

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
STAFF REPORT
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES BICYCLE MASTER PLAN**

BACKGROUND

On March 3, 2011, the Department of Public Works (Public Works) released the Public Review Draft of the County of Los Angeles Bicycle Master Plan (Plan). The Plan is a supplementary document to the County General Plan Transportation Element and would replace the 1975 Plan of Bikeways. The Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Plan was released on August 9, 2011, and the public review period for the Draft EIR will end on November 10, 2011.

At the Regional Planning Commission (Commission) meeting on August 24, 2011, Public Works staff provided an overview of the Plan as a discussion item. On October 17, 2011, Public Works released a revised version of the Plan (Attachment 2), which incorporates the comments received through the public review period and at the Commission meeting.

The Plan will be presented before the Commission at a public hearing on November 16, 2011.

OVERVIEW OF THE PLAN

The Plan proposes a vision for a diverse regional system of interconnected bicycle corridors, support facilities, and programs to make bicycling more practical and desirable to a broader range of people in the County. The Plan is intended to guide the development and implementation of a comprehensive bikeway network and other bicycling programs throughout the unincorporated communities of the County for the next 20 years (2012 to 2032). The Plan recommends 816 miles of new bikeways throughout the County. The implementation of this proposed bikeway network is estimated to cost \$328 million, of which \$71 million is required for off-street bikeways and the remaining \$251 million for on-street bikeways. The Plan also includes non-infrastructure programs that are essential facets of a bicycle-friendly County. These non-infrastructure programs include education, encouragement, enforcement, and evaluation programs. Furthermore, the Plan includes design guidelines for bicycle treatments, funding options, and a phased implementation strategy for the proposed bikeway facilities.

The Plan organizes the County into ten planning areas, which are identical to those used for the Draft General Plan, with the exception of the Coastal Islands Planning Area, which contains no County-maintained roadways or bicycle facilities.

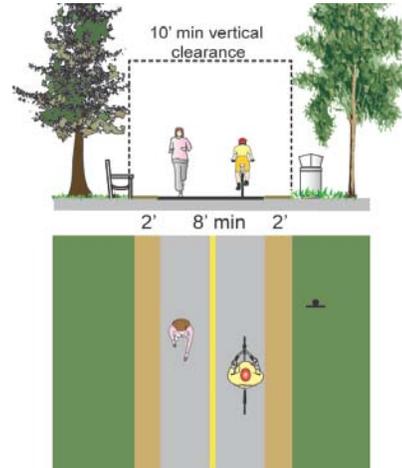
TYPES OF BICYCLE FACILITIES

Bikeway Description

Example Graphic

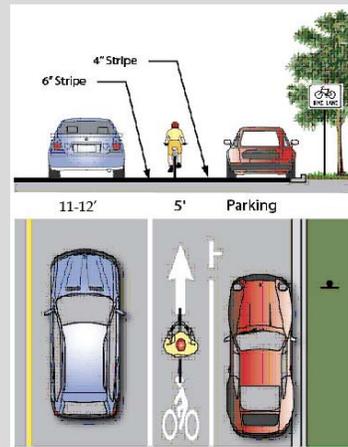
Class I – Bicycle Path

Bike paths, also called shared-use paths or multi-use paths, are paved right-of-way for exclusive use by bicyclists, pedestrians, and other non-motorized modes of travel. They are physically separated from vehicular traffic and can be constructed in roadway right-of-way or exclusive right-of-way. Most of Los Angeles County bicycle paths are located along the creek and river channels, and along the beach. These facilities are often used for recreation but also can provide important transportation connections.



Class II - Bicycle Lane

Bike lanes are defined by pavement striping and signage used to allocate a portion of a roadway for exclusive bicycle travel. Bike lanes are one-way facilities on either side of a roadway. Bike lanes are located adjacent to a curb where no on-street parking exists. Where on-street parking is present, bike lanes are striped to the left side of the parking lane.



Class III – Bicycle Route

Bike routes provide shared use with motor vehicle traffic within the same travel lane. Designated by signs, bike routes provide continuity to other bike facilities or designate preferred routes through corridors with high demand.

