding at all.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Elaine Salinger, *Chair*
John Langbein, *Vice Chair*
Susan Doherty

Fred Zyda
Michael Barnes
Cristina Aquino (Alternate)

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Having a good source of data is the best way for us to determine where the problem areas are and where the risk can be reduced. Good data will save lives. Unfortunately, the standard method for collecting data on conflicts between motor vehicles and bicyclists for most jurisdictions in California is through the Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWTRS) which only reports actual collisions where there has been a fatality, injury or property damage. Additionally, as many as 70% of incidents resulting in cyclists requiring medical care in Emergency Rooms are not even reported to law enforcement based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) data.

During previous meetings the BPAC has firmly established that the SWTRS data is inaccurate and incomplete.

We believe the best solution for generating accurate and complete data about the risks of riding a bicycle on public streets is a Safe Shared Streets Video Pilot Program with the following requirements:

The Safe Shared Streets Video Pilot Program must provide a small group of participating cyclists with pre and post cyclist confidence surveys, the tools, training, support and resources to produce near miss incident video evidence and generate accurate, objective, authenticated, high resolution and first hand near miss and collision data that documents cyclists' experienced and perceived threat environments riding on San Mateo County roads.

It must provide participating cyclists with training on the near miss spectrum and assistance shepherding cases to and through the legal system.

It must provide a free Incident Management System where cyclists can submit every near miss incident and collision report including incident information such as date, time, location, license plate number and state, vehicle color, make and model, free form incident description, incident video, and cyclists' experienced and perceived risk documenting the psychological and emotional impact of their near miss incidents.

It must also provide the ability to sort and search for repeat offenders to establish potential patterns of dangerous driver behavior, and the ability to map all near miss incidents to identify dangerous cycling location clusters.

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The system must also allow cyclists to edit and update their incident reports throughout the incident/case life cycle as the case progresses from the initial incident report to citation, charges, prosecution, conviction and sentencing.

This could be the most proactive, community driven, collision prevention system, powered by the most invested stakeholders: cyclists concerned about their own safe active transportation.

Once the pilot has been completed there may be the opportunity to expand this program to give the County a competitive advantage in future grants for safety and infrastructure funding.

The BPAC recommends that the County support and fund a Pilot Program as described here.

Sincerely yours,



Elaine Salinger, Chair
San Mateo County Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee

CC: Carolyn Bloede, Office of Sustainability

Attachments: Active Transportation Plan Excerpts

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The Unincorporated San Mateo County Active Transportation Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose

The Unincorporated San Mateo County Active Transportation Plan provides a framework to improve active transportation conditions for people walking and biking throughout unincorporated county communities. The Plan presents a framework of implementable and visionary projects, programs, and policies to work towards making that vision a reality.

Vision and Goals

The Plan is oriented around five goals: access, safety, equity, mode share, and flexibility. These goals were integrated into the Plan development process and will help guide the implementation of Plan recommendations to improve walking and bicycling conditions throughout the unincorporated areas of the county.

ADOPTED PLANS AND POLICIES

Existing adopted County plans have informed the development of the goals and objectives presented in this Plan. The primary plans governing transportation in the unincorporated areas of San Mateo County include the San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (2011, with an update in progress), the San Mateo Countywide Transportation Plan (2017), the County of San Mateo General Plan (2013), and the San Mateo County Trails Plan (2001). Other area plans that include active transportation recommendations include the Connect the Coastside Plan (forthcoming), the North Fair Oaks Community Plan (2011), and the San Mateo County Green Infrastructure Plan (2019). Additional forthcoming plans that will influence active transportation in San Mateo County include Plan Bay Area 2050, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's Regional Active Transportation Plan, and Caltrans' District 4 Pedestrian Plan.

PLANNING CONTEXT

When potential riders consider their route to a destination, many will choose not to bicycle if they are concerned about their safety along the route.² Transportation practitioners typically categorize bicycle riders and the level of stress they can tolerate (Figure 2) along a spectrum. This framework of stress and rider type was used to assess the existing bicycle network within the unincorporated areas of the county and evaluate how comfortable existing facilities are likely to be for the full spectrum of bicyclists.

