

March 24, 2025

To: Transportation and Environment Committee

RE: Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee Report to the Transportation and Environment Committee

Honorable City Councilmembers,

Please accept the following report from the San José Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee as part of the May 19, 2025, Vision Zero Action Plan Update.

Background

The San José Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) appreciates the opportunity to present as part of the Vision Zero Action Plan Update, BPAC's first-ever direct report to the Transportation and Environment Committee (T&E). As an advisory committee with expertise and lived experience, we have perspectives that we would like to surface as T&E makes decisions about the future of transportation in San José.

BPAC is a City of San José advisory body with the role of advising the Department of Transportation (DOT) on issues affecting active transportation in San José. BPAC provides recommendations on projects, policies, and priorities that affect walking and biking; acts as a liaison to the community; and promotes safety and community involvement. BPAC meets 10 times per year. Meetings are open to the public and are well attended. BPAC is subject to the City's Sunshine Resolution.

This report will cover a broad set of topics that are important to BPAC, as well as a selection of recent BPAC activities.

BPAC Priorities

Below is a select list of BPAC's priorities. Future reports from BPAC to T&E will include additional priorities.

Equity

While the City is improving San José streets every day, inequities in our transportation system continue to exist in multiple ways regarding active transportation:

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- People walking and biking in Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Equity Priority Communities and in census tracts with high Equity Atlas scores are disproportionately represented as victims of fatal and severe collisions in San José
- Women are under-represented among those who bike in San José based on recent survey data collected by DOT

BPAC thanks the City for establishing and allocating \$1.3 million annually to DOT's School Safety Program for five years (beginning Fiscal Year 2023-2024) via Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority's (VTA) 2016 Measure B funding, though BPAC recommends that the City Council increases funding for the School Safety Program as we believe that the current amount is not enough to address all concerns near schools.

Active transportation offers many health benefits to seniors, though seniors are overrepresented as victims of collisions. From the Blue Zone work championed by former Councilmember Dev Davis, we know that physical activity incorporated into our daily lives is key for a long and healthy life.

Prioritization of Active Transportation Needs vs. Motorized Vehicle Infrastructure Needs

BPAC recommends that the City prioritizes protecting active transportation users (people walking and biking) the same as it does for people using motor vehicles. As such, BPAC recommends considering the following:

- Increasing funding for the School Safety Program
- Designing biking and walking infrastructure to be safely used by youth, such as elementary school-aged children walking and biking to school, and by seniors for local purposes; bike boulevards without enhancements other than sharrows (shared lane markings) and bike lanes without physical protection are insufficient for this purpose
- Creating a Safe Routes to School map for every school and better incorporate school safety into an update of the City's bike plan
- Incorporating annual bicycle safety training into the curriculum of every school
- Addressing organized bicycle theft similar to the San José Police Department's efforts for automobile catalytic converter theft
- Reconfiguring signalized intersections to allow crosswalk activation after a light has already turned green in a holistic citywide effort, similar to DOT's inclusion of leading pedestrian intervals at signals
- Enforcing waste collection bins that are placed into the bike lane by haulers after collection occurs

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Mode Shift

San José is the perfect place for active transportation. There are many days of sunshine, flat landscapes, and a large population of San Jose residents (55% per *Better Bike Plan 2025* community engagement) who are interested in biking more if conditions for doing so were improved. San José residents live within a few miles of shopping, schools, and recreational activities. All residents will benefit from a shift in driving to walking and biking as this will provide less congestion, cleaner air, less need for costly road expansion, and improved health.

To encourage mode shift, our roads must be safe. BPAC strongly supports *Move San José*, *Vision Zero San José*, and *Better Bike Plan 2025* working together to create safer streets and better connectivity, encourage active transportation, and increase transit use. Building low-stress bikeways that someone who is “interested but concerned” will use will ensure the highest return on investment.

