



# Memorandum

**TO:** TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

**FROM:** John Ristow

**SUBJECT: BETTER BIKE PLAN 2025**

**DATE:** August 12, 2020

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Approved

Date

/s/ Jim Ortbal

8/23/2020

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

Consider and accept the *Better Bike Plan 2025* and refer the Plan for full City Council consideration and approval at its September 29, 2020 Council meeting.

## **OUTCOME**

San José will have an updated Citywide Bike Plan that will guide the development of over 500 miles of all ages and abilities bike facilities throughout the City.

## **BACKGROUND**

In 2009, the City adopted *Bike Plan 2020*, which identified a vision, goals, and strategies to increase trips by bike and make it safer to bike in San José. *Bike Plan 2020* included a goal to complete a planned 500-mile network including 400 miles of on-street bikeways and 100 miles of off-street trails. The Department of Transportation (DOT) leads development of on-street bikeways and works collaboratively with the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services (PRNS) which leads development of the City's off-street Trail Network.

To date, 392 miles of on-street bikeways and 62 miles of off-street trails are complete. Over 400 on-street bikeway miles are expected to be completed by DOT by the end of 2020.

Since 2009, the City has adopted several new policies and plans, including:

- *Envision San José 2040 General Plan*
- *Vision Zero San José*
- *Trail Program Strategic Plan*
- *Climate Smart San José*

- Various Urban Village Plans
- City Council Policy 5-1 (Vehicle Miles Traveled as primary transportation metric)
- Complete Streets Design Standards and Guidelines

In addition, since 2009, innovations and developments in transportation planning, design, and programming include several new tools to help cities achieve bicycle transportation goals, including:

- Bikeway facility types, such as Class IV Protected Bikeways
- Planning tools, such as the Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress
- Programs, including bike share and dockless e-scooters
- Planning guidance, such as NACTO's (National Association of City Transportation Officials) Urban Bikeway Design Guide
- Best practices from a variety of U.S. cities who hold similar mode shift goals as San José

To ensure the City continues to improve people's ability to get around comfortably and safely by bicycle, and that the City remains a leader in active transportation, DOT is updating the City's bike plan. Through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process in September 2018, the City contracted with Toole Design Group, LLC, a Maryland-based planning and engineering consulting firm with experience managing a variety of city planning efforts in the nation. Toole Design Group partnered with Bay Area-based Winter Consultants and Crossroad Labs for outreach and design services for the plan.

## **ANALYSIS**

With mild weather and flat geography, San José would seem to be an ideal community to support high rates of bicycling. However, due to historic land use policies and transportation priorities, San José has grown largely around the automobile. This has resulted in larger, high-speed roads and lower-density, single-use zoning that separate people from the places they are trying to go and discourage shorter trips by bike. More recently, San José has updated and adopted various plans and policies to prioritize denser, mixed-use, transit-oriented development; roadway safety for everyone; and investment in public transit. To align the City's bike vision with these efforts, in 2017, DOT identified funding to develop an updated bike plan that will replace the existing *Bike Plan 2020*.

## **Bike Plan Vision and Goals**

The vision of *Better Bike Plan 2025* is to make biking easier and more appealing to everyone in San José. To achieve this vision, the plan focuses on the following three goals:

- Safety: Improve safety for all people biking in San José. This goal aligns with the *Vision Zero San José* plan.

- **Mode Shift:** Increase the portion of trips in San José made by bike. This goal aligns with the *Envision San José 2040* general plan mode shift goal (15% trips by bike by 2040) and *Climate Smart San José* mode shift goals (20% trips by bike by 2050).
- **Equity:** Develop and implement *Better Bike Plan 2025* in a manner that ensures people in traditionally underserved communities are engaged, empowered, and represented.

