

# Citizens' Guide to the Bicycle Plan

**SFMTA**

Municipal Transportation Agency



Fellow San Franciscans:

The San Francisco Bicycle Plan represents a clear roadmap to a safer, more environmentally sustainable community.

Expanding bicycling by making our streets safer and more convenient for bicyclists is an essential part of San Francisco's fight against climate change. Increasing the number of residents who bicycle to work and around their neighborhoods is one of the most significant, cost-effective actions we can take to lessen our local carbon footprint. These improvements also expand healthy, affordable transportation options to residents and improve the quality of life in our diverse neighborhoods. San Francisco has a long history of leading by example and implementation of the Bicycle Plan continues this legacy as we strive to become North America's preeminent city for bicycling.

In order to achieve the Bicycle Plan's mission of making bicycling safer and more convenient in San Francisco, the plan's recommendations must be implemented quickly and thoroughly. We must advance the expansion of our local bicycle route network as one large and urgent civic project rather than becoming mired in isolated individual projects. This will require coordinated efforts by many City departments, as well as continued public involvement focused on this overall goal.

The League of American Bicyclists has already recognized San Francisco as a gold-level, bicycle-friendly community – the largest city to receive such an honor. The number of bicyclists in San Francisco has increased as we have expanded facilities and programs to support bicycling. In fact, more people bicycle to work in San Francisco than in any other major U.S. city. Our City's compact geography and temperate climate provide us unique advantages as we make bicycling less of a transportation alternative and more of a preferred mode of travel. Implementing our Bicycle Plan and improving our bicycle route network will continue this progress and increase local bicycling by leaps and bounds.

We have accomplished a great deal to date but much work remains in order to improve the safety and convenience of bicycling in San Francisco. As Mayor, I am fully committed to rapidly advancing the implementation of our Bicycle Plan as part of my deep commitment to improving the health of our environment, our residents and our community.

Sincerely,

Gavin Newsom  
MAYOR

# sustainable transportation





Fellow San Franciscans:

The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) is pleased to present the Draft San Francisco Bicycle Plan. The SFMTA Board of Directors is scheduled to act on the Bicycle Plan in spring 2009 once the environmental review process is complete. The Bicycle Plan provides a guide for the SFMTA's work with other agencies to make San Francisco more bicycle-friendly.

Our City's *Transit First* policy requires that in San Francisco travel by bicycle, in addition to travel by public transit and by foot, must be a viable option to travel by private automobile. The Bicycle Plan outlines eight major goals and a series of more than 80 actions to help us make bicycling more attractive. The plan's actions are far-reaching and cover improved bicycle facilities and pavement quality, expanded educational and enforcement efforts and better bicycle parking and bicycle access to transit. All of the plan's actions are aimed at increasing safe bicycling.

In order for San Francisco to succeed economically and environmentally as our population grows, we must continue to seek ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while helping more people travel more efficiently. Increased bicycling will play a key role in our efforts to reduce reliance on private automobiles. Redesigning streets along the bicycle route network so that they are more inviting to

bicyclists will be one of the key ways that we can attract more people to ride bicycles for their everyday transportation needs. Improved streets and pathways, coupled with high-quality bicycle parking, along with a continued focus on education, encouragement and enforcement, will help San Francisco become a world-class city for bicycling.

Thank you for your interest in better bicycling in San Francisco. With your help San Francisco will continue to be a leader in developing a multimodal and sustainable transportation system that emphasizes the safe and convenient movement of people and goods via public transit, walking and bicycling.

Sincerely,

Nathaniel P. Ford Sr.  
Executive Director/CEO



## Executive Summary

San Francisco's allure is undeniable. Breathtaking vistas, venerable cultural and professional institutions, a legacy of ideological and ethnic diversity and an indisputable quality of life have made it a favorite international travel destination and a world-class city in which to live. Home to nearly 800,000 residents and an estimated day population of 1.1 million, San Francisco's 47 square mile area ranks as one of the most densely populated urban environments in the nation.


