



**Palo Alto Pedestrian and
Bicycle Advisory Committee**

Tuesday, January 5, 2021 at 6:15 P.M.

Join Meeting Via Zoom

Join Online: <https://cityofpaloalto.zoom.us/j/92604257435>; Dial-in: 669-900-6833

Meeting ID: 926 0425 7435

PART I: TDA 3 – BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN PLAN UPDATE

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/CONFIRM QUORUM 6:15 PM
A quorum of this Committee shall be a majority of its membership (10).
2. AGENDA CHANGES 6:18 PM
3. APPROVAL OF ACTION MINUTES 6:20 PM
4. PUBLIC COMMENTS 6:22 PM
Note: Written comments submitted by email to Transportation@CityofPaloAlto.org before 12:00pm on December 28, 2020 are attached with the agenda packet.
5. ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS 6:30 PM
 - a. Refinement of the draft Framework topic headings with simultaneous editing
6. ADJOURNMENT 7:30 PM

PART II: OTHER ITEMS

1. AGENDA CHANGES 7:30 PM
2. APPROVAL OF ACTION MINUTES 7:32 PM
3. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS 7:34 PM
 - a. Agenda Items Backlog
4. STAFF UPDATES 7:37 PM
 - a. VERBS Grant Project Status
 - b. VTA Bicycle Superhighway ([VTA BPAC Meeting on December 9, 2020](#), Item #6)
5. DISCUSSION ITEMS 7:45 PM
 - a. Selection of 2021 Chair and Vice Chair
6. STANDING ITEMS 7:50 PM
 - a. VTA BPAC Update
7. ADJOURNMENT 8:00 PM



Palo Alto Pedestrian and
Bicycle Advisory Committee

Tuesday, December 1, 2020

6:15 P.M.

VIRTUAL SPECIAL MEETING

Palo Alto, CA

Members Present: Ken Joye (Chair), Art Liberman (Vice Chair), Bruce Arthur, Arnout Boelens, Nicole Zoeller Boelens, Bill Courington, Cedric de la Beaujardiere, Kathy Durham, Penny Ellson, Paul Goldstein, Robert Neff, Rob Robinson, Jane Rothstein, Richard Swent, Alan Wachtel, Bill Zaumen

Members Absent: Eric Nordman, Steve Rock

Staff Present: Sylvia Star-Lack, Joanna Chan

Guest: Joel Gartland, Matt Bryant

PART 1: TDA 3 – BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN PLAN UPDATE

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/CONFIRM QUORUM – 6:16 p.m.

Chair Joye confirmed the presence of a quorum of members.

2. AGENDA CHANGES

None

3. APPROVAL OF ACTION MINUTES

Motion by Mr. Goldstein, seconded by Ms. Ellson, to approve the minutes of the November 3, 2020 meeting, as presented. Motion passed 12-0.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

1 **5. ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- 2 a. Individual PABAC members to provide their preference for other transportation
3 elements for inclusion in the Plan Update

4 Ms. Ellson believed the Plan Update should elevate pedestrian elements more, provide a better
5 layman's summary in the first chapter, reaffirm the City's commitment to complete key
6 recommended projects that were not completed during the period of the 2012 Plan, emphasize
7 the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program and its six Es, replace the five Is system or at least
8 eliminate innovation from the five Is system, include collision documentation and analysis, and
9 place more emphasis on public outreach. City departments should promote the full array of
10 electric vehicles. Funding from the Utility User Tax (UUT) should be allocated to improving
11 bike conditions.

12 Mr. Swent suggested the Plan Update use level of stress as an evaluation criterion for routes and
13 projects, incorporate Vision Zero principles and Complete Streets in every project and
14 throughout the document, support Safe Routes to School, focus on education, enforcement,
15 encouragement, and evaluation, and emphasize policies and programs over projects. Community
16 support and public outreach needs to be the focus during development and implementation of the
17 Plan Update.

18 Mr. Goldstein disclosed his discussions of the Plan with Ms. Durham, Ms. Ellson, Mr. Swent,
19 and Mr. Neff. He proposed prioritizing tried and true programs and treatments over innovation.
20 The Plan Update should prioritize spot improvements, emphasize programs that educate the
21 public about walking and biking, highlight the health and safety benefits of active transportation
22 and the reduction of automobile traffic, rank projects and programs with criteria such as safety,
23 stress reduction, increasing mode share, equity, and coordination with overriding goals, consider
24 ways to improve the structure of PABAC, and contain recommendations and best practices for
25 community engagement when implementing new projects. SRTS should be highlighted and
26 supported. SRTS, Safe Routes for Older Adults, and Vision Zero should be combined into a
27 "safe routes for everyone" vision that incorporates programs for encouragement, education, and
28 safety improvements for all modes. The Share the Street program and other past outreach efforts
29 should be reinvigorated. Staff needs to develop the Plan Update with strong community
30 engagement.

31 Mr. Zaumen proposed the Plan Update include placing road markings indicating the location of
32 detector loops at signalized intersections in the right-most traffic lane and any lane that would be
33 used for left turns.

34 Ms. Boelens suggested revisiting the intention of the Plan and its fundamental components. If
35 the Plan is a policy document, it should be easy to navigate and include cornerstone programs. If
36 the Plan is a vision for active transportation, it needs to be more accessible for a general audience
37 and include an executive summary. The Plan Update may include an executive summary,
38 benchmarks, a list of priority projects, stories of the effects of the 2012 Plan on residents' lives,
39 and a section dedicated to SRTS within programs.

40 Mr. Wachtel concurred with prior comments. Chapter 1 of the 2012 Plan is uninspiring and does
41 not define the purpose of the Plan. Much of the language in the 2012 Plan is boilerplate. The

1 2012 Plan emphasizes infrastructure heavily when the emphasis should be education. The Plan
2 Update should coordinate with Complete Streets and Vision Zero. Bicycle and pedestrian counts
3 and crash data are needed. If safety is a priority, he would not recommend using many of the
4 facilities suggested in the 2012 Plan.

5 Vice Chair Liberman stated the Plan Update should provide a concise description of the status of
6 bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in Palo Alto and include a map of safe bicycle routes and
7 streets and a plan of new State bicycle routes and improved infrastructure. Larger transportation
8 policies and goals should be contained in a separate document such as a mobility plan. Public
9 outreach cannot be overemphasized. Projects and maps contained in the Plan Update should be
10 placed online and updated regularly.

11 Mr. Neff suggested maps include level of stress for bicyclists and be updated regularly. There
12 should be an ongoing program of data collection and analysis and a process for adding new
13 elements to the Plan or changing the emphasis on projects. The Plan Update needs to identify
14 dangerous locations for bicyclists and pedestrians and methods to improve safety and provide
15 guidance for human-powered and electric modes of transportation sharing facilities, especially
16 shared-use paths.

17 Mr. Boelens indicated the Plan Update should prioritize safety and may contain solutions with
18 proven track records, a bicycle collision prioritization tool, a prominent SRTS section, safe
19 routes for older adults, and Vision Zero.

20 Mr. Robinson proposed simplifying the Plan Update and making it searchable. The Plan Update
21 should promote implementing important projects.

22 Mr. Courington remarked that if the purpose of the Plan is to guide planning, the 2012 Plan
23 needs a lot of work. The Plan Update needs a summary chapter and to include new modes of
24 transportation.

25 Ms. Durham preferred to include safe routes for all, congestion management, and level of stress
26 for bicyclists and pedestrians. Cross-barrier connections, messaging, and engagement are
27 important. Mobility plan may be a better title than Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan.

28 Mr. de la Beaujardiere felt the Plan Update should include programs and projects, a dynamic
29 plan to add projects, an assessment of the existing network, and methods to improve the overall
30 effectiveness of the network as well as identify and fill gaps in wayfinding.

31 Ms. Rothstein noted behavior change is an important component of education. Electric modes of
32 transportation should be incorporated into the Plan Update.

33 Chair Joye supported the project prioritization line only from Table 2 of the 2012 Plan. The Plan
34 Update should not have specific sections for SRTS, safe routes for older adults, Vision Zero, and
35 Complete Streets. The Request for Proposals (RFP) should distinguish projects and programs
36 that are high-level and long-lasting from projects and programs that are temporal and should not
37 be included in the Plan.

1 Mr. Goldstein supported an emphasis on programs and education and noted the Plan has to
2 contain projects in order for the City to qualify for grants. Ms. Ellson added that the Plan also
3 needs to contain programs for the City to qualify for other grants.

4 Ms. Chan described the report she will prepare for the January meeting and advised that
5 additional comments should be submitted prior to noon on December 28, 2020 in order to be
6 included in the packet for the January meeting.

7 Mr. Neff reported that VTA seems to think it will no longer have to provide funding for Caltrain
8 with the passage of Measure RR. The County is developing a countywide adult education
9 program. Caltrans District IV has launched a Bicycle Super Highway Plan; details will be
10 provided when they are available. VTA's spending plan for Measure B funding proposes
11 allocating the first ten years of money to BART and a few special projects. VTA has an
12 experimental project that installs railings to prevent pedestrians from walking in front of light rail
13 trains in San Jose.

14 **6. ADJOURNMENT – 7:46 p.m.**



Palo Alto Pedestrian and
Bicycle Advisory Committee

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1. Safe Routes to School

At the December City School Transportation Safety Committee meeting, the Safe Routes to School Partnership highlighted the completion of the 2020 [Annual Informational Report](#) and the attached [Memo](#), which showed record bike rack counts with both high schools exceeding 50% biking for first time, a four percent increase in overall PAUSD active/shared travel modes since 2016/17, a 13 percent increase in PAUSD middle school active/shared travel modes since 2016/17, completion of more than 72 percent of Year 1-3 Work Plan Strategies and conversion of five compulsory in-person PAUSD Bike/Ped Safety classes into 5 online classes, quizzes and digital downloads. The City is also working with a local resident and PAUSD to help facilitate a holiday donation of 24 bikes, front and rear lights, locks and helmets for PAUSD students. Partners have worked closely together to expedite the process on an extremely compressed timeline. Lastly, the SRTS Partnership welcomes Nicole Zoeller Boelens as the new SRTS PTAC Co-chair in partnership with the current Chair, Jim Pflasterer. We look forward to working with Ms. Zoeller-Boelens in this elevated capacity.

