Caltrans District-4 Bicycle Advisory Committee

Minutes
July 15, 2009 1:30 – 3:30
District 4, Mountain View Room, 15th Floor
111Grand Avenue, Oakland

Attendance:
Ina Gerhard Caltrans Bicycle Coordinator
Paul Svedersky Caltrans
Stephen Yokoi Caltrans District 4 - Office of System and Regional Planning
Kevin Herritt Caltrans HQ - Office of Geometric Design Standards (by telephone)
Mo Pazooki Caltrans District 4 - Toll Bridge Design
Christine Lillie Caltrans District 4 - Office of Biological Sciences and Permits
Michelle DeRobertis VTA
Sean Co MTC
Robert Raburn EBBC
Bruce "Ole" Olsen Delta Pedalers
Robert Cronin SVBC
Paul Goldstein SVBC
Pat Giorni Bicyclist, San Mateo County

Item 1. Welcome and introductions were made.

Ina Gerhard, Senior Transportation Planner, has been appointed as permanent D4 BAC coordinator under Stephen Yokoi, District Office Chief, Caltrans Office of Regional Planning within the Division of Transportation Planning and Local Assistance. The duties have been moved from the Office of Advanced Planning.

Item 2. Staff Report (5:30)

1. Complete Streets Implementation Plan - The 1st committee meeting held on June 24 comprised of Caltrans Headquarters Division Chiefs and District Directors charged with guiding the implementation process of transitioning the California Blueprint for Bicycle and Walking Steering Committee into the Complete Streets Steering Committee. A Technical Advisory Committee has produced a draft charter and continues to formulate an Action Implementation Plan, the document which will define who is responsible for incorporating all the aspects of the Complete Streets concept into all the Department documents and manuals, including the Highway Design Manual. The next meeting of the Complete Streets Steering Committee which will meet on a monthly basis is July 26.

2. Caltrans District 4 is applying for Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP) Transportation Enhancements (TE) funding for Capital Corridor e-bike lockers. The application is due Aug 6 and it is felt that given the time constraint this is the best project to submit. Since this application is a competitive process Ina will inform if, when and to whom to send support letters.

3. VTA funded a design study for a pedestrian tunnel beneath the Union Pacific RR tracks at the Santa Clara Caltrain Station to allow pedestrians to easily access the Caltrain and ACE platforms from Coleman Street and is looking for assistance in presenting the project for funding, possibly through ITIP as a regional TE eligible project. Michelle requested that Caltrans consider acting as the sponsor for the project.

4. Solano County received ARRA funding to re-open McGary Road access with Class II bike lanes. The road was closed in 1998 due to a landslide. The contract must be awarded by the end of September and construction is scheduled for Summer 2010.

Item 3. Approval of April 15, 2009 Minutes (18:50)

The Minutes of April 15, 2009 were passed unanimously with the following amendments:

Item 5-The "Safe Routes to Schools" list of ready-to-go projects submitted to Caltrans HQ (I-580-Dublin/Pleasenton, Benicia Bridge project, and US 101/Ralston overpass) are ineligible for ARRA TE funding, because they are not inter-regional as defined by the legislature (Attachment 4-1 Programming Guidelines). Only a short list of State highways, e.g. US 101, SR 1, SR 152, and I-580, qualify. New signage for the Pacific Coast Bicycle Route and e-lockers for the Capitol Corridor railroad stations may be eligible. ITIP TE projects have to be submitted by Caltrans. Regional STIP TE projects are sponsored by CMAs through MTC. There is a better chance to get MTC-programmed funding through CMA sponsorship of new projects if they are ready to go by the August submittal deadline. Some may qualify for ITIP TE through Caltrans though; so send proposal/request to Bijan Sartipi, **(Director, D4) and Will Kempton (Director, Caltrans)** because the District does not make the decisions but does put forward projects. Projects do not have to be shovel ready since this is regular, not ARRA funding.

Item 7-Pigeon Pass 84: There is no shoulder **from Sunol to I-680**. Robert Raburn requested that it be prioritized to construct the shoulder.

Item 4. Report on Action Items from April 15, 2009 Meeting (23:48)

- **US101/Ralston site visit.** Redwood City has proposed to paint bike lanes on the overpass if Caltrans will supply the design drawings. Caltrans does not have the funding necessary to supply the drawings and therefore Redwood City should go through the encroachment permit process with its own design drawings to apply for Caltrans approval of the project. This is a funding issue.