Contributing to the quality of life equation is the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA), responsible for managing the City's formidable ground transportation system that includes pedestrians, bicycles, transit, parking, private automobiles and taxis. Adhering to principles set forth in the City and County's *Transit First* policy, and as outlined in its own 2008-2012 Strategic Plan, the SFMTA's vision mandates the provision of "timely, convenient, safe and environmentally friendly transportation alternatives."

Bicycling is a key component of San Francisco's *Transit First* policy as well as the City's Climate Action Plan. In 2002, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors passed the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Resolution, committing the City and County of San Francisco to a greenhouse gas emissions reductions goal of 20 percent below

1990 levels by the year 2012. Automobiles account for about 47 percent of San Francisco's greenhouse gas emissions, so transportation choices play a major role in this effort. The Climate Action Plan specifically calls on San Francisco to "increase bicycling and walking as an alternative to driving."

In concert with the *Transit First* policy and Climate Action Plan, the SFMTA has developed an aggressive and comprehensive updated Bicycle Plan, a summary of which follows. By investing in and implementing bicycle facility improvements, educational efforts and innovative policies and programs recommended in this plan, the City will make bicycling a more viable and sustainable mobility option.


# increase safe bicycle use



Refine and expand  
the existing bicycle  
network

Expand bicycle  
access to transit  
and bridges

Educate the public  
about bicycle safety



Improve bicycle  
safety through  
targeted enforcement

Ensure plentiful,  
high-quality bicycle  
parking

Promote and  
encourage safe  
bicycling

Adopt bicycle-friendly  
practices and policies

Prioritize and  
increase bicycle  
funding



## **GOAL ONE: GROW & REFINE THE NETWORK**

To increase the number of bicyclists traveling City streets, we must continue refining and expanding San Francisco's 208 miles of existing bikeways with near-term, long-term and minor improvements.

Near-term improvements are defined as those that have had design options developed and are anticipated to be constructed within the next five years. Long-term improvements are either in the proposal stage or are potential additions to be discussed at a future date. Minor ongoing improvements such as shared roadway bicycle markings and signage are proposed throughout the bicycle route network.

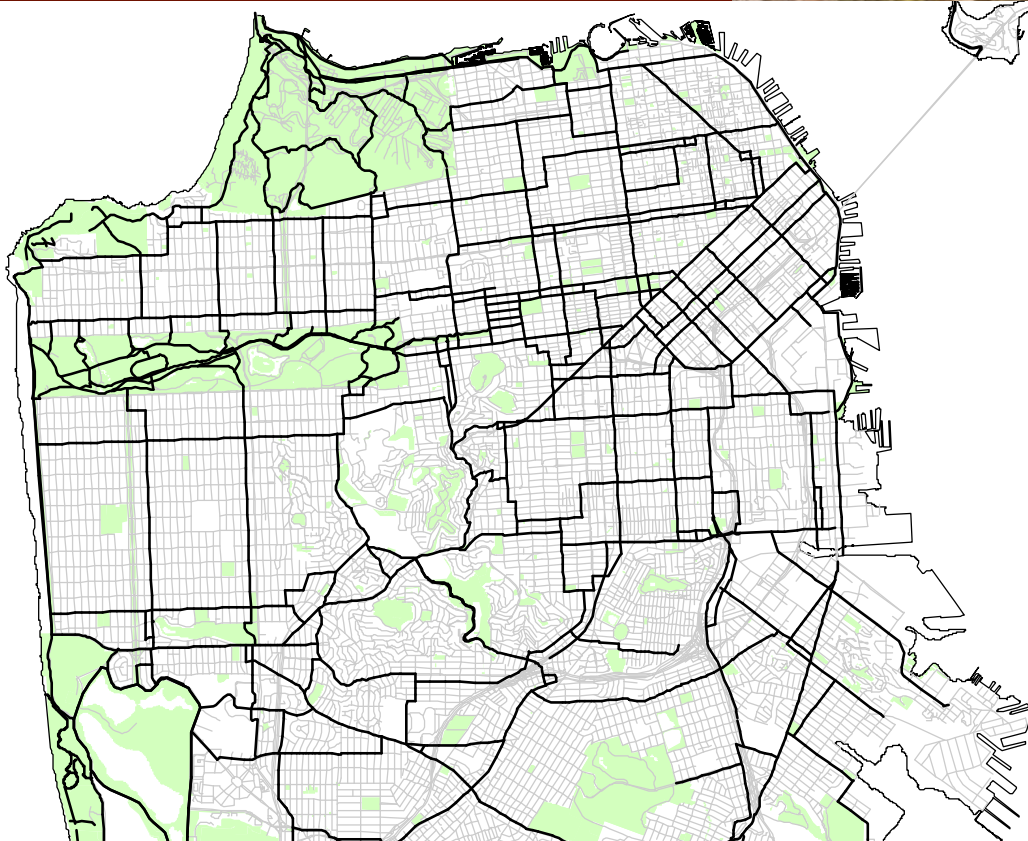
The ultimate goal of the Bicycle Plan is to increase safe bicycle use in the City. To do this, we must develop a comprehensive network of bikeways that are appropriately signed, marked and/or traffic calmed and that provide convenient and direct connections to all of San Francisco's neighborhoods and transit hubs. Strategies to grow and refine the existing bicycle route network include:

- Implement near-term and minor bicycle improvement projects while moving forward with planning needed for long-term improvement projects; implement innovative design treatments along the bicycle route network.
- Install shared roadway bicycle markings for improved safety while developing criteria and identifying streets that could be designated bicycle boulevards.
- Review multi-lane streets for excess capacity and potential travel lane removals to accommodate bicycle lanes; conduct a before and after study on the impacts of allowing bicycles in exclusive bus/taxi lanes.

# refine & expand routes

Strategies for the SFMTA's work with other local agencies include:

- Revise the City's level of service standards to better serve alternate modes of transportation, specifically addressing bicycles.
- Maintain a regular sweeping schedule of on and off-street bicycle paths; inspect streets in the bicycle route network on a yearly basis and prioritize streets on the bicycle route network within the Department of Public Works (DPW) street resurfacing program.
- Enforce strict standards for street excavation restoration.



## **GOAL TWO: PROVIDE A PLACE TO PARK**

To ensure sufficient secure bicycle parking at public and private buildings throughout the City, the existing Planning Code must be amended and improvements in administration and enforcement must be made. New guidelines must be provided for additional bicycle parking throughout the City that promote short-term and long-term parking and support for bike stations and attended bike facilities at major events and destinations. Bicycle parking information must also be made available to bicyclists via an SFMTA outreach campaign. Suggested amendments to the Planning Code include:

- Consolidate Sections 155.1-155.5 to provide clearer regulation, guidance and exemptions related to bicycle parking.
- Modify Planning Code requirements for bicycle parking so they are less dependent on automobile parking provisions; increase required bicycle parking in new residential developments.
- Limit the number of automobile parking spaces required where Class I bicycle parking is provided; require bicycle parking in individual buildings in large, multiple-building developments; and require building owners to allow tenants to bring bicycles into buildings unless Class I bicycle parking is provided.

To further advance the goal of plentiful, high-quality bicycle parking, the SFMTA's strategies include:

- Increase monitoring and enforcement of bicycle parking provisions, especially when issuing building permits.
- Pursue a citywide policy providing secure bicycle parking at all City buildings; ensure that all City leases are negotiated to include required levels of bicycle parking.

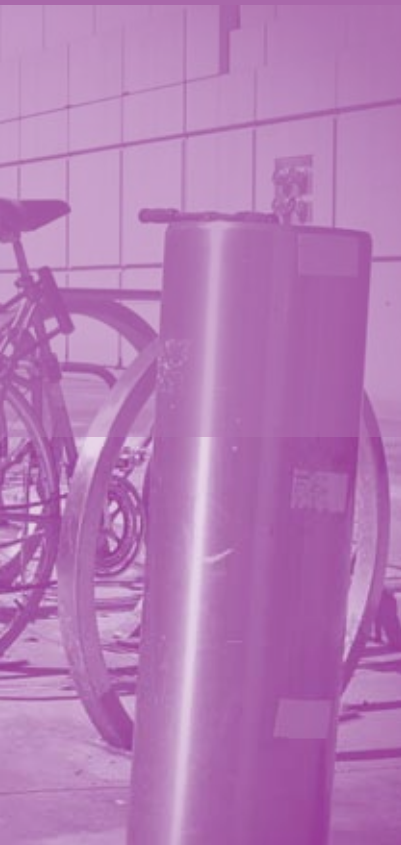
- Develop an SFMTA bicycle parking outreach campaign in various formats alerting bicyclists to relevant information, such as garage locations with bicycle parking and bicycle locker availability.
- Work with the responsible San Francisco agencies to ensure all garage bicycle parking is secure, well-monitored and advertised at garage entrances and other appropriate locations.