Table 3:
2019 Parked Bicycle Counts at PAUSD Schools

School Type	2019 Parked Bikes	% Biking	% pt. + or – since 2016-17
Elementary	759	16%	0
Middle	1,674	63%	+13
High	2,102	51%	+10
Total	4,535	39%	+8

Source: Office of Transportation, December 2019

Table 4:
2019 PAUSD Classroom Tally of Mode to School

	Walk Scooter Skate (%)	Bike (%)	Carpool (%)	Transit (%)	Drive (%)	Resp. Rate (%)	Alt. Transp. Mode (%)	Alt. Mode Shift or – since 2016-17 (%)
Elem.	25	16	6	3	50	80	50	+3
Middle	13	57	8	2	20	84	80	+3
High	9	54	6	6	24	61	75	+6
Average	15	42	7	4	31	75	68	+4

Source: Office of Transportation, December 2019



Public Comment Instructions For City of Palo Alto Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan Update

Members of the Public may provide public comments on the City of Palo Alto Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan Update as follows:

1. **Written public comments** (including visuals such as presentations, photos, etc) may be submitted by email to Transportation@CityofPaloAlto.org. Please follow these instructions:
 - A. Please email your written comments **by 12:00 pm (noon) on the Monday before** the upcoming Palo Alto Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee (PABAC) meeting, unless otherwise indicated. Details of upcoming PABAC meetings are available on the City's [PABAC webpage](#).
 - Written public comments will be attached to the upcoming PABAC meeting agenda packet.
 - Written comments submitted after 12:00pm (noon) on the Monday before the upcoming PABAC meeting will be attached to the following PABAC meeting agenda packet.
 - B. Please **lead your email subject line with "BPTP Update"**.
 - C. When providing comments with reference to the current [City of Palo Alto Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan 2012](#), please be as specific as possible by indicating the chapter number, section heading number, and/or page number.
2. **Spoken public comments using a computer** will be accepted through the teleconference meeting. To address the Committee, click on the URL in the agenda packet for Zoom. Please follow these instructions:
 - A. You may download the Zoom client or connect to the meeting in-browser.
 - If using your browser, make sure you are using a current, up-to-date browser: Chrome 30+, Firefox 27+, Microsoft Edge 12+, Safari 7+. Certain functionality may be disabled in older browsers including Internet Explorer.
 - B. You may be asked to enter an email address and name. We request (but do not require) that you identify yourself by name as this will be visible online and will be used to notify you that it is your turn to speak.
 - C. When you wish to speak, click on "raise hand." Staff will activate and unmute speakers in turn. Speakers will be notified shortly before they are called to speak.
 - D. When called, please limit your remarks to the time limit allotted by the Chair.



3. **Spoken public comments using a smart phone app** will be accepted through the teleconference meeting. To address the Committee, download the Zoom application onto your smart phone from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store and enter the Meeting ID in the agenda. Please follow the instructions B-D above.

4. **Spoken public comments using a phone (cell or land line) without an app** will be accepted through the teleconference meeting. Use the telephone number listed in the agenda. When you wish to speak, press *9 on your phone to “raise hand.” You will be asked to provide your first and last name before addressing the Committee. When called, press *6 on your phone to unmute. Please limit your remarks to the time limit allotted by the Chair.

Public Comments for City of Palo Alto Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan Update

This Packet Includes:

A compilation of written comments on the City of Palo Alto Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan Update submitted by email to Transportation@CityofPaloAlto.org.



From: [Transportation](#)
To: [Chan, Joanna](#)
Subject: FW: BPTP Update (Zoeller)
Date: Monday, November 30, 2020 10:34:07 AM

JC,
Forwarding.

From: Nicole Zoeller <nicole.zoeller@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 28, 2020 9:21 PM
To: Transportation <Transportation@CityofPaloAlto.org>
Cc: Arnout Boelens <ampboelens@gmail.com>; Zoeller-Boelens, Nicole <nicole.zoeller@gmail.com>
Subject: BPTP Update

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Hi, Joanna & Sylvia -

I have several questions and general comments for PABAC's upcoming BPTP discussion on December 1st.

Before we begin a detailed audit of the 2012 plan, we should revisit the intention of the plan and its fundamental components. My key questions are:

- Has the 2012 BPTP achieved its purpose as a strategic guide for investment in facilities and programs? How was it successful? Where did it fall short? How might our intention evolve in an updated 2021/2022 plan?
- Who are the audiences that the BPTP is intended to serve? How might those individuals/entities rate its effectiveness? Is the composition of our audience different for the 2021/2022 update?

While the 2012 plan is resoundingly comprehensive, it is also intimidating and verbose. If it is solely a policy document, it needs to be easier to navigate and inclusive of cornerstone programs like SRTS. If it is also intended to provide a vision for active transportation in Palo Alto, it needs to be more accessible for a general audience, in which we should aim to include a compelling and concise executive summary.

Here are my suggestions to improve the usability of an updated plan:

- Introduce a 1-2 page executive summary of the plan, which should include:
 - A 10-year vision that articulates the value of investing in active transportation for the citizens of Palo Alto
 - Include FROM --> TO statements to capture where we are today and where we aim to be in a decade

- Links city goals (climate change, reducing traffic congestion, etc) to the goals of the plan
- A clear purpose for the plan that speaks to various audiences
- A series of benchmarks. What are the specific, measurable goals we want to hold ourselves, as a city, accountable to?
- A simple list of priority projects, infrastructure and programs, that we believe will get us there
- Since this is not a living document, we should indicate where the latest information on bike and ped projects exist
- Add anecdotes from residents to ground the policy in humanity
- Simplify all of it. Remove lengthy paragraphs and offer concise explanations and bullet points where possible

And, finally, my specific feedback on a section I would like to see added in support of SRTS (for the executive summary, chapter 3, and weaved into chapters 5-7):

- **To achieve Palo Alto's S/CAP goal of increasing bicycle mode share to 25% by 2030, growing student ridership through SRTS will be essential.**
 - SRTS should have a dedicated section in programs, including:
 - Program mission
 - 10-year vision
 - 6 E's
 - Key objectives & metrics
 - Infrastructure needs to be designed to accommodate road users of all ages and abilities
 - Prioritize infrastructure projects that enable students and families to choose active transportation

Thank you in advance for incorporating this feedback and my suggestions into our next discussion. I look forward to it!

Warmly,
Nicole

the document relevant and ac
How might we make this document relevant and accessible to

From: [Transportation](#)
To: [Chan, Joanna](#)
Subject: FW: BPTP Update (Wachtel)
Date: Monday, November 30, 2020 10:34:08 AM
Attachments: [Wachtel on Bike Plan \(updated\).pdf](#)
[AW-Comments \(revised\).pdf](#)

JC,
Forwarding.

From: Alan Wachtel <alan.wachtel@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 30, 2020 7:45 AM
To: Transportation <Transportation@CityofPaloAlto.org>
Subject: BPTP Update

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

As comments on the forthcoming update to the *City of Palo Alto Bicycle + Pedestrian Plan 2012*, I'm attaching, in PDF format, copies of my previous comments on the final draft of the 2012 plan: a letter to the City Council (with a minor revision, in brackets) and a more detailed set of comments on Chapter 5, 6, and 7 and Appendix A, by chapter and page.

~ Alan Wachtel
Palo Alto

Alan Wachtel
3446 Janice Way
Palo Alto, California 94303-4212
(650) 494-1750

6 November 2011

City Council
City of Palo Alto
City Hall
250 Hamilton Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94301

Members of the Council:

As a former member of the Palo Alto Bicycle Advisory Committee (for over 30 years) and the current chair of the California Bicycle Advisory Committee, which advises Caltrans—although I'm not speaking on behalf of either group—I regret to recommend that the Council defer adoption of the 2011 Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan, set for your November 7 meeting, and return it to staff for extensive revision.

This plan contains many welcome and overdue recommendations for improving bicycle and pedestrian facilities and programs in the City. Under the guise of innovation, however, the consultants who wrote the plan have also insinuated into it a number of nonstandard or substandard designs that, while they may be superficially attractive, are incompatible with basic traffic engineering principles or with legally binding design criteria, and that might, therefore, create liability issues if implemented. Appendix A is full of these facilities, which should be explicitly identified as experimental, rather than “innovative,” and included in the plan only where there are clearly defined reasons to do so, and only as experiments subject to appropriate permissions from regulatory bodies. The Council should direct staff to amend the plan along these lines, and to disentangle the many valuable parts of the plan from the unacceptable ones. It would be a mistake to confer policy approval on nonstandard facilities through a political process, rather than a technical one.

Technical aspects of the plan have not received proper attention in the hearing process. For example, the plan represents ordinary bicycling on the roadway as only for the “strong and fearless,” even though the vast majority of all bicycling must necessarily be done on streets and roads, and should be as mundane an activity as driving a car. It suggests that the needs of a broader spectrum of the “interested but concerned” are best served by “innovative” engineering solutions that reduce motor vehicle interactions.” Many of these “solutions,” though promoted as “separated” or “protected,” instead actually exacerbate bicycle-motor vehicle conflicts.

Bike boxes, for instance, violate basic rules of destination positioning by inducing bicyclists to hug the curb as they approach an intersection, and preventing motorists from merging into the bike lane or near the curb in accordance with traffic law. This design can only exacerbate the common type of car-bike collision known as a “right hook.” Cycle tracks (on-street separated bike paths) likewise prevent proper intersection positioning by means of barriers; rely on undefined, ambiguous, or unexpected right-of-way rules; may obstruct sight lines through intervening shrubbery or parked cars; and require turning motorists to peer through seat pillars, headrests, passengers, and cargo to yield to fast-moving bicyclists overtaking in the car’s right rear blind spot. Cycle tracks are also often two-way facilities, even though it is firmly established that wrong-way cycling greatly increases the risk of bicycle-motor vehicle collisions. They can work safely only under highly restricted conditions, where all intersections are controlled by signals that have separate bicycle phases and there are no driveways, and even then they create questions of delay and compliance.

The plan nonetheless proposes a number of cycle tracks, some of them two-way, such as on Newell from Homer or Channing to Jordan, from Los Robles at La Donna to El Camino Way at West Meadow, and on Alma. This can do nothing but needlessly increase collisions at driveways and intersections. The plan also recommends the use of certain sidewalks as bike paths, although riding on sidewalks is another well-known cause of collisions at intersections.

The draft plan attempts to brush off these objections by alluding to “modern guidance . . . suitability criteria and . . . measures that reduce potential intersection conflicts.” The plan relies heavily on the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Bikeway Design Guide, which it calls “the most up-to-date source for information and guidance for on-street bicycle facilities.” The Council should understand that the NACTO Guide is not a generally accepted design guide; it tends to ignore or trivialize design deficiencies, and the quality of the research it cites is often unreliable. It was created, in fact, largely for the purpose of providing nominal legitimacy to otherwise unapproved facilities. These facilities appear in the guide not as the result of a technical review process, but because they were specified from the beginning in NACTO’s Request for Proposals. Furthermore, the NACTO Guide itself was written by the same consultant firm that produced Palo Alto’s draft plan, who may not be entirely objective about its merits.

