

1 | Introduction



WALKING AND BICYCLING ARE INCREASINGLY recognized as important components of the transportation system. Not only can they reduce traffic, air pollution and energy consumption, they can improve the health and quality of life of our residents and communities. The Contra Costa Transportation Authority recognizes the contribution that walking and bicycling can make to mobility, environmental quality and community vitality. Its Countywide Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) outlines strategies

that support pedestrian-friendly developments and encourages a connected, coordinated network of bicycle facilities.

To help carry out these strategies, the Contra Costa Transportation Authority adopted the first Contra Costa Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (CBPP) in 2003. The plan assessed the needs of bicy-

clists and pedestrians in the county and identified a set of countywide improvements that would encourage more people to walk and bicycle. Since that time, there have been a number of important changes affecting nonmotorized travel in Contra Costa. The Authority prepared this update to the CBPP to address those changes and make other important revisions to the plan. This chapter describes the original CBPP briefly; the changes that prompted an update; the purposes of the updated CBPP; the update process (including public involvement); the contents of the CBPP; and, lastly, how those contents meet requirements of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) for bicycle plans.

ORIGINAL CBPP (2003)

The original CBPP grew out of the Authority's 2000 update to the CTP. The 2000 CTP acknowledged the importance of nonmotorized transportation and called for the development of a countywide bicycle plan. Work on the first CBPP began in the spring of 2001 and was completed at the end of 2003. Among other things, the plan:

- Established goals and policies to improve the attractiveness of walking and bicycling in Contra Costa.
- Described existing conditions.
- Identified a countywide bikeway network and a set of priority bicycling corridors.
- Listed recommended pedestrian improvements and improvements related to access to transit, safety, promotion and education.
- Outlined implementation tasks, estimated costs to implement the recommended improvements and potential funding sources.
- Included, as appendices, planning and design guidelines for bicycle and pedestrian facilities; a list of pedestrian and bicycle projects planned by local agencies; and an “atlas” of existing and planned bikeways in Contra Costa, including but not limited to the countywide network.

► **2003 Contra Costa Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan:**
www.ccta.net/EN/main/bike/countywide.html

PURPOSES OF THE UPDATED CBPP (2009)

The update to the 2003 CBPP was driven in large part by the need to address a number of important changes affecting walking and bicycling in Contra Costa that have taken place since adoption of the original CBPP. Among the significant changes are the following:

- In 2004, Contra Costa voters passed Measure J, which extends the county’s half-cent sales tax for transportation improvements, including bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and continues the countywide Growth Management Program.
- Other new funding sources for pedestrian and bicycle improvements were created and some existing funding sources were modified.
- A number of pedestrian and bicycle projects outlined in the original CBPP were completed.
- The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), the regional transportation planning agency for the Bay Area, adopted a “routine accommodation” policy generally requiring that new transportation projects consider the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Greater public support for nonmotorized transportation. People increasingly view walking and bicycling as potential solutions to traffic congestion, sprawling development, global warming, physical inactivity and other concerns.

In addition to addressing these changes, the CBPP was updated with a number of other important objectives in mind. Key objectives include:

- Refining the vision, goals and policies in the original CBPP, particularly to stress the Authority’s special role within the county as a transportation planning, funding and coordinating agency.
- Updating the existing conditions, especially the collision data and commuting statistics for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Updating the countywide bicycle network, the list of priority bicycling corridors and recommended pedestrian improvements and improvements related to access to transit, safety, promotion and education.
- Updating the implementation tasks and the estimated costs to implement recommended improvements.
- Establishing evaluation criteria for prioritizing recommended improvements for available funds.
- Updating the references to available planning and design guidelines for pedestrian and bicycle facilities and for pedestrian-and bicycle-friendly developments to assist local jurisdictions in complying with a requirement in the county’s “Growth Management

Program” (GMP) that each jurisdiction “incorporate policies and standards into its development approval process that support transit, bicycle and pedestrian access in new developments.”¹