The proposed bike plan:

- Defines a citywide, low-stress bike network serving all ages, abilities, and neighborhoods
- Focuses on what can be delivered rapidly and cost-effectively to improve and expand our bike network
- Partners with Community Based Organizations (CBOs) to better engage local communities
- Formalizes where people on bikes have priority on busy public rights-of-way
- Integrates current City planning and policies (*Envision San José 2040 General Plan, Urban Village Plans, Vision Zero San José, Access & Mobility Plan, Climate Smart San José*)
- Addresses changes in our transportation system (Diridon Station, BART, VTA bus and light rail, High Speed Rail, Shared and/or Autonomous Vehicles, etc.)

To create a bike plan suitable to meet City goals for safety, transportation mode shift, environmental sustainability, economic growth, and others, DOT focused on the following tasks for development of the on-street bikeway component of *Better Bike Plan 2025*.

- Existing Conditions Evaluation
- Bike Facility Recommendations
- Program Recommendations
- Cost Estimates & Implementation Schedule
- Draft Plan Review

### **Existing Conditions Evaluation**

To evaluate existing bicycling conditions in San José, Toole Design Group employed several analytical tools. These tools include bikeway network analysis, level of traffic stress, and bicycling demand. Additionally, network connectivity was evaluated and the bikeways network was looked at through the lens of San José's Vision Zero initiative. Analysis also showed that, while 58% of trips in San José are within biking distance, defined as three miles, only 1.8% of all trips in the city are currently made by bicycle.

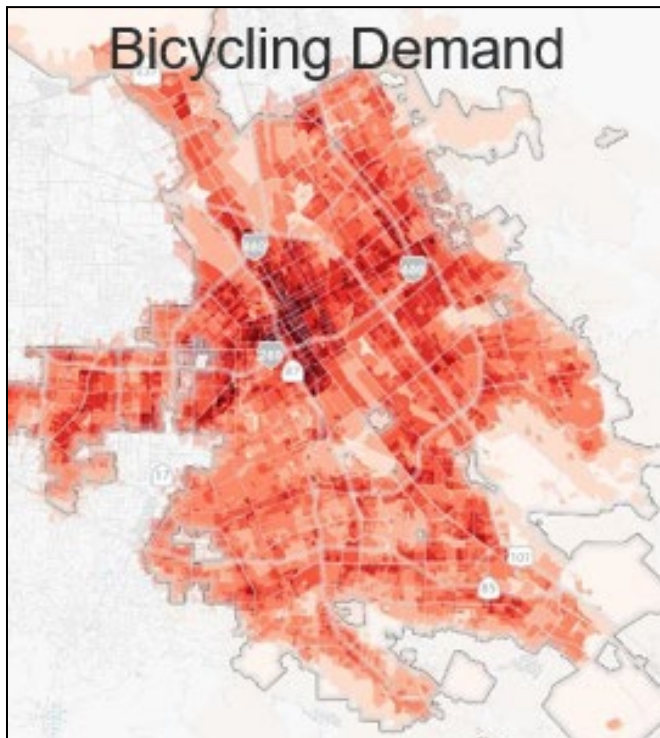
This analysis shows that San José has pockets of high demand for bicycling that are often separated by freeways, arterials, and expressways. The analysis shows that high-stress bicycle facilities are often unprotected bike lanes on arterial streets and low-stress facilities are largely trails and bikeways on residential streets. Because low-stress residential streets conducive to

bicycle use are often cut-off by freeways, expressways, and arterials, bicycling as a mode of transportation is not practical for many residents of San José who may not feel comfortable among existing conditions. Select analysis completed by Toole Design Group for existing conditions is shown in the following images:



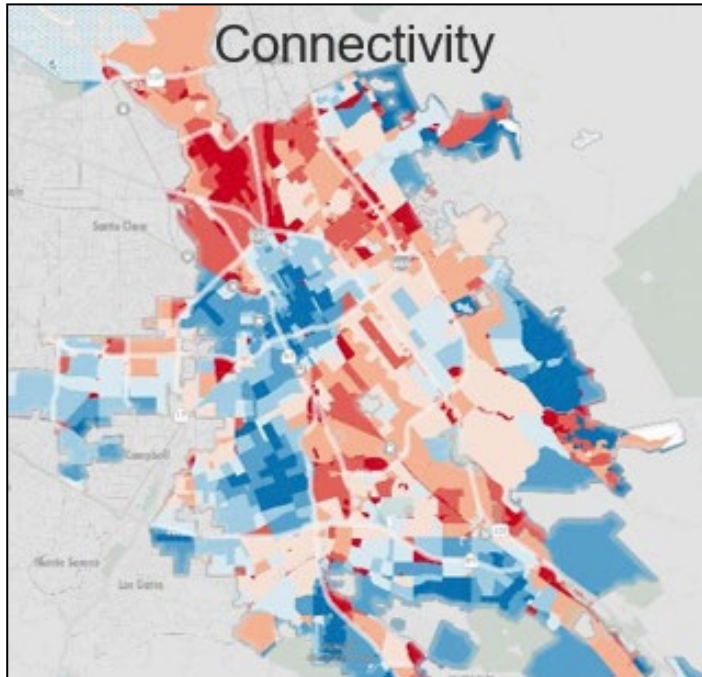
Level of Traffic Stress in San José

Red segments represent existing on-street bikeways with higher levels of stress from speeds, volume, barriers, and other factors.



Existing Demand for Bicycling in San José

Data, including economic and land use factors, show areas of San José that have the most demand for bicycle facilities and may see the quickest return on investment in bikeway facilities. The darker areas of the map represent areas with higher demand.



### Network Connectivity in San José

The areas in blue represent locations in San José that have better connectivity, or the ability to access destinations with low levels of stress. Shorter blocks and more intersections provide a higher level of connectivity.

### **Bike Facility Recommendations**

To achieve the goals established in the plan and provide a connected, low-stress network suitable for all ages and abilities, and help break down barriers to bicycle use, *Better Bike Plan 2025* calls for a mix of off-street trails, protected bicycle lanes, and bicycle boulevards to overcome barriers, encourage bicycle use, and accommodate a large cross-section of the San José community. The plan and network are designed both for those who already bike, along with those who would like to bike more, particularly women and people of color.

Bike facilities in *Better Bike Plan 2025* include the following, with an emphasis on bike boulevards and protected bike lanes:



Class I - Off-Street Trail (Guadalupe River Trail)



Class II - Bike Lane (Tully Road)



Class III – Bike Boulevard (S. 16<sup>th</sup> Street)



Class IV – Protected Bike Lane (S. 4<sup>th</sup> Street)

Implementation practices should continue the success of previous years' bikeways program efforts, most notably:

- New on-street bikeway and enhanced bikeway coordination with the City's Annual Pavement Program, utilizing the "blank canvas" afforded to the City when existing pavement striping and markings are removed when streets are repaved.
- Quick-build methods from the Downtown Better Bikeways program, using simple materials such as plastic bollards, roadway striping and markings, and signs to quickly and easily deliver bikeway facilities to the public.
- Grant-funded efforts, such as the St. John Street Multimodal Project, which provided widened sidewalks and a protected contra-flow bikeway, and the Story-Sunset-Hopkins signal improvement project, which provided a two-way bikeway and bicycle traffic signal.

### **Programmatic Recommendations**

In addition to bikeway facilities, the plan includes several programmatic elements. These include expanding bike share, bike parking, shared micro-mobility programs, improved street design and internal processes, and expanded bicycle safety education offerings. The plan also notes that the City's investment in infrastructure should be matched by a thriving local bicycle culture, education and encouragement programs, and political willpower.