Implementation of Policy Recommendations in *Better Bike Plan 2025*

Better Bike Plan 2025, adopted by the City Council in October 2020, is more than just a map of planned bikeways. It contains bold, thoughtfully considered policy recommendations to achieve a variety of City goals. While the City has made progress on implementing its bikeway network and select bike plan policies, there are many policies that remain either partially implemented or unimplemented. We urge T&E and the City Council to ensure that progress is made on these policies, including the legislative recommendations contained in the plan.

A matrix of bike plan policy recommendations with their implementation status can be found [here](#)¹. Of the nearly 60 policies included in the plan, BPAC would like to highlight the following:

- **Lower speed limits and design speeds** along bikeway corridors without physical protection to 25 miles-per-hour or lower.
- **Adjust mode priority** in design and network planning to achieve the walking- and bicycling-first city called for in *Envision San José 2040*. In urban villages, Downtown, and similar contexts, single-occupancy vehicles should be the lowest priority.

¹ <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/110013/638469817151070000>

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- Bring the Functional Classification Diagram of Street Typologies in *Envision San José 2040* and the City's *Complete Streets Design Standards and Guidelines* into alignment to clearly articulate that **protected bikeways are the preferred bikeway treatment** on all roads aside from low-volume neighborhood streets.

Best-in-Class Standards for Roadway Design

Every major capital project and pavement maintenance project provides a once-in-a-generation opportunity to leverage costs, drive mode shift, and save lives.

As such, BPAC recommends that the City revise its *Complete Streets Design Standards and Guidelines* to incorporate the Safe System Approach; strengthen the prioritization of safety for people walking and biking; and incorporate the latest requirements and best practices from Caltrans' Complete Streets Contextual Design Guidance, the 2025 Urban Bikeways Design Guide from National Association of Transportation Officials (NACTO) – of which San José is a member – and the forthcoming 2026 California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).

BPAC Activities

The following is a list of select activities recently undertaken by the Committee.

Engagement with the Public at Viva CalleSJ Open Streets Events

In 2024 and 2025, BPAC engaged with the public at several Viva CalleSJ events. BPAC set up a booth with a sign that simply asked, “Why Not Bike Every Day?” Dozens of residents visited the booth at each event to provide Committee members thoughtful comments on their experience and concerns. Themes included safety from motorized vehicles; recommendations for street, bike lane, and trail improvements; accessibility concerns; and a lack of secure bike parking at their destinations. BPAC provided these comments to DOT for documentation and follow up.



Figure 1: BPAC community outreach table at the June 9th, 2024, Viva CalleSJ event.

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Engagement with Integrated Waste Management

On September 26, 2023, [the City Auditor's report on the Integrated Waste Management Program](#)² (IWM) was accepted by the City Council, including "staff direction to return to T&E with enforcement options to keep bike lanes clear from any obstructions." This is an important issue to BPAC and to the public as waste collection bins and yard trimming piles in bike lanes create obstacles that can increase the risk of vehicle collisions as people on bikes must navigate around them. They are nearly invisible at night.

Since September 26, 2023, IWM has reported to BPAC on three occasions to discuss this matter. These discussions have been productive and BPAC appreciates IWM's partnership. One of the key outcomes so far was summer 2024's [Residential Garbage & Recycling Guide](#)³, mailed to residents, which included diagrams and language for how to set bins and yard trimmings outside of bike lanes.

Comments to the Transportation and Environment Committee

Beginning in 2023, BPAC reviews the T&E workplan and agenda at each monthly BPAC meeting to provide T&E comments on items that directly relate to or have intersectionality with BPAC's work. These have included T&E items on Vision Zero, *Move San José*, *Bike Plan 2025*, the City's trail network, *Climate Smart San José*, street sweeping, and waste management, among others. We hope these comments, submitted verbally and in writing, have been helpful. We welcome any feedback that T&E may have.

Sincerely,



Aarshdeep Kahlon, Chairperson

² <https://sanjose.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6346698&GUID=BCB12265-9748-45B6-A9E5-AB2C71117C22&Options=&Search=>

³ <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/113976/638616652605730000>

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BPAC Committee Members, Fiscal Year 2024-2025

Aarshdeep Kahlon, Chairperson

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