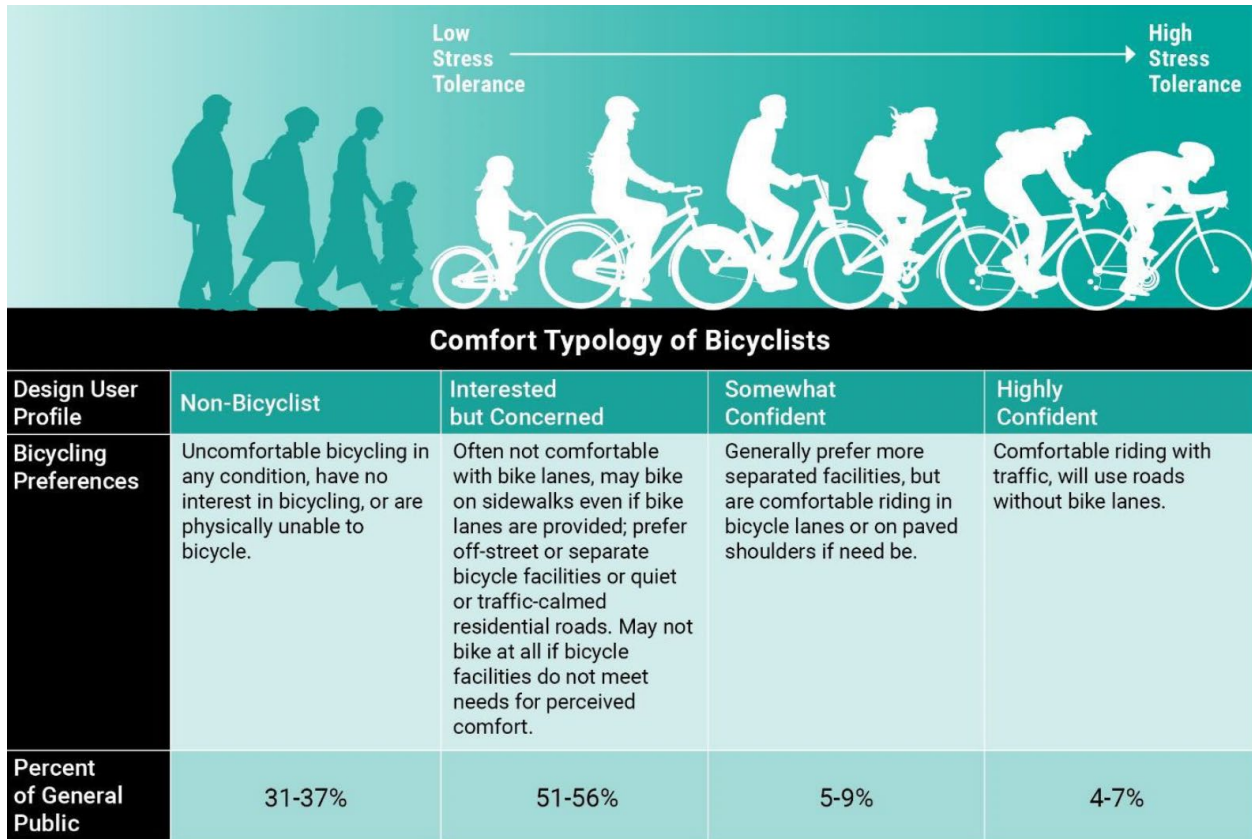
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San Mateo County Community Climate Action Plan

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation makes up the largest proportion of San Mateo County’s unincorporated area emissions. There are a few key strategies to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from transportation. The first strategy is to reduce the amount of driving we do and make other ways to get around more convenient and accessible, such as walking, biking, and public transit.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

The County included several transportation measures in its 2018 Energy Efficiency Climate Action Plan. Some have already been implemented, like traffic calming requirements, electric vehicle parking spaces in some new developments, and permitting updates to improve walkability. In this updated plan, the County is doubling down on partnerships to take a thorough look at improving biking, walking, transit, and driving infrastructure.

WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

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Primary Goals

Transportation makes up the largest portion of the San Mateo County community's greenhouse emissions. By creating better cycling, pedestrian, and transit systems and promoting electric vehicle adoption, the County aims to:

- Increase adoption of zero-emission vehicles and equipment to 18% by 2030 and 100% by 2040.
- Reduce communitywide vehicle use.

Supporting Goals

Well-designed paths, crossings, transit schedules, and green spaces that help us leave internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles behind in favor of walking, biking, transit, and electric vehicles can change all our lifestyles for the better.

- Reduce local air pollution. Vehicle traffic is a main source of air pollution in many places, and there is growing knowledge about the impact of traffic pollutants on health. Car occupants may be exposed to higher levels of air pollution than cyclists or pedestrians. Reducing use of ICE vehicles can improve life expectancy and overall health.
- Create more livable and connected communities. Walking is associated with many social benefits, including increased social interaction and increased safety. Areas with services that are convenient to walk and bike to create better access to jobs, education, services, and social inclusion.
- Improve community health through time in green spaces and physical activity. Active transportation can particularly benefit cardiovascular health and mental health, and it has been linked to lower healthcare costs.
- Bolster local economies. Active transportation can create more foot traffic to shop at local businesses and can reduce costs related to healthcare, road collisions, congestion, fuel, air pollution, and traffic delays.
- Get around better. Better access to active transportation and reliable public transit can reduce traffic congestion and help everyone get where they need to go on time. Less traffic also results in a more pleasant living environment.

The 2021 Unincorporated San Mateo County Active Transportation Plan

In February 2021 the County Board of Supervisors approved the Unincorporated San Mateo County Active Transportation Plan. This plan provides a framework for making walking and bicycling safer and more comfortable for everyone in the county's unincorporated areas. It presents current (2021)

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conditions, including existing infrastructure and collision trends as well as recommendations to invest in walking and bicycling networks. The plan is oriented around five goals:

- **ACCESS:** Improve walking and bicycling paths and other facilities so that residents and visitors of all ages and abilities can comfortably access key destinations.
- **SAFETY:** Improve safety for people walking and bicycling.
- **EQUITY:** Provide equitable access to transportation investments and improve mobility for all.
- **MODE SHARE:** Increase the share of people walking, biking, and accessing transit for all trip purposes to reduce congestion and GHG emissions, and to improve public health outcomes.
- **FLEXIBILITY:** Create a resilient and flexible transportation network that supports a variety of modes of transportation and can adapt to changes in land use, infrastructure, and transportation technologies over time.

The overarching vision of the Plan, as well as its recommendations, align with and support the measures in the Community Climate Action Plan. Investments in active transportation stand to reduce GHG emissions by helping community members utilize less carbon-intensive methods of travel. Given that transportation emissions derived from vehicle miles traveled make up the largest source of emissions in the County (40%), encouraging more active transportation by allocating funding and resources for implementation of the projects and programs outlined in the Active Transportation Plan represents an important avenue for the County to meet its climate goals.

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