### **Implementation & Schedule**

*Better Bike Plan 2025* recommends an interconnected city-wide network consisting of protected bikeways on busier streets and bike boulevards on calmer, neighborhood streets using quick-build materials to quicken the implementation timeline and to conserve resources, and leveraging the City's off-street Trail Network. While the planned network covers the entire city, the plan provides a five-year implementation strategy for on-street bikeways centered on five focus areas that are most suited to bicycle mode shift. These focus areas are in North, East, and West San

José; Downtown; and the Edenvale/I-Star development area in South San José. These focus areas combined with a quick-build implementation strategy will help ensure significant build-out of *Better Bike Plan 2025*.



*Bike Plan 2025* focus areas.

### **Plan Development Coordination**

Development of this plan is being coordinated with PRNS, especially as the City’s Trail Network is an important part of San José’s transportation system per the General Plan, and serves both a recreational and active transportation function. The City’s on-street bikeways and trail systems are inter-linked; but development, funding, implementation, and management of these facilities is distinct. In 2016, PRNS authored the Trail Program Strategic Plan to discuss the challenges and resources needed to build out the Trail Network. The Strategic Plan documents that the pace of trail development is significantly impacted by limited staff, access to City and external fiscal resources, environmental regulations, and regulatory requirements. The Strategic Plan will be discussed in *Better Bike Plan 2025* and will serve as an appendix to guide conversations about resources tied to the Trail Program.

The City has coordinated with the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) for the development and future implementation of Class IV separated bike lanes along high-frequency VTA bus routes. As a result, the plan will include design considerations for these types of facilities and recommendations for coordination among the two agencies during implementation of the plan.

Additionally, a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was established to help guide the development of *Bike Plan 2025*. The TAC was comprised of representatives from numerous City offices and departments, including the Mayor's Office, and from external agencies and partners, including the VTA, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), Caltrans, and the County of Santa Clara. The TAC completed its fourth and final meeting in June 2020, providing valuable input that will inform the final plan alongside community feedback.

### **Draft Plan Review**

The draft plan and draft bikeways network are available for public view on the bike plan website at [bikesanjose.com](https://www.bikesanjose.com). Community members had the opportunity to comment directly on the online copy of the plan and on the interactive web map of the proposed network during a public review period from May 29, 2020 to July 19, 2020. The review period was extended to allow for additional community input.

The draft plan includes five chapters:

- Introduction, including the history of bicycling in San José, background on *Bike Plan 2020*, and the goals and timelines of *Better Bike Plan 2025*.
- Community Voices, including the plan's engagement strategies.
- Existing Conditions, including the types of bike trips people make in San José today and what prevents people from riding in the city, including barriers to riding and safety concerns. This chapter also includes the analysis used to inform the proposed bikeways network contained within the plan.
- A Next Generation Bike Network, including the proposed bikeways network and bike facility type.
- Implementation Strategy, including policies, programs, and priorities.

Visit <https://www.bikesanjose.com/draftplan> to see the draft *Better Bike Plan* and <https://www.bikesanjose.com/map> to view the draft bikeways map.



## **CONCLUSION**

The City has a long-standing commitment to the safety, mobility, and health of its residents. Through the construction of an extensive bike network and supportive programs and policies, the City has been transforming itself into a bike-friendly community. The policies and goals of *Better Bike Plan 2025* set to extend the benefits of the City's bike network to provide safety, equity, and mobility to San José residents of all ages and abilities. Because bicycling is an affordable, zero-emission mode of transportation, it has the potential to solve many of the City's pressing issues and speaks to numerous goals in *Envision San José 2040*. *Better Bike Plan 2025* sets the vision for a safe, direct, and connected citywide bike network that supports people's daily needs.

## **EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP**

DOT will continue the current practice of providing a Spring annual progress report on the Bike Plan's progress to the Transportation and Environment Committee.

## **CLIMATE SMART SAN JOSÉ**

The recommendation in this memo aligns with one or more Climate Smart San José energy, water, or mobility goals.