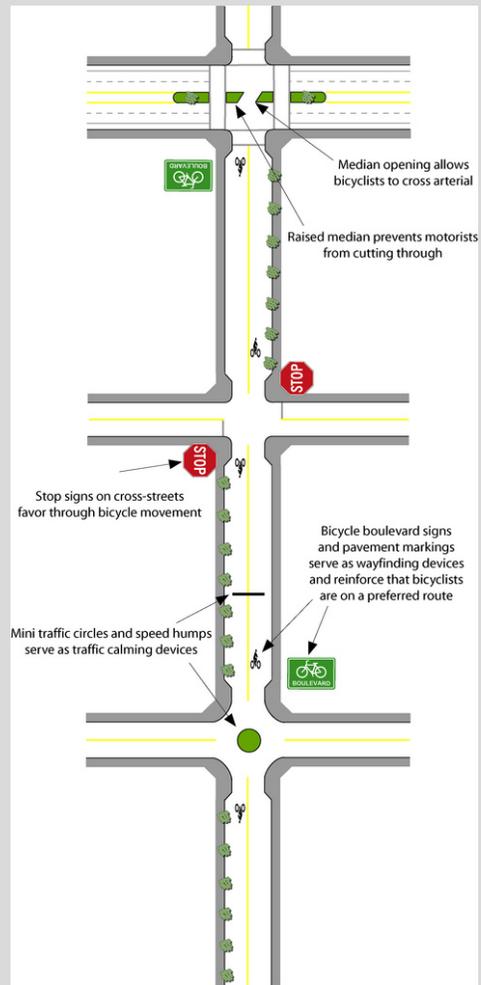


Bikeway Description

Example Graphic

Bicycle Boulevards

Bicycle boulevards are local roads or residential streets that have been enhanced with signage, traffic calming, and other treatments to prioritize bicycle travel. Bicycle boulevards are typically found on low-traffic / low-volume streets that can accommodate bicyclists and motorists in the same travel lanes, without specific bicycle lane delineation. The treatments applied to create a bicycle boulevard heighten motorists' awareness of bicyclists and slow vehicle traffic, making the boulevard more conducive to safe bicycle (and pedestrian) activity. Bicycle boulevard treatments include signage, pavement markings, intersection treatments, traffic calming measures and can include traffic diversions. Bicycle boulevards are not defined as a specific bikeway type by Caltrans; however, the basic design features of bicycle boulevards comply with Caltrans standards.



EXISTING AND PROPOSED BICYCLE FACILITIES

The following table summarizes the mileage of existing bikeway facilities in the Plan within each of the ten planning areas, and the mileage and cost for the proposed bikeway facilities.

	Existing Facilities			Proposed Facilities			
Planning Areas	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class I	Class II	Class III	Bike Blvd
Antelope Valley	3.2	3.8	0.2	--	89.4	138.2	--
East San Gabriel Valley	7.5	7.6	9.4	25.1	30.8	27.5	3.0
Gateway	45.9	1.0	9.7	5.8	23.3	10.3	--
Metro	--	2.3	--	0.6	48.2	26.8	12.1
San Fernando Valley	--	1.5	--	2.2	0.9	7.5	--
Santa Clarita Valley	--	2.4	0.9	16.5	33.4	108.3	--
Santa Monica Mountains	--	0.5	--	--	1.8	92.9	--
South Bay	8.9	1.1	--	9.0	14.2	9.3	0.9
West San Gabriel Valley	23.3	--	2.6	8.1	16.8	32.0	5.2
Westside	11.5	--	0.7	3.2	7.1	5.7	--
Total Mileage	100.3	20.2	23.5	70.6	265.9	458.6	21.3
Total Cost	----	---	---	\$75.9M	\$140.7M	\$110.4M	\$0.63M

NON-INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMS

Education, encouragement, enforcement, and evaluation programs are crucial for raising awareness of bicycle use and providing safe conditions for all roadway users. The Plan recommendations include programs to educate bicyclists, pedestrians, and motorists on rights, responsibilities, and safe bicycle operation; connect current and future bicyclists to existing resources; and encourage people to bicycle more frequently. Monitoring and evaluating the County's progress toward becoming bicycle-friendly is critical to ensuring that programs and facilities are achieving their desired results, and to understand changing needs.