Additional initiatives include:

- Work with responsible agencies to prepare additional guidelines for the placement and design of bicycle parking within City rights of way including curbside on-street parking where feasible and sleeve rings on parking meters.
- Work with the San Francisco Police Department (SFPD) to make bicycle theft a higher priority and to create a more efficient system for the return of recovered bikes to their owners.



plentiful parking



### **GOAL THREE: EXTEND ACCESSIBILITY TO TRANSIT & BRIDGES**

Expansion of bicycle accessibility to transit service and local and regional bridges creates a more conducive environment for increasing bicycle usage. A number of recommendations have been put forth to further these objectives:

- Create an SFMTA policy explicitly permitting folded bicycles on all transit vehicles.
- Install bicycle racks on all SFMTA-operated buses and work with other regional transit operators to do the same.
- Develop a pilot program to provide bicycle access to SFMTA light rail vehicles for a trial period that would be monitored for potential future implementation.
- Work with the Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART) to identify expanded bicycle access times and to develop a trial program allowing non-folding bicycle access in both directions on transbay peak period trains.
- Expand bicycle access on Caltrain and to its San Francisco stations by promoting bicycling to stations and by providing secure bicycle parking.
- Promote bicycle parking stations at major transit hubs that provide secure, monitored bicycle parking, commuter information and bicycle maintenance services; ensure that all San Francisco transit stations, including

the new Transbay Terminal, provide barrier-free bicycle access and state-of-the-art bicycle parking; work with the California High-Speed Rail Authority to ensure bicycle accommodations on long-distance trains.

- Work with San Francisco Bay Area transit operators and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to develop, implement and enforce improved intermodal bicycle access.
- Work with Caltrans and the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District (GGBHTD) to provide improved bicycle access to and on San Francisco bridges where feasible and appropriate.



# connections

## GOAL FOUR: FURTHER BICYCLE SAFETY EDUCATION

The City must enhance its bicycle safety outreach efforts to include general and targeted bicycling safety materials. Funds must be allocated to create and implement various campaigns for the general public, bicyclists, motorists, City staff and specifically targeted populations to ensure all citizens are aware of bicyclists' rights and responsibilities. Specific strategies include:

- Provide SFMTA multi-lingual bicycle safety information to diverse age, income and ethnic populations; partner with other agencies to distribute SFMTA bicycle safety materials via mass mailings; implement new outreach campaigns for improved bicycle facilities.
- Develop SFMTA bicycle safety classes for City employees and safety workshops for transit vehicle operators and other large fleet vehicle operators; increase the SFMTA's involvement in Bike to Work Day.
- Work with the SFPD to create a bicycle traffic school curriculum as an option to fines for traffic law violators.
- Work in concert with the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD), San Francisco public colleges and other educational institutions to develop bicycle education curricula; work with the SFUSD to promote a transportation curriculum in lieu of driver's education at City high schools that promotes alternative transportation modes.