Lastly, the CBPP was updated to enable local jurisdictions to comply fully with requirements of the state’s Bicycle Transportation Account (BTA) without needing to develop their own bicycle plans. The BTA is a statewide funding program for bicycle facilities administered by Caltrans. To be eligible for BTA funds, cities and counties must have adopted bicycle plans that include certain required components (these are summarized at the end of this chapter). In certifying the 2003 CBPP, Caltrans commented that the plan did not contain sufficiently detailed information at the level of individual jurisdictions to meet State requirements for BTA funding. One of the main objectives of the CBPP is to enable the County and the 19 cities and towns to use

the plan—by adopting it with any refinements needed to reflect local conditions and policies—to meet the Caltrans requirements for their own purposes and projects. The plan accomplishes this by including detailed information on bicycling conditions at the local level. The BTA provides relatively little funding for bicycle projects compared to local funding sources such as Measure J; nevertheless, addressing the BTA-required components is good planning practice in the development of a bicycle plan.

UPDATE PROCESS AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Because the 2009 CBPP is an update to an existing document, the public participation process to develop it was less extensive than it was for the original plan. Nevertheless, the updated CBPP was prepared with the involvement of bicycle and pedestrian advocates, planning staff at the local jurisdictions and other public agencies, elected and appointed officials, and the broader public.

This section addresses BTA requirement (h): “A description of the extent of citizen and community involvement in development of the plan, including, but not limited to, letters of support.” Appendix C contains information that Contra Costa jurisdictions can use to address BTA requirement (h) for their local bicycle plans.

The update process began with Authority staff and consultants meeting with each of the four Regional Transportation Planning Committees (RTPCs)—representing the west, central, east and southwest areas of the county and consisting of local agency staff—to introduce the project. The consultants then worked with individual members of the RTPCs and additional agency staff to obtain information on existing conditions at the local level related to walking and bicycling for each of the county’s 20 jurisdictions. The compiled information was

¹ Contra Costa Transportation Authority, *Measure J: Transportation Sales Tax Expenditure Plan*; p. 24.

presented for review and comment to the Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (CBPAC), which consists of local agency staff and members of the public.

The next task involved preparation of an “Issues and Options” paper. That report summarized the background information collected and laid out options for approaching a number of policy questions concerning the CBPP update. The “Issues and Options” paper was reviewed by the CBPAC and was the subject of three evening public workshops held in September 2008 around the county.

Based on information gathered during the previous task, the consultant team and Authority staff prepared an administrative draft version of the CBPP. Between March and May 2009, the “admin” draft CBPP was reviewed by the CBPAC at two meetings, was presented to the Authority’s Technical Coordinating Committee and Planning Committee, and was approved for public release by the Authority Board. In June the public draft CBPP was presented to the four RTPC TACs and was again the subject of three evening public workshops around the county and discussions with the RTPCs.

Comments received on the admin draft CBPP were considered and incorporated into an admin final version. That version was reviewed by the CBPAC at two meetings, in August and September. The plan was then presented to, and approved by, the Authority’s Technical Coordinating Committee in late September and its Planning Committee in early October. The final CBPP was adopted by the full Authority Board at its October 21, 2009, meeting.

The Authority proposes updating the 2009 CBPP in 2013 and every four years after that. We expect that the next update, much like this one, will revise the CBPP to reflect new policies, expectations, priorities and on-the-ground conditions, and any other important changes

affecting walking and bicycling that take place in Contra Costa after the adoption of this document. At that time the Authority will also consider whether to continue developing a combined pedestrian and bicycle plan or to develop two separate plans, one for each mode.

The Authority also intends to make “mid-course” technical amendments to the CBPP every two years, including as part of the quadrennial update. These amendments will be limited to minor technical changes, including updates to the map of the countywide bicycle network and the county’s bikeway atlas.

