

Caltrans District-4 Bicycle Advisory Committee

Minutes

July 21, 2010 1:30 – 3:30

District 4 Headquarters, Mountain View Room, 15th Floor,
111 Grand Avenue, Oakland

Attendance:

Ina Gerhard, Caltrans District 4 Bicycle Coordinator
Michelle DeRobertis, Chair, Santa Clara VTA
Andrew Casteel, BABC
Alan Forkosh, California Association of Bicycling Organizations
Bruce “Ole” Olsen, Delta Pedalers
Robert Cronin, Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition (SVBC)
Paul Goldstein, SVBC
Leo Du Bose, East Bay Bicycle Coalition (EBBC)
Dave Campbell, EBBC
Lee Huo, ABAG/Bay Trail
Chip Roberson, City of Sonoma BPAC/Sonoma Valley Cycles
Steven Schmidt, Sonoma County BPAC
Mike Costanza, Napa County Bicycle Coalition
Christine Culver, Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition (via telephone)
Philippe Van, Caltrans Office of Traffic Safety

1. 1:30 PM Welcome and Introductions

2. 1:35 PM Approval of April 21, 2010 Meeting Minutes

http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/transplanning/docs/d4_bac_mom042110.pdf

The minutes were approved with no corrections or additions.

3. 1:40 PM Caltrans Complete Streets Implementation – State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) - Ina Gerhard, CT

This item was scheduled for discussion in order to have someone from HQ or District SHOPP describe their efforts of how to implement Complete Streets (CS). However, since the April presentation by Chris Ratekin (HQ Planning, Complete Streets Program Manager) on the CS Implementation Action Plan there has been little further activity to advance implementation. In HQ, the SHOPP Program was under the impression that Planning would educate and train the Districts. Therefore, nothing happened and nobody at the District level is aware of the CS policy and the SHOPP implementation decision document that was signed in December 2009.

It was decided to place this item on the October agenda. Further discussion followed on whether to write a letter to Headquarters with the request to speed-up implementation at the District level so that the policy can be implemented before the end of the year.

4. 2:00 PM CA High Speed Rail (HSR) - Impacts on Bikes/Peds – All

Issues around HSR and impacts on bicycle travel along and across the proposed HSR alignments on the Peninsula were discussed. It was mentioned that the Altamont Pass alignment does not

appear to be entirely off the table, which would eliminate the Peninsula option. Some of the issues to watch out for and comment on during the review process for this project are:

- Ensure that no across corridor connections are severed; identify and comment on locations where HSR might impede bicycle connections that currently exist.
- Grade separated crossings and/or newly created intersections have to be designed for safe and convenient bike/ped movement.
- Access to stations should not be similar to airport access; instead access should be made easy with short walking distances and secure bike parking at the stations.
- How will bikes be accommodated on High Speed Rail? Bikes should be allowed aboard unboxed and without fee, hopefully in a separate bike-car.

5. 2:20 PM Bike Lane vs. Bike Route (SR 116 in Sonoma) – Ina Gerhard, CT

A 3-mile widening and realignment project on State Route (SR) 116 in rural Sonoma County between Arnold Dr and Old Adobe Rd is underway. SR 116 is a rural two-lane highway, the speed limit is 50 mph, a standard 8-ft shoulder will be provided as part of the project as well as shoulder rumble strips. CT Traffic would like to sign it as a Class III bike route, the County and bike groups would like to see a Class II (bike lane) marking and signing. In the Countywide Bike Plan this route is currently a proposed Class III, the updated Plan that will be approved this summer has it designated as a Class II. The discussion is supposed to provide input on the Class III versus Class II decision-making process. Since the Complete Streets (CS) implementation guidelines are not yet finalized, D4 is interpreting the intend of CS on a “project basis”.

Sonoma County, the Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition, and other speakers strongly support bike lanes with signage, possibly a painted buffer zone, instead of a Class III bike route for the following reasons: Bike lanes provide a safety benefit, especially if there is an additional buffer zone, and they ensure better maintenance. This is the only connection between Petaluma and Sonoma, it is designated in the Countywide Plan and would contribute to the completion of the network. No shoulder rumble strips (SRS) should be placed between travel lane and the shoulder/bike lane. It is not clear which type of SRS will be installed. CT is aware of the problems that cyclists have with SRS and may use a SRS type that is 18 inches maximum, rolled over the lane marking line, and minimally cut into the surface. On the downhill portion of the route there should be no more than 200 feet of SRS from the apex, followed by 200 feet of un-scored pavement so that cyclists have the chance to skirt debris and other hazards in the shoulder/bike lane without having to cross SRS. Other considerations concern the slope/grade of bike lane versus shoulder that can vary as much as 2%-5% respectively.