The plan correspondingly supposes that “the most trivial of advances” should not be unnecessarily held up by the “lengthy approval processes and other constraints” that serve to ensure the safety and usability of traffic control devices and roadway design features, and suggests how the City could circumvent these safeguards:

While none [of the “innovative” facilities] . . . are expressly prohibited under or contrary to the current versions of the AASHTO Guide to Bikeway Facilities or the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), there are barriers to implementation nonetheless—including restrictions on the use of many state and federal funding sources. . . . Chapter 7 includes recommendations to utilize local spending for bikeway facilities not eligible for other funds. [The wording, on p. 5-14 (PDF 104), has been changed slightly in the final plan and the CA MUTCD is acknowledged, but the comments below remain valid.]

On the contrary, some of the proposed facilities are indeed expressly prohibited. Moreover, the consultants seem unaware that the relevant standards in California are the Caltrans Highway Design Manual (not the AASHTO Guide) and the California MUTCD (not the national MUTCD), or that the California Streets and Highways Code requires all agencies responsible for bikeways to adhere to minimum safety design criteria, regardless of funding source.

It does not serve “interested but concerned” bicyclists to provide facilities that actually degrade safety. A much more effective and safer approach would be, for instance, to expand the City’s network of bicycle boulevards, which would provide a low-traffic environment that takes full advantage of the principles of traffic engineering and traffic law that are already built into the existing roadway network. To its credit, the plan does include recommendations for bicycle boulevards. Again, I recommend that the Council return the plan to staff so that appropriate solutions such as this one can be given their proper emphasis, and unsuitable ones discarded.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alan Wachtel". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Alan Wachtel

These revised comments are based on the Final Draft dated January 2012, organized by page number. Text in bold is quoted directly from the plan.

Chapter 5

5-1

Addressing the lack of existing bicycle and pedestrian count data, and updating the citywide traffic volume data (the current map dates back to 1999), is one of the highest priority needs identified in this Plan. Regularly documenting and assessing actual bicycle/pedestrian activity will help Palo Alto target investments where they are most beneficial and measure progress towards achieving stated goals for bicycling and walking rates as established in Chapter 2. Where projects recommend potential significant changes to roadway configuration and/or circulation patterns, being able to assess specific traffic conditions (both general “screenline” volumes and key turning movement locations) for both modes is critical to final design and approval. Furthermore, having verified pedestrian and bicycle counts can make an important contribution for improving future activity level estimates (i.e., non-motorized demand modeling).

Data collection needs to include more than just counts. Where safety improvements are implemented, and particularly for experimental or innovative facilities, it should include before-and-after measurements of bicyclist and motorist roadway position, crashes (if any), compliance, conflicts, delay, aggressive behavior, or other variables, as appropriate, to determine whether the installation has produced the desired effect.

5-2

Similar early coordination within the City has provided for the equivalent of a future cycletrack facility on San Antonio Road between Charleston Road and Middlefield Road, planned for implementation in 2012.

What is this all about?

5-12

The bicycle network should accommodate all types of bicyclists, from confident [sic], experienced users who would rather ride in traffic and minimize travel time, to others who would rather travel a little out of direction or wait longer to cross a street in order to avoid riding on major streets. This section identifies types of bicyclists, as well as specific bikeway facility and supporting facility types appropriate for different bicyclists.

This is a laudable sentiment with which no one could disagree. The types of facilities identified as suitable for less confident bicyclists, however, in reality often present greater hazards and challenges than conventional ones.

Recent developments in bicycle facility planning and design have focused largely on one principle: separating bicyclists—visually, psychologically, and physically—from automobile traffic.

It is not generally possible to separate bicyclists fully from automobile traffic. Interactions must still occur at intersections and driveways, and by concentrating these interactions into a confined space, rather than allowing merging at a safe time and location, “separation” runs the risk of intensifying the conflict.

5-13

According to the bicycle coordinator with the City of Portland, OR:

“Riding a bicycle should not require bravery. Yet, all too often, that is the perception among cyclists and noncyclists alike. . . .”

It is unclear whether the speaker endorses the view that routine bicycling on streets is a dangerous activity that requires bravery, or is merely describing a prejudice. But reinforcing this attitude would certainly be a deterrent to cycling and should not be part of the plan.

Based on a theory developed in Portland and corroborated elsewhere in the U.S., planners often refer to four types of bicyclists . . .

How are these descriptive categories corroborated? Again, the implication of a “strong and fearless” category is that ordinary cycling requires fearlessness or indifference to risk, and this is an attitude that ought to be discouraged.

Cultivating these potential [“interested but concerned] bicyclists demands both engineering solutions that reduce motor vehicle interactions and education/encouragement efforts to proactively engage and support reluctant populations.

“Separation” is not the only way to reduce motor vehicle interactions: bicycle boulevards are an excellent way to do so without the problematic engineering of “separated” facilities. Education and encouragement efforts should attempt to reduce unwarranted fears and should provide opportunities to increase skills. After all, the majority of bicycle travel still must take place on streets without special facilities.

5-14

Like most other U.S. cities, however, existing design and funding constraints have thus far limited opportunities for substantially expanding trail and protected on-street networks (and education/encouragement programs) to attract even more bicyclists.

The word “trail” is imprecise, since it is not a defined type of bicycle facility and carries inaccurate connotations of rustic seclusion. “Protected” is likewise imprecise, since the “protection” breaks down at intersections and driveways.

In response to the need for innovation and advocacy on behalf of cities, the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) recently developed the *Urban Bikeway Design Guide* (April 2011). This online resource includes strategies for increasing separation between motor vehicles and bicyclists using relatively low-cost treatments such as colorized bike lanes, intersection markings, and physically separated bike lanes (e.g., cycletracks).

NACTO is not a recognized practice-setting body like AASHTO or ITE; I doubt that many people, including transportation professionals, had ever heard of it before it developed the *Urban Bikeway Design Guide*. That guide was an ad-hoc effort, produced to provide a rationale for the roadway treatments it describes, which were specified in the RFP, rather than evaluated independently. It has been heavily promoted through political and public-relations efforts.

While all have been implemented in the U.S., and none are expressly prohibited under or contrary to the current versions of the AASHTO *Guide to Bikeway Facilities* or the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (MUTCD), there are barriers to implementation nonetheless – including restrictions on the use of many state and federal funding sources. Customized guidance on relevant NACTO and other innovative treatments is included in this chapter and Appendix A of this Plan, while Chapter 7 includes recommendations to utilize local spending for bikeway facilities not eligible for other funds.

In California, it is the Caltrans Highway Design Manual (HDM) and California MUTCD that govern, by law, regardless of the funding source. In any case, the statement that “none are expressly prohibited or contrary” to standards is incorrect. For example, bike boxes require nonstandard duplicate stop lines and colorization in the travel lane. Buffered bike lanes employ a nonstandard striping and hatching scheme whose traffic law implications are murky. The HDM prohibits physically separated bike lanes. Cycletracks can, for the most part, be implemented safely only if intersections are signalized and display separate bicycle phases. The national MUTCD does not provide for bicycle signal heads. The California MUTCD does, but only under strict warrants that would not necessarily be met for cycletracks. Cycletracks may also use nonstandard YIELD TO BIKES signs, whose efficacy has not been investigated.

At http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/mutcd_bike.htm, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) describes whether certain bicycle facilities, signs, and markings are permitted by the national MUTCD, experimental, not allowed, or are not traffic control devices and therefore outside its scope. Note that when the FHWA says that cycle tracks, for instance, are consistent with the MUTCD, it is not necessarily endorsing or approving those facilities. It is only saying that they can be implemented with existing approved traffic control devices, or that they are not traffic control devices and therefore not regulated by the MUTCD.

There currently exists a procedure for experimenting with traffic control devices, by a Request to Experiment (RTE) to the FHWA and the California Traffic Control Devices Committee (CTCDC). There is no procedure for requesting permission from Caltrans to experiment with nonstandard geometric designs, but one is likely to be implemented soon. All nonstandard facilities should obtain the proper experimental approvals.

5-17

Enhanced Bikeways

The BPTP 2011 generally identifies enhancements to existing corridors – in particular, bicycle stencil markings carried through intersections as described in the NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide – as the most effective strategy to improve arterial bicycling conditions in Palo Alto. This is in light of the fact that many existing bike lanes are dropped at approaches to major intersections – leaving bicyclists and motorists with little guidance at the points of greatest potential conflict. Such markings do not impact traffic capacity, are relatively inexpensive, and can be implemented throughout the city.

“Enhanced” seems to be code for “nonstandard” and should be used with care. Bicycle stencil markings through intersections are inconsistent with the California MUTCD, and would have to be conducted through an RTE. The reason for dropping or dashing bike lanes at approaches to intersections is that right-turning motorists must merge toward the curb at a time and place where it is safe to do so, and bicyclists may need to merge left to avoid being to the right of right turns. I don’t necessarily object to these stencils—after all, markers are sometimes used to guide left-turn lanes through intersections—but I’d like to see more information about their purpose and implementation.

Other recommended improvements to enhanced bikeway corridors include the use of green colorized pavement markings to denote potential conflict zones or exclusive bike facilities, improved bicycle detection, and the conversion of substandard bike lanes to well-designed shared roadways. For the latter, lead-in bicycle boxes (see Appendix A) are strongly encouraged to promote bicycle priority where there are heavy bicycle or vehicle turn movements. The enhanced bikeway designation also seeks to prioritize corridors for potential conversion from time restricted bike lanes to two-way cycletracks and/or the addition of Class I sidepaths. These corridors and their issues are discussed in greater detail below.

Likewise with green colorized pavement, which has received interim approval from FHWA and the CTCDC, and can be used provided the proper notices are given and guidelines observed. How the green color is intended to affect bicyclists and motorist movements, and how it does affect them, remain unclear. My concern is precisely that the color will discourage proper merging movements; Palo Alto has an opportunity to study this question.

Bike boxes are a fundamentally bad idea. As discussed above, they require nonstandard duplicate stop lines and colorization in the travel lane. “Promote bicycle priority” means cut to the head of

the line. They are also sometimes presented as providing an opportunity for less confident bicyclists to merge away from the curb into the stream of traffic to avoid right-turn conflicts at intersections, or to position themselves for a left turn. All these claims may be true when the signal is red. If it is green, however, or if it is initially red but changes to green during the approach, the green bike lane marking directs bicyclists along the curb. Meanwhile, the green bike box and bike lane markings actively prevent motorists from merging safely to the curb or into the bike lane to begin a right turn, whether they're approaching on a green indication or starting up on a new green, in direct conflict with California traffic law. (I'm assuming that right turns on red are prohibited and that motorists obey the prohibition, which may be generous.) This arrangement almost seems to guarantee right hook collisions.