## **GOAL FIVE: IMPROVE BICYCLE SAFETY THROUGH TARGETED ENFORCEMENT**

An imperative to advancing safe bicycle usage in San Francisco is the targeted enforcement of motorist and bicyclist traffic violations that pose the greatest threat to safety. The SFMTA Bicycle Plan recommends increased enforcement of traffic violations by the SFPD and the provision of additional SFMTA bicycle safety education to both the SFPD and those cited for moving violations. Cooperation between the SFMTA and the SFPD will be required for a number of proposed initiatives regarding bicycle safety and targeted enforcement which include:

- Develop an SFMTA bicycle safety curriculum for the SFPD focusing on bicyclist rights, responsibilities and techniques for safe and legal sharing of City roadways.
- Work with the SFPD to place a high priority on both motorist and bicyclist violations that most frequently cause injuries and fatalities.
- Work with the SFPD and the Superior Court to develop and implement a bicycle traffic school program as an option for those cited for moving violations; develop a “fix-it ticket” program for bicycle equipment violations.
- Increase parking enforcement and fines for violations involving vehicles parking or double parking in bicycle lanes; increase enforcement prohibiting motorcycles in bicycle lanes; increase enforcement of double parking violations in bike lanes and post additional “no stopping in bike lane” signs along bicycle routes.
- Increase number of SFPD bicycle-mounted patrols.
- Work with the SFPD to develop a system for hospitals, emergency rooms and clinics to report all instances of bicycle injuries to both the SFPD and the SFMTA; inform bicyclists that they are legally entitled to a collision report when one is not initiated by the police; develop a system to share non-collision bicyclist citations with the SFMTA; and develop standardized procedures for reporting bicycle-related incidents with transit vehicles and ensure that this information is available to appropriate City staff.



enforcement & safety



## **GOAL SIX: PROMOTE & ENCOURAGE SAFE BICYCLING**

The City must not only keep existing bicyclists on the road but also focus on encouraging new riders to the streets of San Francisco. This can be done by promoting the benefits that increased bicycle usage holds for the City. The City should develop and implement media campaigns and promotional materials advocating bicycling as a safe, healthy, cost-effective and eco-friendly mode of transportation to all segments of the community. Strategies include:

- Promote the benefits of bicycling to diverse age, income and ethnic populations.
- Work with the Department of the Environment (SF Environment), the Department of Public Health (DPH) and other City agencies to formalize bicycle education and promotion by developing partnership agreements with the SFMTA; work with all City agencies to expand bicycle incentive programs for City employees to serve as a model for other San Francisco employers; encourage and promote bicycle-related businesses in San Francisco.
- Conduct a feasibility study for a public bicycle sharing program including any required environmental review.