Phillipe Van with CT Traffic maintained that a bike lane in this high-speed environment provides a false sense of safety and cited a study that supports this idea. Regarding the suggestion to lower the speed limit he explained that CT does not decide the speed limit on State routes – it is determined by a speed study and usually set at the '85th percentile speed', which is the speed at which 85% of the traffic is travelling.

The recommendation of the D4 BAC is that there be Class II bike lanes and no shoulder rumble strips as part of this project, in line with the CS policy that stakeholder input and local plans should be considered in such decisions. The BAC asked the D4 Bicycle Coordinator convey this recommendation of the Committee to the decision-makers in D4.

6. 2:35 PM Santa Clara County Draft Special Events Ordinance – Michelle DeRobertis, Santa Clara VTA

The Santa Clara Board of Supervisors has drafted an ordinance to regulate special events that has gone beyond vehicle code regulations on state and local roads (parades, processions, assemblages, closures, encroachments), recognizing that some bicycling events may raise traffic safety issues. However, it is feared that the language used in the current draft might set precedent to limit bike events that are not assemblages, parades, etc. Bicycle advocates concede that whatever conforms to the vehicle code is acceptable, i.e. a “bike race e.g. the Tour of California” is a parade or procession which requires a permit. However, if the event, i.e. a club ride does not require extraordinary traffic control measures and/or enforcement, then it should not need to be regulated through the permit process. Key issue is that the current draft of the ordinance regulates bicycle traffic and could potentially be applied to require permitting of any group ride of any size. It was suggested to take this issue to CBAC as similar ordinances seem to exist or be proposed in other jurisdictions.

7. 2:45 PM D4 BAC Charter - All

[http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/transplanning/docs/d4 bac charter draft062110.pdf](http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/transplanning/docs/d4_bac_charter_draft062110.pdf)

The motion was made and seconded to accept the D4 BAC Charter with a unanimous vote. Ina and Andrew will solicit County and Advocacy membership positions respectively. At-large members will be considered at the October 20 meeting.

8. 3:00 PM Update on Various Projects – Ina Gerhard, CT

1.) Skyline Drive (State Route 35)/Skyridge Drive in Pacifica

CT Planning Deputy has submitted a memo to Highway Operations requesting to at least partially remove the bollards (per solution that was agreed on during the site visit). At this point, the matter remains unresolved while awaiting that decision.

2.) Sharrows on El Camino Real in (SR 82) in Millbrae

The project to install sharrows between Linden and Center Avenues is approved and in the pipeline for implementation, hopefully within the next 6-8 months, pending State budget approval and work load. Caltrans has already purchased the thermoplastic sharrows needed for installation.

3.) Bikeway signage to Dumbarton Bridge

As referenced in the January 20, 2010 minutes, Item 1, Mo Pazooki stated that Caltrans had planned to meet with Fremont, Union City, Menlo Park, Newark, and East Palo Alto in May 2010 to discuss details of proposed bikeway signage, which would then be presented to the D4 BAC for review and comment. That meeting has yet to be scheduled. Cities and groups on the east side of the bridge have come to an agreement on a proposed alignment; Paul will coordinate for the west side. It was confirmed that the BCDC permit language includes signage from the Dumbarton Bridge to the Menlo Park Caltrain station.

4.) Lower Crystal Springs Dam project/ I-280 detour

CT responded to a request by the lead agency (SF Public Utilities Commission) for CT to look into the option of I-280 as a detour for the Lower Crystal Springs Dam project. A number of safety improvements (3,000 ft of bicycle railing on the bridge, steel cover plates for the bridge deck expansion joints, bike-safe drainage grates, signage, and recommended improvements to one on-and off-ramp) would have to be put in place by the lead agency through the encroachment permit process in order for the detour to be approved. However, Caltrans has a bridge improvement during part of the time the detour is needed (May to October, 2011). Therefore, Caltrans would only consider giving permission for the I-280 alternative before and after completion of its own project.

9. 3:20 PM Work Plan Review and Update – All

<http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/transplanning/bicyclecommittee.htm>

Continue to review PIDs and comment on rumble strip projects; track implementation of bike mitigation projects; identify/prioritize interchanges that present barriers to local and regional bicycle travel; track and comment on High Speed Rail project.

10. 3:25 PM Future Agenda Items/Announcements/Adjourn

- 1.) Discussion about alternative D4 BAC meeting days to allow the Planning Deputy to attend is postponed to the Oct 20 meeting.
- 2.) There are still several traffic signals on the Peninsula that do not detect cyclists. Suggestion was made to have an inspection schedule.

D4 BAC meeting date in 2010:

October 20