The *NACTO Guide* recognizes this conflict to the extent of recommending that a “Yield to Bikes” sign should (not “shall”) be post-mounted “to reinforce that bicyclists have the right-of-way going through the intersection.” The signs shown are nonstandard variants of similar signs to yield to pedestrians. But it is not enough to simply substitute bicyclists for pedestrians on the sign. It's one thing to look through your windshield and see pedestrians standing on or approaching a curb; moreover, in case of misjudgment, pedestrians can stop suddenly or step sideways or back. It's another thing entirely to yield to bicyclists overtaking in your right rear blind spot at much higher speed and expecting to have right-of-way. This is exactly the right-hook geometry that we know causes collisions, on both roads and sidewalks, and that roadway design, traffic law, and behavior normally seek to avoid. I'd venture to say that you'll never see, anywhere, a lane of right-turning traffic expected to yield to a lane of through vehicular traffic on its right (or the mirror image, in countries that drive on the left).

The *NACTO Guide* marshals an impressive array of research studies for bike boxes, but in them this conflict is almost universally ignored. Typically what's measured is compliance with the markings and encroachment on them. The only significant exceptions I found are Hunter in Eugene and Dill et al in Portland. Hunter was looking at a bike box intended to help bicyclists cross from one side to the other of a one-way street; Dill's numbers were very small. In both cases, Oregon traffic law is anomalous: it explicitly prohibits bicyclists from leaving the bike lane to continue straight at intersections (unless the lane to the left is right-turn-only), and it prohibits motorists from merging into the bike lane to prepare for a right turn.

Arguably bike boxes don't make the situation in Oregon any worse, but this is not a model to be followed elsewhere, and the results cannot be generalized.

I likewise discuss time-restricted bike lanes below.

5-18

These options [for time-restricted bike lanes] include consideration of full-time parking restrictions in order to “stack” dedicated bicycle space to one side of the street (i.e., build cycletracks).

Full-time parking restrictions would permit a full-time bike lane. “Dedicated bicycle space to one side of the street” is exactly the problem. With a one-way cycletrack, you have three destination movements for vehicles (left, right, through) positioned entirely to the left of the same three movements for bicyclists in the cycletrack. If the cycletrack is two-way (as p. 5-12 says it would be), the number of conflicts multiplies enormously. (This forms a striking contrast to more accepted innovations such as roundabouts, which seek to reduce the number of crossing conflicts.) These are the same conflicts, of course, that occur on sidewalks or sidepaths.

Cycletracks may have some advantages compared to sidewalks: they’re straight, while sidewalks are not always, and they’re not shared with pedestrians or street furniture. They are also (sometimes) one-way. But against those advantages must be weighed bicyclists’ higher speed and expectation of right-of-way at driveways and intersections. These conflicts can be reliably resolved only if every intersection is signalized and displays separate signal phases for bicyclists, and there are no driveways. The separate phases introduce additional delay for all modes, and right turns on red must be prohibited, which can lead to compliance problems. Traffic law does not require bicyclists to use the cycle track, and those who recognize its dangers and ride in the street face narrower lanes, possible harassment by motorists, and confusion about whether to follow vehicular or bicycle signal heads.

These facilities are more attractive to novice bicyclists, can help develop a core bicycle network integrated with trails and barrier crossings, and may reduce wrong-way and sidewalk riding. They also require a limited number of major intersections and careful design attention to reduce potential vehicle conflicts, and thus may be appropriate only for a small number of corridors.

Door-zone bike lanes, sidewalks, and wrong-way riding are also attractive to novice bicyclists. It is not clear that cycletracks are an improvement. The survey in Appendix C showing that 61 percent of respondents would feel safer riding on a cycletrack than in a bicycle lane does not validate the design.

Recognizing that they require a limited number of major intersections is unusual for this plan; there may be no corridors that qualify.

The 2003 *Bicycle Transportation Plan* was instrumental in helping establish clear City policy prohibiting and/or discouraging riding bicycles on sidewalks in most situations (see also Chapter 10.64 of the Municipal Code). This policy is based in part on a 1994 Palo Alto study that concludes on-street cycling is two times safer on average than sidewalk riding, as well as from similar findings/theories such as John Forester’s influential book “Effective Cycling.” While this conclusion and the existing city policy remain valid, it is important to distinguish sidewalk riding from newer types of facilities recommended for consideration under this Plan. These include the potential provision of two-way cycletracks and conversion of existing sidewalks into Class I shared use paths (known as sidepaths when running parallel and adjacent to roadways).

The main issue identified with sidewalk riding, just as with cycletrack and sidepath design, is the identified safety risks at roadway crossings (intersections and to a lesser extent, driveways). Without proper geometric design standards, signal controls, signage, markings, or associated education and outreach to motorists, existing intersections where sidewalk riding occurs are often ill equipped to handle conflicts with turning vehicles. Modern guidance on the design of cycletrack and sidepath facilities considers a number of suitability criteria and includes measures that reduce potential intersection conflicts. More information on cycletrack and sidepath design guidance is provided in Chapter 6 and in Appendix A.

One of the basic principles of vehicular cycling (and of traffic law in general) is that bicyclists should not approach a conflict point from a direction and at a speed at which motorists cannot see them in time to avoid a collision. For example, a motorist who is scanning left before turning right at an intersection cannot see wrong-way bicyclists approaching from the right on the intersecting street or sidewalk, and likewise cannot see bicyclists on the motorist's street or the adjacent sidewalk who overtake in the motorist's right rear blind spot.

The consultants imply that through geometric design, traffic control devices, and educational outreach, motorists can be trained to look where they would not normally look and to see where they could not normally see. But there is little evidence that this is even cognitively possible, much less that motorists can be relied upon to do it when their attention is necessarily occupied by traffic approaching from other directions. Facilities that implicitly rely on such claims need to be examined critically.

A second significant risk from sidewalk riding is that it promotes wrong-way travel. Some "innovative" facilities also either facilitate or actually incorporate wrong-way travel.

5-19

Understanding reasons for sidewalk riding, as well as the differences between newer protected facility types, is important for developing community support for protected facilities – and ultimately, communicating their proper function to users and motorists. Where opportunities may exist to meet modern guidelines, the BPTP 2011 recommends consideration of sidewalk upgrades to Class I sidepaths and re-striping of roadways to include two-way cycletracks.

Again, the terms "protected" and "modern" may be misleading. The burden should be on the consultants to demonstrate why sidepaths, which have long been known to increase collision rates, and two-way cycletracks, which not only exacerbate intersection conflicts but incorporate wrong-way travel, are appropriate and safe at the recommended locations.

Chapter 6

6-5

First, multiple “sidepath” segments are recommended by widening existing sidewalks behind the face of the curb. These segments would extend existing trails toward El Camino Real along both Churchill and Page Mill Roads . . . and along Embarcadero Road near the Community Center campus and out near the Palo Alto Golf Course. As sidepaths can have visibility challenges at intersections, they are identified for areas with long, unobstructed frontages and must be well-designed.

If these paths are to serve bicyclists, what benefits do they offer to offset the well-known hazards of sidepaths due to intersection conflicts and wrong-way riding? An earlier draft described the visibility challenges as “huge.” The restriction to “long, unobstructed frontages” does not seem to have been heeded.

6-6

The BPTP 2011 recommends an emphasis on removal of and enhancement to existing substandard bike lanes (particularly those that pose potential “dooring” issues adjacent to parked cars or where gutter pans affect the functionality of curbside bike lanes and the continuation of bicycle lanes across intersections through innovative green colorization and roadway markings.

What benefit will these nonstandard markings confer?

6-8

Where conditions indicate potential suitability and demand, the Plan prioritizes additional analysis of green coloration, buffered bike lanes, or two-way cycletracks to attract “interested but concerned” riders who may otherwise avoid arterial bikeway riding of any kind.

There is no virtue in attracting “interested but concerned” riders to facilities that are promoted as “separated” or “protected,” but that intensify intersection conflicts and encourage wrong-way riding.

6-30

Bike boxes should not be installed at Lytton and Alma, or anywhere. The Walter Hays/Rinconada sidepath (under “Trails”) crosses only one driveway (at the fire station), but it presents intersection conflicts at both ends, especially for wrong-way riders, and it may encourage two-way sidewalk riding at both ends.

6-30

Homer/Channing couplet: Prioritize this corridor with the goal of implementing enhanced bicycle facilities; at minimum, consider two-way bicycle travel on Homer Avenue from Alma Street to either (a converted two-way) High Street or to Emerson Street to connect with downtown.

I agree that a contraflow bike lane on Homer would be workable and desirable, but it isn't currently allowed by the HDM. If Caltrans adopts an a procedure for bikeway experiments, this would be a good opportunity for one.

6-39

El Camino Way and Los Robles: Enhance bike lanes (potentially consolidate with sidewalks into a shared use path) approaching and across El Camino Real to La Donna Avenue.

Why a shared use path, and how does consolidating bike lanes into a path constitute an enhancement?

6-43

Class I bikeway on the north side of Churchill Road: Link the Embarcadero and Churchill Mall paths via a widened sidewalk and reconfigured El Camino Real intersection.

What is the Churchill Mall path? This sidepath would cross major driveways at Palo Alto High School and the Palo Alto Unified School District office.

Chapter 7

7-1

Appendix A: Design Guidelines presents innovative bicycle and pedestrian facilities that can complement existing standards and guidelines. Despite the experimental nature of some of the recommended treatments, all include U.S. examples and many have been adopted by the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO). The design guidelines are intended to be a toolkit that allows the City flexibility for implementing all future projects. It incorporates the latest thinking from NACTO (which has been officially endorsed by the FHWA) and reflects recent State policies such as Complete Streets.

See my comments to p. 5-10 and to Appendix A. "Innovative" and "latest" are not equivalent to safe or effective. The reference to FHWA is misleading. The Secretary of Transportation has informally recommended the guide in the context of a press conference. There has been no technical or official approval.

7-4

Project TR-1 is a wide sidewalk on Embarcadero Road from Newell Road to Middlefield Road. This may be the same as the Walter Hays/Rinconada sidepath discussed on p. 6-30. TR stands for the perhaps inappropriate “trail.”

7-6

Project TR-5 is the Churchill path discussed on p. 6-43.

7-9

Project BB-7, the Amarillo-Moreno Bicycle Boulevard, includes consideration of a bike box.

Project BK-1 for a Charleston/Arastradero “enhanced bikeway” includes green lanes and intersection through markings, whose purpose, as previously discussed, should be defined. Intersection through markings are nonstandard. It also includes bike boxes, discussed in the comments to p. 5-17.