- **Highway 9 site visit. (29:58)** It was noted that for a seven-mile stretch between Saratoga and Skyline Boulevard the centerline rumble strip was ground on top of the existing painted yellow line rather than encroaching into the traffic lane. Motorists seem comfortable crossing the rumble strip when necessary to pass cyclists. Shoulder enhancements were put in place at 5 or 6 locations that did not require further environmental review. There are locations within those 7 miles where the narrow shoulder cannot be widened that are not advantageous to cyclists, but to make those improvements would require an EIS. Share the Road signs have been installed. Ina

informed that there is a long term project in progress to improve the road that will include retaining walls and shoulder widening.

Additional discussion noted that if this particular CLRS configuration, along with the proposed shoulder widening efforts is shown to be an effective countermeasure then there may be no further issue with their installation in other locations, i.e., Niles Canyon. A suggestion was made to collect more data to assess impact on bicycle safety before making it policy to install CLRS throughout California.

It was decided that this item need not come back on the next agenda as an action item. However it was requested that two items relevant to the issue be up-dated under Staff Reports at the next meeting: an MTC sponsored bike ride/site visit on July 30, initiated upon the request of CDC Commissioner Carl Guardino; and the results of an SVBC informal survey/questionnaire regarding the improvement on Highway 9 to date, and the installation of CLRS in general.

- **D4 BAC Structure and Operational Procedures. (42:00)** The D4 BAC Charter is modeled on the D4 Pedestrian Advisory Committee Charter. The D4 BAC Charter is amended to read:

  Goals and Objectives:
  Improve bicycle safety and access on **and across** Caltrans facilities except where bicyclists are prohibited by law.

  The discussion on the **Responsibilities and Tasks** of the Charter included how to review projects, planning efforts, design and PIDs in order to make timely comments. A suggestion was made to update the Matrix and integrate it with other Caltrans plans to insure a nexus between any proposed or current Caltrans projects and topics that had come up before the BAC in the past so that it can be flagged since not all projects stand out as bicycle projects.

  D4 BAC **Operational Procedures** is amended to read:
  The Chair, in cooperation with the **Bay Area** Bicycle Coalition designee and the Caltrans bicycle coordinator will develop the agenda for the upcoming meeting. Supporting materials that consist of Caltrans documents and reports will be collected by the bicycle coordinator, while supporting materials derived from sources outside Caltrans will be collected by the Chair and Vice Chair, who will send these by electronic mail to the bicycle coordinator at least two weeks prior to the upcoming meeting.

  The D4 BAC FY 2009/2010 Work Plan should be further refined by the committee. Discussion was tabled for later in the meeting in order to move to Item 5.

- **Continue with tabled discussion (2:13:00)** Outreach to the public will be continued by the BABC. The Office of Regional Planning, through Ina, will solicit and approve agency membership from CMAs and/or County Public Works

Departments with an eye toward Planners and Traffic Engineers. Provision should be made to select alternates for membership if the appointed representative is unable to attend a meeting.

Under the **Responsibilities and Tasks** of the Charter it was decided to add another bullet point to reflect D4 BAC responsibility to review and make comment to specific projects to maintain consistency with the Regional Bike Plan. That will be presented for adoption at the next meeting.

Item 5. Status and Comments on the Highway Design Manuel Update (1:00:00)
An update of the Highway Design Manual in relation to non-motorized issues in a general sense was already in progress before the adoption of the Complete Streets (CS) Directive, but blends well with that document. In the past, guidance may not have been clear in relation to bike components of a project. It is anticipated that it will take 2 years to rewrite the entire Manual. The Draft Manual has been sent to Terry Abbott, Chief of Design, for review. His recommendations are expected to be released within the next 3 weeks. Currently the Manual includes Chapter 1000 which presents bicycle specific guidance. The inclination at this juncture is to integrate bicycle information and guidance throughout the Manual in order to address a bicycle consideration in a specific project, i.e. intersection construction. It is anticipated that a "bicycle chapter" will remain as a reference to address guidance of related issues such as placement of bike shelters, racks, etc. and as such might be a source of definitions. The Manual will focus on State Highway guidance and not on local and residential streets and roads if they are not State highways. However it is recognized that not all State highways are alike and that the Manual has been misused over the last 40 years as a "one size fits all" document. The rewrite hopes to rectify this complaint. It was suggested that the Department scrutinize all the design exceptions that have been asked for in the last 10 years and incorporate more flexibility in standards to be met. The Draft will be made available to the public. The Manual will most likely refer to the MUTCD or other references to address such standards as signage to include local flexibility to allow bike destination markers, symbols for public transit, etc. where other jurisdictions might want to exercise control over those matters. The Manual rewrite will be integrated with the Complete Streets Implementation Plan as well Strategic Highway Safety Plan process which has charged Ken McGuire with bike issues.