## **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

The City, in conjunction with Toole Design Group and Winter Consultants, conducted a wide-reaching outreach process to reach diverse audiences, specifically to provide information to the public and gather input in a meaningful and inclusive way. Outreach was conducted to inform the public, receive input, and develop the plan based on community input. To best leverage resources and reach out to diverse communities, the City utilized existing public and community meetings to disseminate information and collect feedback, and hosted an online web tool to collect input from bicyclists and community members. Specifically, DOT staff attended over 30 neighborhood meetings and events, with many being regularly occurring neighborhood or business association meetings, along with cultural events.

To best reach out to diverse communities within San José, DOT and the consultant team partnered with several CBOs: Latinos United for a New America (LUNA), Veggielution Community Farm, and Vietnamese Voluntary Foundation (VIVO).

The role of these CBOs has been to host meetings, workshops, and events about the bike plan within their communities, attend community working groups, assist with translation and interpreting needs, review materials, and review the draft plan.

During COVID-19, these efforts were adapted for an online setting and included a web-based presentation available in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. The presentation summarized the draft plan and provided information on viewing the draft plan and providing input. The presentation recording was made available to the public and to community groups who received project presentations in earlier phases of the outreach effort.

Meetings and events included:

Alameda Business Association	McLaughlin Tenant Association
Axis Homeowners Association	Plata Arroyo Neighborhood Association
Bike to Work Day	Ride of Silence
Buddha Birthday Celebration	River Oaks Neighborhood Association
Cory Neighborhood Association	San José Bike Party
District 1 Leadership Group	Shasta-Hanchett Park Neighborhood Association
District 3 Community Leadership Council	Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition
District 6 Leadership Council	Silicon Valley Leadership Group Transportation Committee
Erikson Neighborhood Association	SUN Neighborhood Association
Future of Alum Rock	Tet Lunar New Year
Japantown Business Association	Tropicana-Lanai Neighborhood Association
Hensley Historic District	Vendome Neighborhood Association
Lanai-Cunningham Neighborhood Association	Viva Calle San José
LUNA event	VIVO workshop
LUNA workshop	VTA Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
Little Saigon event	Willow Glen Business Association

**COORDINATION**

This memo was coordinated with PRNS, the City Attorney’s Office, and the City Manager’s Budget Office.

**COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION/INPUT**

No commission recommendation or input is associated with this action. However, the plan has gone before the San José Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee (BPAC) five times for review and comment. Input from BPAC focused on the safety aspects of *Better Bike Plan 2025*, particularly on its alignment with Vision Zero; ensuring that proposed bicycle facilities are safe and appropriate for their context; and that the plan’s outreach, development, and proposed facilities are inclusive, equitable, and invest in traditionally under-served areas; and that the proposed bicycle facilities meet the needs of the communities where they are implemented.

## **COST IMPLICATIONS**

The estimated build-out cost of the on-street bikeway facilities in *Better Bike Plan 2025* ranges from roughly \$250 million to \$420 million, depending on the type of physical separation used in each Class IV protected bikeway. This includes a range of roughly \$68 million to \$143 million in Focus Areas in East, North, West, and South San Jose, priorities as described in the Implementation Chapter of the *Plan*.

This cost assumes that bikeways will be installed as independent projects aligned with the City's annual pavement maintenance program, however the City will continue to coordinate with other projects to reduce costs. Opportunities to leverage resources exist within a variety of City projects and programs to leverage resources, including Vision Zero, new development projects, and stormwater and green infrastructure projects. Additionally, regional, state, and federal grant funding will be pursued to help implement projects.

## **CEQA**

Determination of Consistency to the Envision General Plan 2040 Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Report, File No. ER20-156.

/s/

JOHN RISTOW

Director of Transportation

Attachments: Draft *Better Bike Plan 2025* and Draft *Better Bike Plan* Map

For questions, please contact Ramses Madou, Division Manager, at (408) 975-3283 or [ramses.madou@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:ramses.madou@sanjoseca.gov).