7-10

Project BK-2, the California Avenue enhanced bikeway, suggests a cycletrack on a business street that has many intersections at cross streets and alleys, and parking that cannot be removed. The potential for conflict is enormous.

Project BK-3, the Channing/Newell enhanced bikeway, proposes unspecified bicycle markings or a potential two-way cycletrack from the Homer/Channing enhanced bikeway to Jordan Middle School. What on earth can be the purpose of a two-way cycletrack, whose physical separation, whatever the details, would create innumerable turning conflicts at residential driveways, and whose wrong-way bicycle traffic would be a major hazard?

Project BK-4, the Lytton Avenue/Alma Street/Sand Hill Road enhanced bikeway, includes a possible cycletrack along the El Camino Park or Caltrain frontage. The details are unclear. How will the wrong-way and intersection issues be handled?

7-11

Project BK-7 proposes yet another potential cycletrack on Los Robles/El Camino Way between La Donna and West Meadow Drive, giving rise to the usual questions.

7-12

Project BK-9: another potential cycletrack on Fabian Way. What is the need?

7-14

Project INT-6, Churchill Avenue at El Camino Real, proposes another bike box.

7-19

Project F-7 is a general feasibility/design study to assess potential for cycletrack design in Palo Alto. That should be a prerequisite to any of the specific cycletrack proposals in the plan.

7-22

Bike boxes should not be included in the cost estimate table or the plan.

Appendix A

A-1

This section presents innovative bicycle and pedestrian facilities that build upon and improve Palo Alto's existing non-motorized network. All of the facilities presented have been implemented in the United States. However, not all are approved for use by Caltrans or the Association of American State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO).

The last sentence deserves emphasis, because for certain traffic control devices and bikeway designs, compliance with Caltrans standards is mandated by law.

Many of the bicycle facilities are from the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Bikeways Design Guide, which has developed design guidelines for innovative bicycle facilities and is the most up-to-date source for information and guidance for on-street bicycle facilities. The Design Guide is meant to complement, not supersede, guidance from AASHTO and MUTCD and was recently endorsed by the U.S. Secretary of Transportation. NACTO is an association of major urban cities, who among other initiatives, have banded together to form Cities for Cycling.

By now it should be clear that claims to be innovative, up-to-date, separated, protected, modern, widely used, best practice, and so on should be viewed skeptically. The USDOT Secretary's endorsement was casual and informal. Many of the NACTO designs appear to violate basic engineering principles or traffic law by introducing ambiguous or unexpected right-of-way, impaired sight lines, nonstandard destination positioning, and unrealistic scanning patterns. The design guidelines and research cited often overlook or dismiss these issues. Each design should be evaluated on its own merits, rather than as an authority.

Incorporating detailed design sheets for buffered bike lanes, bike boxes, and especially cycletracks is redundant and acts primarily as padding and PR to lend these treatments an undeserved legitimacy. At a minimum, unapproved treatments should be identified, their potential disadvantages acknowledged, and the need for approved experimentation emphasized.

From: pennyellson12@gmail.com
To: [Chan, Joanna](#)
Subject: BPTP Comments
Date: Monday, November 30, 2020 11:42:34 AM
Attachments: [BPTP Comments.pdf](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Hi Joanna,

I wish I had more time for this. My comments are less organized and thorough than I'd like, but this has been a busy time for me. It's the best I could do right now. Please see attachment.

Thanks for your outreach.

Best,

Penny



Virus-free. www.avg.com

Overall BPTP Comments:

Overall, we are lucky that our city has a temperate climate, flat terrain, and a good street network, already fitted with shady sidewalks and trails and bike facilities that connect parks, shopping and community centers to homes and places of employment (in most places). Still, there are many areas we can work on to make walking and bicycling a more welcoming, easier, safer choice.

Please elevate Pedestrian elements of the plan more. I'd like to see more attention given to pedestrians throughout the document.

Who is your audience? If the plan is meant to speak to the people of Palo Alto, most of whom are not traffic wonks, this document has missed the mark. If its audience is PABAC, staff and transit agencies who issue grant money, maybe it is spot on. I think the document can speak to both. The first chapter, however, must speak to the people. Let them know why it is important reading if they walk or bike in Palo Alto—or even if they only like to drive. Provide a good layman's summary of its contents.

Let's finish what we started. The new plan should reaffirm the city's commitment to complete key recommended projects that were not completed during the period of the 2012 plan:

- Charleston-Arastradero Plan (also was recommended in the prior BPTP and Comp Plan)
- Adobe Bicycle/Pedestrian Bridge (ditto)
- Bicycle Boulevards (at minimum, please prioritize Wilkie and the Wilkie Bridge repairs. The bridge surface is really hard to navigate safely.) Fix the STOP signs on Park.

Planning for e-bikes.

Integrate new electric vehicle options in the plan. A recent City of PA presentation promoted new subsidies for e-car purchases, focused mostly on e-cars and glossing over other kinds of EVs, like: e-bikes, e-scooters, e-transit, etc. We need recommendations for policies that direct Utilities staff to promote a full array of electric vehicles, including e-bikes, e-cars, e-scooters and e-trikes to replace existing gas-powered vehicles-- to balance the Utilities Department's new hard push for e-car subsidies and charging station roll out.

Promoting only e-cars this way will lead to increased traffic congestion, parking issues, safety risks and discourage people from choosing lower impact alternatives to driving. Consider adding policy recommendations that require Transportation, Public Works and Utilities departments to work across silos on this matter on communications and incentives offers and framing EV options more thoughtfully (not just in knee-jerk reaction to availability of incentives for e-car purchases). I'm not sure where this should go in the BPTP, but it will be important, if the Utilities is pushing e-car purchase incentives. We don't want Utilities' well-meaning and important GHG initiatives to undermine Transportation's important work reducing overall car trips and their parking, congestion, safety impacts and costs.

Funding: Further, the BPTP might recommend policies to insure that some portion of the incremental Utility User Tax (UUT) dollars that will be generated by charging EVs would be spent on congestion management the way gas tax dollars (which are diminishing) help to mitigate automobile impacts.

The Language We Choose When We Talk About These Projects

Much of the money spent on so-called "bike/ped" projects is spent on accommodating cars and, more recently, building new green stormwater management systems. To help people understand this, can we choose different language to describe the projects in the next BPTP? These are complete street projects, creating safe, efficient, sustainable street environments for all road users. How do we convey that in a way that communicates that these projects also serve cars, often adding capacity that car trip volumes demand, as the C-A Plan did, for instance, before bike lanes were laid down. Let's explore new language we can use throughout the BPTP and other city communications and processes to describe these projects more accurately.

People express shock at the cost of the "bike/ped" projects, not understanding:

1. How much of the cost of "bike/ped" projects is driven by the need to accommodate cars.
2. That money spent on all of the "bike/ped" projects combined is less than the cost of just one parking garage project currently underway.

The plan should clearly lay out what the city has been spending on street paving and infrastructure maintenance (mostly driven by wear and tear from cars, parking construction and maintenance, frequent repaving and restriping, including things

like: parking enforcement, capacity improvements for cars, collision damage costs the city absorbs, liability costs, deaths/injuries, PAPD vehicle code enforcement, other separate costs that are driven by the needs of motorists. Over the period of the 2012 BPTP what were the city dollars spent on autos? Compare. Presently, these huge costs are essentially invisible in the city budget. Let's get those huge costs out of the dark recesses of the budget into the light of day with the words "auto transportation" attached to them.

If we are going to call some projects "bike/ped" projects, then we should also call out far more massive city expenditures that driving demands as "car projects". If we are not willing to do that, then we need to reframe language around complete streets projects.

As I think about it, maybe this is the argument for treating all transportation projects as complete street projects. We need a complete street system.

Chapters: What do you like/not like?

Chapter 3, "Existing Projects & Programs" focuses mostly on projects and dedicates only a few paragraphs to programs and the 6E's. This is a striking deficit of the 2012 BPTP that calls for a new, separate chapter.

New Chapter: Safe Routes For Everyone

In Chapter 3, the 2012 BPTP gave very little attention to the city's most successful TDM partnership and program, Safe Routes to School. As the city pursues a very ambitious 80/30 SCAP GHG reduction goal that depends on widespread mode shift, the new BPTP should correct that omission, provide recommendations to help SRTS continue to evolve, and hold the program up as a model for what can we do to create mode shift across the rest of the population.

The next BPTP should elevate the city's successful Safe Routes to School program and what we learned about effecting mode shift from that program. **A new Safe Routes for Everyone chapter** could offer special sections:

- **Spotlight and explain the SRTS partnership, program and outcomes with recommendations for next steps in the evolution of this program**
- **recommend a 6E's community partnership approach across the board for people of all ages and abilities.**
- **integrate Vision Zero core principles and components.**

Recommendations for adults should emphasize education and encouragement designed for adults at different ages—because physical and cognitive changes affect how people walk and bike throughout their lives. We know what works. Engineering, Enforcement, Evaluation, Equity are important; however, **robust, targeted Education and Encouragement programs introduce people to the fun of the walking and bicycling experience and show them how they can do it safely. *Education and Encouragement are the catalysts for change.*** We need to adapt what we know and apply it across the population more broadly. This new chapter would lay out a plan for that work.

Be sure to build in metrics for mode shift goals for: bikes, e-bikes, walking, transit. We don't accomplish what we don't measure.

Scoring Systems for Projects Needs Work:

1). The Five I's Evaluation Framework was only somewhat helpful in evaluating projects. If we continue using any of these criteria, the Innovation criteria should be eliminated. Though I'm not opposed to innovation, innovation is not a reason to do something.

2). Consider new scoring systems: Possibly conform with VTA's Guidelines? Another member of PABAC has suggested: Cohesion, Directness, Safety, Comfort, Attractiveness. I might add to this Equity, fair distribution of improvements like rail grade separations, for instance. These seem to me reasonable guidelines.

Consider using Level of Traffic Stress Measures (LTS) to identify existing trouble spots and to evaluate the need for treatments. I'm not clear on what the best LTS scoring system is for Palo Alto. If we are serious about accommodating the "interested but concerned" bicyclists, LTS is a measure worth adding. However, this will require a commitment to better crash data collection and organization.

LTS could provide a way to identify higher stress locations in the BB network that we could prioritize for treatment. This might be a lower cost way to improve the network for people who bike and walk. (Robert Neff mentioned this at a PABAC meeting. I think it may be a terrific way to get BB network improvements moving forward at lower cost with less cause for objection.)

Also, to get BB projects moving again, please consider reviewing and recommending revision to Comprehensive Plan Policy T-41 “Keep all neighborhood streets open as a general rule.” which has disallowed low cost BB solutions that worked so well on Bryant BB.