FUNDING AND IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

Implementation of the network and the programs and policies outlined in the Plan will require significant and sustained funding levels from grants, as well as dedicated funding sources

available to the County. Wherever possible, bikeways will be incorporated into County road construction projects.

The Plan identifies planning level estimates of project costs and potential grant sources, including Federal, State, and Regional sources of funding. The Plan prioritizes the different projects based on their utility and ease of implementation, and groups the recommended bikeways into the following implementation phases:

- Phase 1 – Projects planned for construction between 2012 and 2017
- Phase 2 – Projects planned for construction between 2017 and 2027
- Phase 3 – Projects planned for construction between 2027 and 2032

The non-infrastructure programs, including education, encouragement, enforcement, and evaluation are grouped into two tiers:

- Tier I – Programs expected to be implemented within one year following Plan adoption.
- Tier II – Programs expected to be implemented within five years following Plan adoption.

ISSUES IDENTIFIED

The following issues have been identified by stakeholders that need to be addressed in the Plan and/or clarified:

Coordination with Other Jurisdictions: During development of the Plan, state, county, and local bikeway plans and policies were reviewed, and the County Plan was developed to be consistent with those policies and plans to the greatest extent possible.

To further improve connectivity between the Plan’s recommendations and existing and proposed bikeways in other jurisdictions, the County kept the cities throughout Los Angeles County informed of the status of the Plan via electronic mail blasts. In addition, representatives from numerous cities participated in the public workshops and submitted comments on the Plan.

To facilitate greater coordination and ensure connectivity with the bikeway networks with neighboring counties, the Plan team revised the maps showing the Eastern and Western Los Angeles County Proposed Bicycle Network to depict existing and proposed bicycle networks in neighboring counties.

Availability of Bicycle Transportation Account (BTA) Funds: The BTA is used to fund city and county projects that improve safety and convenience for bicycle commuters. Each year, the State issues a call for projects for BTA funds. The demand for BTA funds far exceeds the availability of the funds. For instance, in FY 2009-10, a total of 142 applications were received, but only 14 projects were funded.

Section 2106 of the Streets and Highways Code stipulates that the annual BTA funding level in the State Budget Act remain constant at \$7.2 million per year. Section 892.2(a) of the Streets and Highways Code (SHC) authorizes the continuous appropriation of funds and requires that all unexpended funds shall be retained in the BTA for use in subsequent fiscal years. A one-time increase was last authorized in FY 2006-07 to reappropriate savings from closed or cancelled projects in prior years. Reappropriation of current savings may be requested sometime in the future.

Regular Updates to the Plan: Another issue that the Plan has addressed is the need to regularly update the Plan. Per Policy 1.5, Public Works, in collaboration with Regional Planning, is committing to complete regular updates of the Bicycle Master Plan every 5 years.

Recreational Opportunities: In addition to a bikeway network, the County has a system of multi-use trails with typical trail uses ranging from hiking and walking, to mountain biking and horseback riding. While the Plan does not include the County's multi-use trail system, the County's multi-use system is a part of the General Plan, and the trail system can be used for recreational bicycling in conjunction with the bikeway system.

Strategies to Encourage a More Significant Commitment From the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA) With Regard to Bikeway Facilities: LACMTA is the regional transportation planning agency for Los Angeles County, and as such, LACMTA is responsible for long-range planning for Los Angeles County, including determination of how to disperse the available regional transportation funds. Public Works and Regional Planning participate in LACMTA's countywide transportation planning efforts through participation in its transportation committees, as well as participation in the process of reviewing and commenting on LACMTA's transportation plans and projects.

In addition, Implementation Action (IA) 1.1.2 has been revised as follows to include LACMTA among those entities that the County will coordinate with to implement bicycle facilities:

*IA 1.1.2 Coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions and LACMTA to implement bicycle facilities that promote connectivity.
Lead Department: DPW
Timeframe: Ongoing*

DPW will continue to coordinate with other cities and LACMTA to review and comment on bicycling issues of mutual concern. DPW will continue to propose bicycle facilities where appropriate to improve regional connectivity and also support and encourage LACMTA and local jurisdictions to install bicycle facilities within their jurisdiction and/or as part of their large transportation projects.