encourage  
new riders

# practice & policies

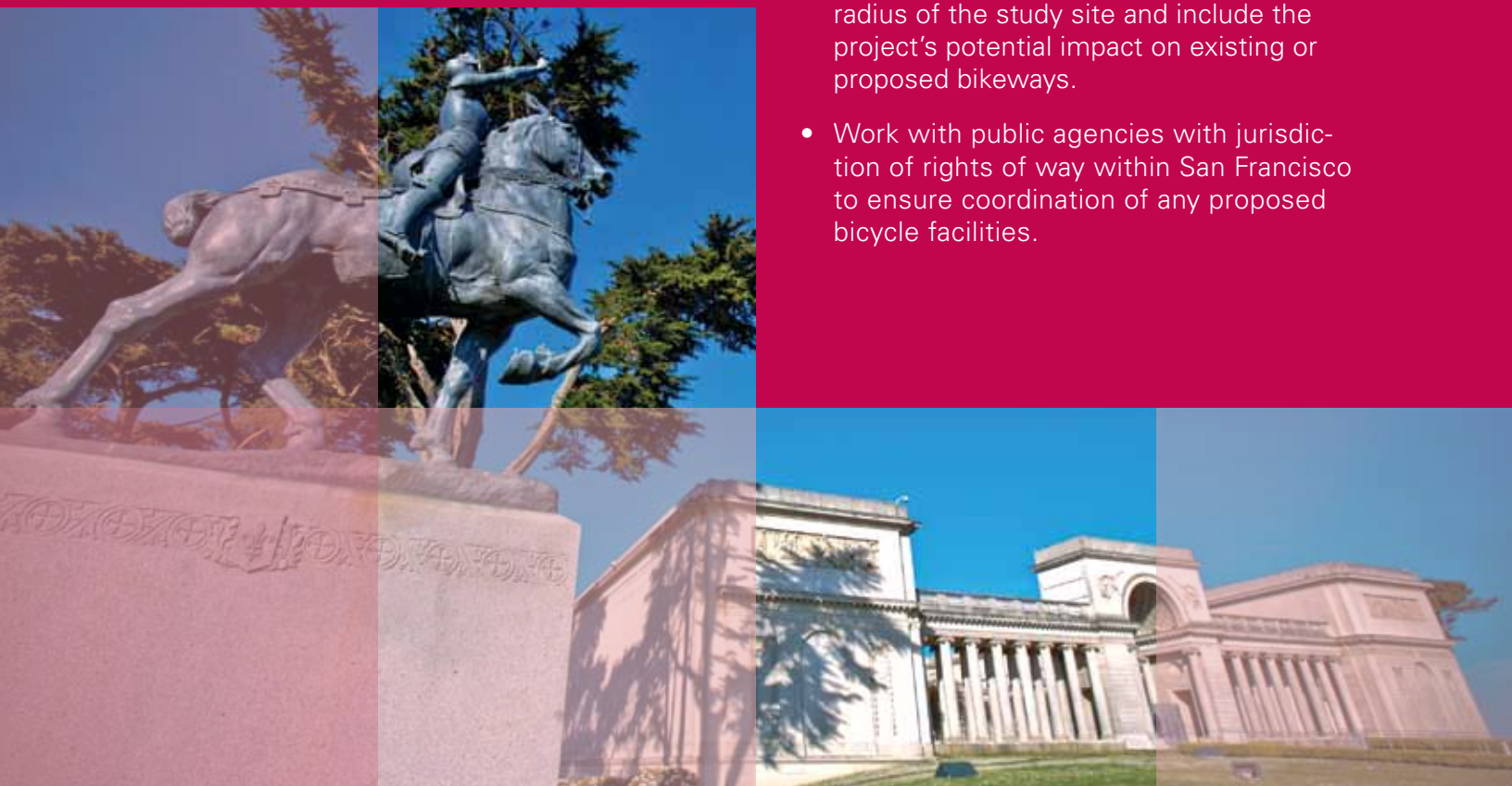
## GOAL SEVEN: ADOPT BICYCLE-FRIENDLY PRACTICES & POLICIES

With an end goal of integrating bicycle travel into all roadway planning and design and construction policy, modifications are being recommended to the City's General Plan Transportation Element, Area Plans and to the City's Environmental Review guidelines. Modifications proposed to ensure bicycle-friendly practices and policies include:

- Incorporate this Bicycle Plan in whole into the General Plan and amend existing sections relevant to bicycling, including the Transportation Element and relevant Area plans.
- Ensure adequate and appropriate environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act for the Bicycle Plan and all proposed discretionary actions within that may have a direct or indirect physical environmental impact.

Citywide coordination efforts and strategies proposed include:

- Work with the Planning Department to coordinate updates to the General Plan as needed as subsequent updates to the Bicycle Plan and bicycle route network occur; work with the Planning Department to ensure all current and proposed Area Plan objectives are consistent with the goals of the Bicycle Plan and that updates or revisions to the plan—especially those that do not currently contain sections on bicycling—include sections consistent with Bicycle Plan goals; work with the Planning Department as transportation impact guidelines are updated to ensure that new projects consider bicycles.
- Work with the responsible San Francisco agencies to collect bicycle counts when City transportation or development studies call for non-automated traffic counts; work with the same agencies to collect an inventory of existing bicycle parking within a two-block radius of the study site and include the project's potential impact on existing or proposed bikeways.
- Work with public agencies with jurisdiction of rights of way within San Francisco to ensure coordination of any proposed bicycle facilities.





## **GOAL EIGHT: PRIORITIZE & INCREASE BICYCLE FUNDING**

To achieve the Bicycle Plan's goals, a commitment to funding must be made. Local, regional, state and federal funding sources have been identified and should be pursued to facilitate bicycle facility improvements and bicycle education and promotion programs.



# funding



**SFMTA**

Municipal Transportation Agency

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