Because the BB network aligns with school commute routes, it is critically important that we begin implementing the most needed safety improvements as soon as possible. Let’s find a way to get that done.

4.2 – Collisions Documentation and Assessment

Table 4-4 is probably meant to show trends over time, but the format doesn’t also look at factors that might have affected those numbers. For instance, was Traffic Team fully staffed? What was the overall ADV (bikes, peds and cars) during this time? We are missing information that might make this data more useful. This is pretty typical of how data is treated in this document.

There are some bright spots.--An interesting way to track collisions is shown on Maps 4-1 and 4-2. These outdated maps give us some sense of where the problems are. Working backward from this map, one might look at police reports for all of the collisions that occurred at high frequency collision locations like Charleston/Middlefield, for instance, to understand if there is some commonality between the events that might be addressed using the 6E’s.

The next BPTP could consider ways to standardize data collection and reporting to align with the city’s needs for decision-making, automate it as much as possible in order to get better information to help the city make decisions without wasting staff time hand-gathering data. Certain reports should be offered in the same formats regularly over time so trends can be observed. The BPTP could lay out specifically what kinds of data and formats would be most helpful and recommend requirements for getting that work done more efficiently. Data collection has always been a problem. Let’s fix it.

1.5--Public Information & Outreach

The last plan did not address the matter of outreach. We’ve learned a lot from the roll out of the first BB projects, particularly Ross Road. I’d like to see that learning reflected in the updated plan. A place to do that would be in the Public Outreach summary section, 1.5.

Question: How will this plan address XCAP recommendations? I have a lot of questions about grade sep proposals and their probable systemic effects on our transportation network. The heavy emphasis on motor vehicle LOS in the planning process has led to solutions that, I think, need a lot more work.

Appendices

Appendices A&B could be replaced or augmented with links to the materials with a short summary of what can be found in these resources. Please also consider adding links to technical Guidelines (VTA, NACTO, Level of Traffic Stress, for instance).

From: [Richard Swent](#)
To: [Chan, Joanna](#)
Subject: Late comments on new Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
Date: Monday, November 30, 2020 8:11:13 PM
Attachments: [Ped and Bike Plan Comments 12-2020.pdf](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Joanna,

I apologize for how late these comments are. I have had trouble organizing my thoughts using the framework you provided, and was not able to meet the deadline for public comments. I would like to read these comments at tomorrow's meeting, and I have attached them here so you can more easily incorporate them into the record.

Thanks,
Richard Swent

Comments on the upcoming Palo Alto Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan

From Richard Swent

Many things have changed since the 2012 Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan was written. Some of the changes that I think should affect the new plan are:

1. Bicyclist level of stress has been articulated and accepted as a useful criterion for evaluating routes
2. Vision Zero has become more widespread as a philosophical guiding principle for developing transportation plans and policies
3. Complete Streets is a legal requirement and design guides are available to help achieve compliance
4. Palo Alto's Safe Routes to School Program has continued to succeed impressively
5. The Ross Road Bicycle Boulevard was a disaster that shut down the whole Bicycle Boulevard program in Palo Alto
6. The COVID-19 pandemic has drastically affected the City's financial situation at the same time as it has put a lot more residents out on the streets on foot and on bikes

In response to these changes, I feel that the new plan should:

1. Use bicyclist level of stress as an evaluation criterion for bike routes and projects, with an eye to avoiding critical stress points that can render an entire segment uncomfortable
2. Use Vision Zero principles, if not the name itself, to guide the development of a Plan that puts safety as the highest priority. Increasing the use of active transportation is a goal that, in my opinion, cannot be achieved without convincing the general public that it is safe.
3. Complete Streets should not be a discussion point, let alone a chapter or section of the Plan. This should be an assumption at the start of every project. The goal should be to make every street safe for all users, and the Plan should make that clear at the very beginning.
4. Safe Routes to School should be acknowledged and vigorously supported in the new Plan, while pointing out that it provides safe routes for others beyond the school commute. Its success should be used as a model and motivation for providing safe routes for everyone.
5. Community support and public outreach should play a more prominent role in the development and implementation of the new Plan. Residents should be able to read the plan and feel that the Plan is working for their benefit.
6. The finances of Palo Alto, and California as a whole, are likely to be severely pinched for several years, affecting the ability to fund major infrastructure projects. Looking at the 5 E's (Engineering, Education, Enforcement, Encouragement and Evaluation), it would be fiscally prudent to focus on the last 4 for the immediate future (although Enforcement may be constrained as much as Engineering). We certainly have many opportunities and can make lots of progress on them without the magnitude of investment required for infrastructure. I think the new Plan should emphasize policies and programs over projects.

From: [Robert Neff](#)
To: [Chan, Joanna](#)
Subject: BPTP Update Note
Date: Monday, November 30, 2020 11:27:22 PM
Attachments: [BPTP Update Neff 20201130.pdf](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Hello Joanna,

I know this is more than a week late for tomorrow's meeting. Please include it in the minutes next month, I may summarize in the meeting Tuesday evening.

--

-- Robert
robert@neffs.net

Nov 30, 2020.

BPTP Update Suggestions

In general, I think the 2012 BPTP is a good framework for the network we want to have in Palo Alto. Also, many of our existing routes are good for active transportation. Here are some areas I would like to see changes to the plan, and areas for changes in implementation.

- Level of Traffic Stress analysis is a new methodology developed since 2012, and I think it is an excellent way to evaluate the effectiveness and completeness of an alternative transportation network, whether bicycle or pedestrian. The new plan should embrace this, particularly for prioritizing locations for improvement.
- Palo Alto has a strong educational program for school age walkers and bikers, and this should be described in the plan, and extended to adults. This program is important to developing adoption of active transportation in the community.
- I think safety, and the perception of safety and comfort is important. A Vision Zero plan can help evaluate that, but I think the big commitment is to make it an ongoing program of data collection and analysis, and not necessarily a large part of the BPTP development.
- I think the plan should be flexible in allowing additional developments to become recognized as part of our city wide network, so that if elements are not called out in the plan, there is a mechanism to add them later. An example of a well used street not included in the plan is Arastradero Road near Arastradero preserve. It could really use uphill bike lanes. Whether this should be added is not the point, but we should explicitly allow flexibility.
- The 2012 plan identified dangerous intersections, and a few of those locations have been addressed, but I think we should aggressively look at the most dangerous configurations, with a goal to eliminate these wherever possible. In particular, bike lanes next to permitted right turn traffic lanes have been a topic of unsuccessful cyclist and auto driver education since their introduction, at least 40 years ago, and they remain a frequent location for “right-hook” collisions and bicyclist injury. They remain unsafe, and discourage prospective cyclists. This original configuration is found on nearly every Palo Alto street with bike lanes and traffic signals. I think the plan should recommend a city policy to modify these toward safety wherever possible, give concrete recommendations (good, better, and best, depending on the intersection), and support a city policy to design these out of any new intersection reconstruction or restriping. For example, the grade separation proposals at Charleston and Meadow should not be implemented with the same old bike lane configurations.
- I would like to see us become more aggressive in pedestrian safety. We have had an average of one fatality every year since 2010 in Palo Alto. The plan should identify areas for improvement, and we should follow through.
- The plan should consider Traffic Level of Stress for Pedestrians, perhaps not city wide, but at least within walking distance of the downtown business district. Not all sidewalks and intersections are the same, and this analysis could illuminate ways to make our pedestrian network safer and more friendly. This could give us ideas to use city wide.
- Electric scooters, boards, and bikes are now part of our environment. Guidance for sharing facilities is needed, especially shared use paths.

Thank you for your consideration,

Robert Neff

Nov 30, 2020.

BPTP Update Suggestions

In general, I think the 2012 BPTP is a good framework for the network we want to have in Palo Alto. Also, many of our existing routes are good for active transportation. Here are some areas I would like to see changes to the plan, and areas for changes in implementation.

- Level of Traffic Stress analysis is a new methodology developed since 2012, and I think it is an excellent way to evaluate the effectiveness and completeness of an alternative transportation network, whether bicycle or pedestrian. The new plan should embrace this, particularly for prioritizing locations for improvement.
- Palo Alto has a strong educational program for school age walkers and bikers, and this should be described in the plan, and extended to adults. This program is important to developing adoption of active transportation in the community.
- I think safety, and the perception of safety and comfort is important. A Vision Zero plan can help evaluate that, but I think the big commitment is to make it an ongoing program of data collection and analysis, and not necessarily a large part of the BPTP development.
- I think the plan should be flexible in allowing additional developments to become recognized as part of our city wide network, so that if elements are not called out in the plan, there is a mechanism to add them later. An example of a well used street not included in the plan is Arastradero Road near Arastradero preserve. It could really use uphill bike lanes. Whether this should be added is not the point, but we should explicitly allow flexibility.
- The 2012 plan identified dangerous intersections, and a few of those locations have been addressed, but I think we should aggressively look at the most dangerous configurations, with a goal to eliminate these wherever possible. In particular, bike lanes next to permitted right turn traffic lanes have been a topic of unsuccessful cyclist and auto driver education since their introduction, at least 40 years ago, and they remain a frequent location for “right-hook” collisions and bicyclist injury. They remain unsafe, and discourage prospective cyclists. This original configuration is found on nearly every Palo Alto street with bike lanes and traffic signals. I think the plan should recommend a city policy to modify these toward safety wherever possible, give concrete recommendations (good, better, and best, depending on the intersection), and support a city policy to design these out of any new intersection reconstruction or restriping. For example, the grade separation proposals at Charleston and Meadow should not be implemented with the same old bike lane configurations.
- I would like to see us become more aggressive in pedestrian safety. We have had an average of one fatality every year since 2010 in Palo Alto. The plan should identify areas for improvement, and we should follow through.
- The plan should consider Traffic Level of Stress for Pedestrians, perhaps not city wide, but at least within walking distance of the downtown business district. Not all sidewalks and intersections are the same, and this analysis could illuminate ways to make our pedestrian network safer and more friendly. This could give us ideas to use city wide.
- Electric scooters, boards, and bikes are now part of our environment. Guidance for sharing facilities is needed, especially shared use paths.