Item 6. Various Projects (1:26:55)
Dumbarton Bridge Seismic Retrofit The recommendation for bike signage from Union City/BART to Menlo Park/Stanford is being considered and most likely will be included. A new concrete barrier will be constructed to replace the existing barrier on the western pedestrian and bicycle approach to enhance safety. The entire bike path will be repaved and at the eastern approach widened from 6' to 8'. A new rest area, including tables and benches, will be added for pedestrians and bicyclists in the parking lot at the western approach. All bridge joints are being replaced at a cost of $5M to reduce noise and vibration impacts. The finger joints across the bike lane will be recessed with a cover plate to present a smooth pavement. The existing concrete barrier between the bike path and the traffic lane will not be heightened because to redesign that barrier would trigger the redesign of the bridge railing heights. As the barrier exists now it also allows accident

or stalled vehicle passengers and drivers to wait in the bike lane until help arrives. Discussion of the installation of a light or glare screen atop the barrier resulted in unanimous agreement that it would not enhance safety for either motorists or cyclists.

Before the project is signed off an invitation was issued to do a site visit in case the D4 BAC membership has any further suggestions to include further safety enhancements. The construction schedule will close the bridge to all traffic on two 3-day holiday weekends and possibly an additional two 2-day weekends. A shuttle will be provided from sunrise to sunset to ferry bikes and pedestrians across the bridge during those closures. The D4 BAC membership is invited to help determine where the shuttle stops should be.

Burlingame ped O/C at Broadway/US101 **(1:51:40)** Special traffic signal poles are to be installed there and to order and install them will take a few months. The major issue there is that the Level of Service (LOS) will drop from D to E if the poles are installed and no one in the Department feels comfortable in making a decision to go forward. The City of Burlingame has indicated it is comfortable with that assessment of LOS decline. It was pointed out that the unfinished intersection has become a safety issue because pedestrians are moving the temporary barrier in order to cross at the intersection rather then take the temporary detour. A detailed letter will be sent to Ina so that she might move to have the issue resolved.

I-880/Brokaw/O'Toole in San Jose (**1:55:00)** A complaint that Routine Accommodation had been violated in 2003 when a freeway ramp was replaced which cut westbound bicycle access to Brokaw when O'Toole became a one-way street. The D4 BAC determined that since Routine Accommodation did not exist before 2006, there is no legal constrain to restore bike access at this location even though there is a new Caltrans project in progress to provide an HOV lane adjacent to this intersection. This does not appear to be a case of discrimination against bicyclists because motor vehicles also lost the ability to travel in the same direction in 2003 when O'Toole became one-way. It could be considered as mitigation that within the year construction will begin on a new POC at Charkot Avenue, a short distance away. Another consideration is that the City of San Jose has included the construction of the Coyote Creek Bike Trail in its Bicycle Master Plan, which could address the situation at a future date. It was determined that it is inappropriate for D4 BAC involvement because it does not have a bicycle project to consider as part of the I-880 HOV project.

Groove shoulder @ Hwy 37/US 101 in Marin Sean Co had to leave at 3:30. This has been tabled and Ina will conduct an email exchange to bring resolution.

McGary Road in Solano See Item 2 above.

Item 7. Announcements

Michelle will not attend the October 21 meeting as she will be on a 3 month sabbatical in Italy and Germany to study land use and transportation issues.

The EBBC is sponsoring a lecture on Monday, July 20 with Jeff Mapes, author of "Pedaling Revolution—How Cyclists are Changing American Cities", at Wurster Hall on the UC Berkeley campus.

Item 8. Adjournment The meeting was adjourned at 3:55 pm.

Date of the next D4BAC meeting: October 21, 2009