Strategies from Other Municipalities That Have Succeeded in Becoming Bike-Friendly: The preparation of the Plan included the review of policies and best practices in bike-friendly cities, including New York, Chicago, Minneapolis, and Portland, and the Plan reflects many of these successful strategies.

In addition to successful policies, the Plan team identified factors that contributed to the successful implementation of bicycle policies in other jurisdictions, most importantly, strong political support, the availability of funding, and the recognition that supporting bicycling does not just benefit bicyclists, but the entire community by improving health, livability, and the overall quality of life.

Safety and Security for Bicyclists: Conflicts between bicyclists and motorists result from poor riding and/or driving behavior as well as insufficient or ineffective facility design. Encouraging development and redevelopment that supports bicycle travel improves the overall safety of the roadway environment for all users. Well-designed bicycle facilities improve security for current cyclists and also encourage more people to bike, which in turn can further improve bicycling safety. Studies have shown that the frequency of bicycle collisions has an inverse relationship to bicycling rates, which means more bicyclists on the road equates to lower crash rates. Providing information and educational opportunities about safe and lawful interactions between bicyclists and other roadway users, increased and targeted enforcement, as well as providing encouragement programs, also improves safety.

With regard to improving security for bicycles, the Plan identifies locations where bicycle parking and other end of trip facilities are recommended. In addition, the Plan acknowledges that the County needs to develop a parking policy (Policy 1.6) that is to be established by 2015. To condition developers to implement bicycle facilities including on-site bicycle parking and/or end of trip facilities, changes in the County code will also be required (Policy 1.2, timeframe: by 2015).

Section F.4.6, Bikeway Maintenance, in Appendix F of the Plan, discusses the potential hazards drainage grates can create for bicyclists. New drainage grates installed on County roads are designed to be bicycle-friendly. Appendix F provides suggestions for Public Works to retrofit existing drainage grates as necessary. In addition to issues with drainage grates, Appendix F of the Plan provides a range of design options for bicycle treatments. The Plan recognizes that bicyclists have legal access to all County streets, whether or not they have an official bikeway designation; therefore, it is important that all roadways be designed to accommodate bicycles.

Incentive and Disincentive Programs for Employers to Encourage Bicycling: The Plan provides that the County will require bicycle parking at key locations such as employment centers, parks, transit, schools, and shopping centers (IA 1.3.2). To accomplish this effort, a bicycle parking policy first needs to be developed (IA 1.6.2) and subsequent changes to the County Code enacted (Policy 1.2). Incentive and disincentive programs for employers can be considered in conjunction with this policy, along with subsequent code changes.

Preservation of Public Right-of-Way for Potential Future Bicycle Facility Needs: Public Works can encourage developers to voluntarily use alternative roadway cross-sections that can accommodate bikeways and bicycle facilities. However, change to the cross-section requirements in the County Code are first needed to determine the right-of-way requirements to accommodate future bicycle infrastructure.

Other Issues: In addition, the Plan team made the following revisions, to further address issues and concerns raised by stakeholders:

- Addition of an Executive Summary;
- Stronger goals, policies, and implementation actions and more descriptions;
- Addition of 121 miles of bikeway facilities (119 miles of on-road bikeway facilities and 2 miles of off-road bikeway facilities);
- Addition of evaluation programs;
- Addition of implementation information for the non-infrastructure programs; and

In addition, the Plan team thoroughly reexamined the prioritization and phasing for funding and implementation.

ADDITIONAL REVISIONS TO THE PLAN

Since the Plan was made available for public review on October 17, 2011, the Plan team has identified additional minor edits to the Plan for consistency. In addition, based on recommendations by Regional Planning staff, the Plan team proposes to make changes to Policies 1.2, and 1.3, and Implementation Action 1.3.1 to be consistent with the General Plan Update efforts, as shown in Attachment 3.

GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY

The Plan is in conformance with the purpose, intent and provisions of the Los Angeles County General Plan. Specifically, the Plan supports the following goals and policies:

General Policies, Policy 14: Restore and protect air quality through the control of industrial and vehicular emissions, improved land use management, energy conservation and transportation planning.

Transportation Element, Goal: Provide transportation to serve the needs of the public and to support adopted land use.

Transportation Element, Goal: Reduce highway congestion.

Transportation Element, Goal: Reduce transportation-related degradation of the environment.

Transportation Element, Goal: Improve the efficiency of the transportation system and reduce transportation energy consumption.

Transportation Element, Policy 3: Plan and develop bicycle routes and pedestrian walkways.

Transportation Element, Policy 18: Support use of non-vehicle improvements to reduce peak-hour congestion.

Transportation Element, Policy 25: Develop alternative transportation systems and procedures which will effectively reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by automobiles.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

The County of Los Angeles, as the lead agency through Public Works, has completed the Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Plan (Attachment 4). The County released the Draft EIR on August 9, 2011, and the public review period will end on November 10, 2011.

The Draft EIR analyzes the potential for significant environmental impacts associated with the Plan. The Draft EIR does not detail impacts that may occur from specific projects included in the Plan, as these facilities have yet to be designed. Site-specific environmental reviews may be required for particular projects and programs as they proceed to implementation and the required detailed information is available.

STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH

The Plan team solicited community involvement and stakeholder input throughout the development of the Plan and on a website provided information on the Plans development, schedule and hosted Plan documents for public review and comment.

Two committees were set up to guide the development of the Plan: the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC). The TAC is made of members from the Los Angeles County Departments of Public Works, Regional Planning, Public Health, Parks & Recreation and Beaches & Harbors. The BAC has 12 members. Two members were selected to represent each of the five Supervisorial Districts, which comprise 10 of the members. The other two members are from Caltrans and the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

The Plan team held three rounds of public workshops to present the Plan and receive feedback from the public on the Plan's findings and recommendations. A total of 32 public workshops were conducted. In addition, the Plan team performed other extensive outreach efforts, including but not limited to: sending out electronic email blasts to multiple stakeholders; issuing a press release; distributing postcards at Metro's "Bike to Work Week"; mailing comment cards to local bike shops, libraries, and parks and recreational facilities; and posting

public service announcements in bus shelters and on buses and shuttles that serve the unincorporated areas. Furthermore, the Plan team contacted numerous stakeholders and had additional discussions regarding the comments received and how they were being addressed in the Plan.

For the environmental document, public scoping meetings were held on April 9, 2011, at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. at the Metro building in downtown Los Angeles. Public Works also hosted a public review meeting for the Draft EIR on September 15, 2011, at 7 p.m. at the Hall of Records in downtown Los Angeles.

LEGAL NOTIFICATION & PUBLIC COMMENT

The notice of public hearing was published in the Los Angeles Times and La Opinion on October 15, 2011, mailed to approximately 3700 individuals and organizations, and emailed to approximately 1600 individuals and organizations. In addition, the Plan and the Draft EIR were made available on DPW's website and in all County libraries.

Staff has included all comments received since initiating work on the Plan (Attachments 5 & 6).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Commission take no action at this time and this hearing be continued to a date certain.

The purpose of the recommended action is because the formal review period for the DEIR will not conclude until November 10, 2011. The purpose of the November 16, 2011 hearing is for the Commission to hear testimony from the public on the Plan and the DEIR, to direct staff to make changes to the Plan, investigate issues, and/or undertake other activities before bringing the Plan and the Final EIR back for consideration and approval with a formal resolution to the Board of Supervisors.

RECOMMENDED MOTION

I move that the Regional Planning Commission continue the public hearing on Project R2011-00874 to a date to be determined and direct staff to return with the County of Los Angeles Bicycle Master Plan, the Final Environmental Impact Report, and a resolution to the Board of Supervisors.

Staff report respectfully submitted by the Department of Public Works, prepared by Allan Abramson, Senior Civil Engineer and approved by John Walker, Assistant Deputy Director. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Abramson at (626) 458-3950 or aabrams@dpw.lacounty.gov

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