Thank you for your consideration,

Robert Neff

From: [Paul B Goldstein](#)
To: [Chan, Joanna](#)
Subject: Re: Comments on Bike/Ped Plan Update
Date: Wednesday, December 2, 2020 1:34:13 PM
Attachments: [BikePed update 2020 comments2.pdf](#)

Here you go. Sorry for the mix-up. I did not attach this originally. -Paul

> On Dec 2, 2020, at 8:46 AM, Chan, Joanna <Joanna.Chan@CityofPaloAlto.org> wrote:
>
> Good morning Paul,
>
> Could you resend the attachment?
>
> Thank you!
>
> Joanna Chan, Senior Transportation Planner
> Office of Transportation
> T: 650.329.2156 | E: Joanna.Chan@CityofPaloAlto.org
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Paul B Goldstein <marmot@stanford.edu>
> Sent: Tuesday, December 1, 2020 9:32 PM
> To: Chan, Joanna <Joanna.Chan@CityofPaloAlto.org>
> Subject: Comments on Bike/Ped Plan Update
>
> CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening
attachments and clicking on links.
>
> _____
>
> Hi Joanna,
>
> Here are the comments I made at tonight's meeting, plus additional remarks on the Table of
Contents. Please replace the version I sent yesterday with this version. It is slightly edited and
contains a few more comments, but it should totally replace what I previously submitted, having
both in the packet would be confusing.
>
> Best regards,
> Paul

Here are my comments on the 2020 Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan Update:

The 2012 Plan is a good document, although it has some weak points. If we had built out all the recommendation in that Plan, I think we would all be feeling pretty happy. My biggest single problem with that plan is that it over emphasized “innovation” as a positive force. In general, I feel that “tried and true” programs and treatments are to be preferred over innovation. I make the following suggestions for the 2020 update:

- In general, Palo Alto, is a safe and comfortable place to bike and walk. For the most part, problems, where they do exist, are at specific spots, usually crossing arterials, or other barriers (like creeks, railroad, freeway), or at intersections. Emphasizing spot improvements would be good strategy. The plan could have model suggestions for how to improve these locations. Especially in light of likely budget constraints, focusing on spot improvements would be a good strategy.
- The effort to get more people biking and walking, and to encourage people to drive less should be stressed. Programs to encourage and educate people of all ages should be highlighted. Only by getting more people in Palo Alto to walk and bike, and to leave their cars at home can the City’s ambitious climate and environmental goals be met. In addition, having more bicyclists and pedestrians on the streets makes the street safer for all. In short, an emphasis on programs rather than infrastructure.
- Our Safe Routes to Schools (STRS) program has been an outstanding success. Although this was mentioned in the 2012 Plan, it was only briefly noted. The program should be highlighted, celebrated, and given strong support in the 2020 Plan.
- I am not in favor of separate SRTS, Safe Routes for Older Adults, and Vision Zero sections in the Plan. Instead, these concepts can be combined into a “Safe Routes for Everyone” vision, that incorporates programs for encouragement, education, and safety improvements for all modes. Recommended projects and programs should be noted as contributing to the SRTS, the SRFOA, and/or the Vision Zero goals. The health benefits of Active Transportation should be highlighted, as well as the health, safety and environmental benefits of reducing automobile traffic. In the past, the city has had “Share the Street” programs and other outreach efforts. These should be reinvigorated.
- Rather than the “5 I’s”, projects and programs should be ranked using criteria like safety, reducing stress, increasing mode-share, equity, and how well they coordinate with overriding goals like SRTS, SRFOA, and Vision Zero.
- I would like the Plan to consider how the structure of PABAC could be improved.
- The Ross Road Bicycle Boulevard created a lot of neighborhood blowback. This resulted in a setback for bicycle projects citywide. The 2020 Plan should be developed with strong community engagement and should contain recommendations and best practices for community engagement in rolling out new projects. These recommendations should include both how to solicit input as well as how to respond to concerns. We should also be realistic in recognizing that any change will often create discomfort and bring out opposition: that promoting convenience and safety for bikes and pedestrians will often have an adverse impact on automobile traffic or parking. Recognizing these issues upfront may make it easier to address and weather out opposition.

Table of Contents

List of Acronyms iv

Chapter 1 Introduction

This chapter should be punchier and should engage the reader, (think parents of school-age kids, or new residents in town). There should be an emphasis on safety and the health benefits of walking and cycling for people of all ages. The purpose of the plan is carefully laid out in section 1.1 of the 2012 plan, but perhaps something could be done to make it more readable for the layperson.

1.1 Purpose

1.2 Setting

1.3 Benefits of Bicycling and Walking.

1.4 Relation to Other Plans

1.5 Public Outreach Summary

1.6 Plan Organization

Chapter 2 Objectives, Key Strategies, and Guiding Principles

2.1 Plan Objectives

2.2 Strategic Guiding Principles - The “Five I’s”

The Guiding Principles of the Five I’s is not helpful. Especially “Innovation” has been a net negative in the rollout of bike projects. (c.f. Ross Road). Using “tried and true” strategies and applications should be preferred, especially since these make it less confusing to motorists and other users of the roads. Principles like safety, comfort, low-stress, and ease-of-use are more useful.

2.3 Comprehensive Plan Policies and Programs Assessment

The Comprehensive Plan policy discouraging the use of street closures should be reexamined in light of the benefits such closures can have for reducing through traffic and improving safety and stress-level for bikes and pedestrians.

Chapter 3 Existing Facilities and Programs

This chapter is necessary and should include specific references to what has changed since the 2012 plan. The concept of “Low-Stress” streets should be highlighted here. More emphasis on Maintenance. It should be noted that despite high priority and emphasis placed in the 2012 plan on data collection, little has been done.

3.1 Existing Pedestrian Facilities -

3.2 Existing Designated Bikeways

3.3 Pedestrian and Bicycle across Barrier Connections

3.4 Bicycle Support Facilities -

3.5 Existing Programs

Chapter 4 Travel Demand and Collision Analysis

Should be updated and should call attention to the current problems in data collection and getting information from police reports

4.1 Travel Demand Overview

4.2 Collisions Documentation and Assessment

Chapter 5 Needs Analysis and Recommended Programs

There should be added recommendations of how to roll out projects with neighborhood outreach and buy-in. If this is vetted and adopted by City Council, it would provide some guidance to Transportation of how to build projects with correct outreach. Best practices from other communities should be suggested

- 5.1 Promoting Nonmotorized Transportation Neighborhoods
- 5.2 Bicyclist Needs and Recommendations
- 5.3 Pedestrian Needs and Recommendations
- 5.4 Recommended Programs and Policies Summary (Five E's)

Chapter 6 Recommended Facilities and Conditions -

- 6.1 Bicycle Network Recommendations
- 6.2 Relationship of Recommended Bikeway Network to 2003 Plan
- 6.3 Priority Pedestrian Areas and Treatments
- 6.4 Recommendations by Sub-Area –

Chapter 7 Implementation and Funding

- 7.1 Design Guidelines Toolkit -
- 7.2 Project Prioritization
- 7.3 Key Potential Funding Sources
- 7.4 Approach to CEQ

Appendix A. Design Guidelines and Standards –

Is there a reason to incorporate these specific treatments here, or would it be better to simply reference the existing source materials. What is the advantage of putting these specific things in our plan. It indicates a preference for these treatments, where perhaps none exists.

Appendix B. Municipal Code Bicycle Parking Recommendations –

- Bicycle Parking Design Guidance
- Bicycle Parking Location and Placement Guidance Development Requirements

Appendix C. BTA Requirements Checklist -

- Demand and Benefits Model

Appendix D. Public Outreach and Survey Summary –

- Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee
- Public Meetings
- Community Survey -

Appendix E. Policy and Plan Framework –

- Planning Overview -

Appendix F. Funding

From: [Transportation](#)
To: [Chan, Joanna](#)
Cc: [Transportation](#)
Subject: FW: BPTP Update
Date: Wednesday, December 16, 2020 7:24:46 PM

JC,
Forwarding.

From: Ken Joye <kmjoye@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 16, 2020 5:25 PM
To: Transportation <Transportation@CityofPaloAlto.org>
Subject: BPTP Update

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

I would like to offer some further thoughts on how to update the BPTP.

Nicole Zoeller made a most apt comment when she asked about the intended audience for the plan. A clear answer to that question should inform the structure and content of the update.

If the reader will find the plan on the City's www site, making it primarily an electronic document with embedded URL's may help avoid the tension between legibility and comprehensiveness. When reviewing the 2012 BPTP, I only used the electronic version for searching, spent most of my time reading my printed copy. Very few readers of the BPTP update will ever read a printed version (if any...).

[Staff Report #11776](#), the Safe Routes to School Annual Informational Report, is an example of a "living document", whose URL could be referenced in the BPTP. Either that or a page on the cityofpaloalto.org site should contain a list of each annual report, so that any interested person could easily find the complete set of them (rather than having to search through City Council agenda packets). Such a list ideally would not be hidden on a "[Partners](#)" page...

Perhaps the metaphor should be that any given year's SRTS Annual Informational Report is a ring in the tree; the collection of annual reports is the "living document", not the individual reports.

Similar to the question of the intended audience for the plan is the question of the intended "audience" for those things the plan prioritizes. Who is it that we are designing for? If the BPTP is to be tied to GHG-reductions, what are the profiles of roadway users we are aiming at? Commuters coming into town for work (from a particular distance?)? PAUSD students riding to school? People walking to the grocery store or library?

If the S/CAP framework states that we have the goal of 25% modeshare for cycling by 2030, should the BPTP update attempt to forecast how that will be achieved? For example: secure bike parking

will get us to 10%, new grade-separated rail crossings to 15%, Safe Routes To Work to 20% and a new mixed-use path through Bol Park to 25%.

I believe 100% that the next BPTP should rank Vision Zero and SRTS as top priority programs. The criteria used to rank programs and projects should be transparent and weights assigned to favor things like those two. To achieve that, maybe weight for safety needs to be quite high to give Vision Zero top ranking and “inertia” should be given weight, so that SRTS also gets top ranking. One flaw I see in the 2012 BPTP is that the ranking methodology is not explicit. What is the value to our community of spending \$500K on SRTS compared to \$10M on the Adobe Creek bridge? The prioritization methodology for comparing those two things should be transparent.

One thing we might think about is whether we'd say that Green House Gas (GHG) reduction should be a consideration in prioritizing items. Should we say that the project which potentially has the highest GHG-reduction should be the highest priority?

I have said following NTSBB1 that I am in favor of bike infrastructure which does not produce overt opposition. Perhaps the implication of that is that I would give low weight to innovation when ranking programs and projects. There is tension between that and doing what may be necessary to achieve Vision Zero goals—if we don't change what we currently have in our public spaces we will continue to have deaths from motor vehicle collisions. Perhaps the simple answer is that something which is familiar (non-innovative) may be the key factor to producing streets which are safe for all. If residents say that bicycle boulevards need to look like Bryant St, then maybe barricades preventing through motor vehicle traffic need to be placed all along our network.

"[AccessMV—Comprehensive Modal Plan](#)" contains some elements which should be considered for the update (see also: <<https://www.mountainview.gov/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?BlobID=33305>>)

- Pedestrian Quality of Service scores (existing/planned)
- Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress (existing/planned)
- Low Stress Islands (existing/planned)

In particular, their use of pairs of maps which contrast current conditions with potential future conditions is quite effective. Parts of the Mountain View plan suggest that they may be conceptually segregating cyclists and pedestrians, in order to avoid conflicts on mixed-use facilities as have been found in Palo Alto on the Bol Park Path and in the California Avenue Underpass (the level of detail in their documents does not make it clear whether that is actually their intent).

I would like to make sure that pedestrian projects and programs are weighted appropriately compared to bicycle projects and programs. (One speaker at the SVBC Bike Summit commented upon focus on school children vs. seniors, saying that children get safety measures disproportionate to their injury/fatality rates).

Besides knowing where people currently go, I am quite keen on knowing where they would like to go but do not. Those are two quite different sorts of data collection; I would really like to make data-

driven decisions, don't believe that we are able to do so.

=====

Some more specific points, some of which follow from items above:

Perhaps future versions of the SRTS Annual Informational Report could include the then-current versions of walk-and-roll maps. Also, how would the set of "Critical Intersection or Crossing"-s in the [2013 report](#) (page 16-of-36) compare to a similar list today?

Just as is the case for the SRTS Annual Informational Report, would it make sense to publish some of the maps included in BPTP2012 outside of the update and refer to them using embedded URL's in the update? As I stated in a previous set of comments, some of the maps in BPTP2012 felt quite dated when reviewing that document recently. More generally, what elements in BPTP2012 are still relevant today and which are dated? All elements which are dated might be best left out of a high-level planning document.

In a previous set of comments, I used the term "equity" when discussing ABC's across the train tracks. That is probably not the best way to use that term, but hopefully you get the idea I was trying to get across. Strictly speaking, there are probably very few places in Palo Alto where "equity" in the most commonly used sense is applicable. One might argue that pedestrian facilities on Curtner Ave are an "equity" issue. The BPTP update might address that particular issue by prescribing street width, curb style and sidewalk width for areas of Palo Alto with higher density multi-family housing. (An analogous approach has been taken by the city's urban forester, who has recognized that the tree canopy is not uniform throughout the city.)

From: [Transportation](#)
To: [Chan, Joanna](#)
Subject: FW: BPTP update
Date: Monday, December 21, 2020 11:02:33 AM

JC,
Forwarding.

From: Arnout Boelens <a.m.p.boelens@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, December 19, 2020 10:03 AM
To: Transportation <Transportation@CityofPaloAlto.org>
Subject: BPTP update

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Vision Zero/Systematic Safety

I would like to share this video with the committee by Peter G. Furth from Northeastern University:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5aNtsWvNYKE>

In my mind we need to go one step further than Vision Zero. Vision Zero is a passive approach, first people need to die in traffic before it is marked as a hazardous location. It is better to have an **active policy** that implements safety measures **before** people get in an accident.

To summarize the video:

People are not built to withstand the impacts of cars and people make mistakes. Infrastructure needs to be designed to allow people to make mistakes without serious consequences.

Five principles of systematic safety

1. Speed control & separation: Traffic flows need to be separated to prevent conflicts or, when this is not possible, traffic speeds need to be reduced to accommodate the conflicts that will occur. E.g. Bicycle boulevards should have a speed limit of 20 mph. At higher speeds cars and bikes should be separated using bicycle lanes or bicycle tracks. Speed limits should be enforced through road design.

2. Functional Harmony: A road should avoid having incompatible functions. E.g. a shopping street like University Ave where cars are pulling in and out, and people are crossing is incompatible with through traffic, which aims to have a high throughput of traffic. Same for a Stroad like El Camino.

3. Predictability and simplicity: People make fewer mistakes when they know what to expect and when decisions are simple. E.g. All bicycle lanes are green so green asphalt becomes synonymous with "watch out for bikes". Pedestrian crossings have an island, so you have to only pay attention to one direction at a time.

4. Forgivingness and restrictiveness: Forgivingness means to design roads in such a way that people can make mistakes without serious consequences. Restrictiveness means preventing people from making mistakes they want to make. E.g. a class 4 bicycle way prevents people from parking in the bike lane. Building only one car lane per direction prevents people from taking over other cars and speeding.

5. State awareness: Try to reduce dangers that cannot be mediated through road design like texting and driving, drunk driving, and inexperienced operators.

From: [Transportation](#)
To: [Chan, Joanna](#)
Subject: FW: BPTP Update
Date: Monday, December 21, 2020 11:03:02 AM

JC,
Forwarding.

From: Arnout Boelens <a.m.p.boelens@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, December 19, 2020 11:08 AM
To: Transportation <Transportation@CityofPaloAlto.org>
Subject: BPTP Update

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Safe Routes For Adults

To reach its climate goals the city will have to be serious about getting adults out of Single Occupancy Vehicles (SOVs). Electric cars are great, but converting all internal combustion cars to electric cars will require a major and expensive update to the electricity grid. In addition, electric cars are still dangerous to pedestrians and bicyclists and cause traffic congestion.

Part of the money needed to convert all cars to electric cars should be used by the city to hire a "Safe Routes For Adults" coordinator. This would be similar to the positions of Rosie Mesterhazy and Jose Palma for the Safe Routes To School program. This coordinator can then apply for grants and implement ideas to get adults out of their cars. For example, the city of Antwerp has a small team of people dedicated to getting people to use active transportation and transit:

<https://www.slimnaarantwerpen.be/en/home>

They have implemented ideas like cash incentives for people to commute by bike, cash incentives to buy a (e-)bike, bicycle test rides, etc. The huge success of Safe Routes To School shows that a similar program for adults could also work in the Palo Alto context.

From: [Transportation](#)
To: [Chan, Joanna](#)
Subject: FW: BPTP Update
Date: Monday, December 21, 2020 11:03:02 AM

JC,
Forwarding.

From: Linda Henigin <linda@brail.org>
Sent: Sunday, December 20, 2020 10:41 PM
To: Transportation <Transportation@CityofPaloAlto.org>
Subject: BPTP Update

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Hello PABAC members,

I am writing to urge you to give Safe Routes to School a dedicated section in the new plan. My children are in 8th grade and 2nd grade, and both of them ride their bikes to Greene and Duveneck, respectively. We rely on having safe bike routes to school. We are all healthier and happier because my children are able to ride their bikes, rather than be driven, to their schools.

To achieve Palo Alto's S/CAP goal of increasing bicycle mode share to 25% by 2030, growing student ridership through SRTS will be essential. Therefore, SRTS should have a dedicated section in programs, including the following:

- Program mission
- 10-year vision
- 6 E's
- Key objectives & metrics

Palo Alto's infrastructure needs to be designed to accommodate road users of all ages and abilities. We need to prioritize infrastructure projects that enable students and families to choose active transportation. And, the city needs a policy like Vision Zero to prevent unnecessary traffic casualties.

Thank you for your work in this important issue.

Sincerely,
Linda Henigin
Palo Alto CA

From: [Transportation](#)
To: [Chan, Joanna](#)
Subject: FW: BPTP Update
Date: Monday, December 21, 2020 11:03:02 AM

JC,
Forwarding.

From: Linda Henigin <linda@brail.org>
Sent: Sunday, December 20, 2020 10:41 PM
To: Transportation <Transportation@CityofPaloAlto.org>
Subject: BPTP Update

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Hello PABAC members,

I am writing to urge you to give Safe Routes to School a dedicated section in the new plan. My children are in 8th grade and 2nd grade, and both of them ride their bikes to Greene and Duveneck, respectively. We rely on having safe bike routes to school. We are all healthier and happier because my children are able to ride their bikes, rather than be driven, to their schools.

To achieve Palo Alto's S/CAP goal of increasing bicycle mode share to 25% by 2030, growing student ridership through SRTS will be essential. Therefore, SRTS should have a dedicated section in programs, including the following:

- Program mission
- 10-year vision
- 6 E's
- Key objectives & metrics

Palo Alto's infrastructure needs to be designed to accommodate road users of all ages and abilities. We need to prioritize infrastructure projects that enable students and families to choose active transportation. And, the city needs a policy like Vision Zero to prevent unnecessary traffic casualties.

Thank you for your work in this important issue.

Sincerely,
Linda Henigin
Palo Alto CA

Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan Update

Draft Framework

1. Introduction

1.1. Vision and goals

- Intents: (1) To guide City staff on building an accessible and comfortable transportation network for everyone, taking into consideration project priorities and available funds. (2) To inform the public about walking and biking safely around the city.
- Audiences: For City staff and members of the public alike

1.2. Executive summary

2. Relevant plans, policies, guidelines, and programs

2.1. Supporting plans, policies, and guidelines

- Brief description of related local, countywide, and regional policies and plans with links to each document

2.2. Supporting Programs

2.2.1. Safe Routes to School

- Include a route map, strategies, and the 5-year work plan

2.2.2. Safe Routes for Older Adults

- Include a route map, strategies, and pilot program

3. Community Engagement Summary for the Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan Update

3.1. Purpose

3.2. Engagement Plan

3.3. Outcome

4. Needs Assessment Criteria and Metric

- Some potential criteria for consideration:
 - Level of traffic stress
 - Mobility
 - Gap closure or across barrier connection
 - Connectivity to transit or destination
 - Safety

Criteria	Definition	Metric	Points

5. Collision Analysis

5.1. Bicycle and Pedestrian High Injury Network

5.2. Pedestrian collision trends

5.3. Bicycling collision trends

6. Needs Assessment and Recommendations

6.1. Pedestrian needs and recommendations

- Evaluate existing conditions and propose pedestrian facilities based on Chapter 4: Needs Assessment Criteria and Metric
- 6.2. Bicycling needs and recommendations
 - Evaluate existing conditions and propose bicycle facilities based on Chapter 4: Needs Assessment Criteria and Metric
- 6.3. Across barrier needs and recommendations
 - Evaluate existing conditions and propose across barrier facilities based on Chapter 4: Needs Assessment Criteria and Metric

7. Implementation

- 7.1. Project categorization and prioritization methodology
 - Description of the categorization and prioritization methodology
- 7.2. List of prioritized projects
 - Categorized by high, medium, and low
 - Prioritized by readiness, cost, and availability of funds

8. Appendices – Maps could potentially be web-based

- 8.1. Appendix A: City of Palo Alto Bicycle Network Progress Map and Existing Conditions
- 8.2. Appendix B: City of Palo Alto Pedestrian Network Progress Map and Existing Conditions
- 8.3. Appendix C: City of Palo Alto Bicycle and Pedestrian High Injury Network Map
- 8.4. Appendix D: City of Palo Alto Safe Routes to School Route Map
- 8.5. Appendix E: City of Palo Alto Safe Routes for Older Adults Route Map