CONTENTS OF THE 2009 CBPP

The 2009 CBPP consists of the following sections:

- **Executive Summary**
- **Chapter 1, Introduction**
- **Chapter 2, Existing Conditions:** Discusses existing conditions in Contra Costa relevant to walking and bicycling, including updated commuting statistics and collision data for pedestrians and bicyclists, and highlights the main accomplishments made toward implementing the 2003 CBPP.
- **Chapter 3, Relationship to Other Plans:** Summarizes key plans, programs, policies and other planning efforts that will affect and be affected by implementation of the CBPP.
- **Chapter 4, Goals and Policies:** Refines the vision, goals and policies that were established in the original CBPP.
- **Chapter 5, Pedestrian Facilities:** Outlines the general types of locations to which the Authority will give priority under its funding sources for capital pedestrian projects; discusses important considerations in planning for pedestrians; highlights recommended types of bicycle facilities that local jurisdictions can implement; and provides online tools and resources for local agencies on the planning and design of pedestrian facilities.

- **Chapter 6, Bicycle Facilities:** Contains maps of local bicycle networks in Contra Costa, including both existing facilities and facilities planned or proposed by local jurisdictions or agencies. (This more detailed network, while not identical to the designated CBN, does overlap with and include most of the corridors established in that network.) It also discusses key considerations in planning for bicyclists; highlights recommended types of bicycle facilities that local jurisdictions can implement; and provides online tools and resources for local agencies on the planning and design of bicycle facilities.
- **Chapter 7, Support Programs:** Discusses efforts that complement and support walking and bicycling, including access to transit, promotion, encouragement, education, safety and enforcement, and highlights recommended types of supporting programs.
- **Chapter 8, Other Tools for Local Agencies:** Provides tools, resources, references and other information for local agencies on the planning and design of pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly developments; complying with MTC's routine accommodation policy; using the CBPP to be eligible for BTA funds; and the application of the Americans with Disabilities Act to public rights-of-way.
- **Chapter 9, Implementation:** Updates the lists of implementation actions to be undertaken by the Authority and of actions suggested for local jurisdictions; provides online tools for estimating costs of pedestrian and bicycle facilities; describes funding sources for pedestrian and bicycle projects; and, perhaps most importantly, establishes evaluation criteria for prioritizing proposed projects for available funds.
- **Appendix A:** Explains the methodologies used to estimate current and projected daily bicycle ridership and daily bicycle trips in Contra Costa, information which appears in chapter 2.
- **Appendix B:** Contains information gathered from the local jurisdictions in Contra Costa regarding local pedestrian-related planning efforts.
- **Appendix C:** Presents data gathered from the local jurisdictions in Contra Costa on the 11 bicycle-related informational topics required by Caltrans to be included in bicycle plans for purposes of BTA eligibility.
- **Appendix D:** Contains a set of maps of local bicycle networks (distinct from the Countywide Bikeway Network) in Contra Costa, including existing facilities as well as facilities planned or proposed by local jurisdictions.
- **Appendix E:** Provides summaries of the projects on the Authority's Comprehensive Transportation Project List (CTPL) that are directed at walking or bicycling, or that have a pedestrian or bicycling component.



BTA-REQUIRED ELEMENTS IN THE CBPP

As mentioned earlier, Caltrans requires that bicycle plans include certain components, or “elements.” These required elements are listed in Section 891.2 of the California Streets and Highways Code. Table 1, below, summarizes the Caltrans-required elements and lists the pages

or sections in the CBPP—in addition to Appendix C—where these requirements are addressed. Chapter 8, “Other Tools for Local Agencies,” provides guidance for local jurisdictions on adopting the CBPP and amending it as necessary to comply, for their purposes, with the Caltrans requirements.

► **California Streets and Highways Code, Section 890-894.2:**
www.leginfo.ca.gov/cgi-bin/displaycode?section=shc&group=00001-01000&file=890-894.2

Table 1 | **Caltrans-required components of a bicycle plan**

<i>Requirement</i>	<i>Pages or sections</i>
a. Number of existing and future bicycle commuters	12-15
b. Land use and settlement patterns	7-11
c. Existing and proposed bikeways	Chapter 6, Appendix D
d. Existing and proposed bicycle parking facilities	79-82, Figure 6
e. Existing and proposed access to other transportation modes	73-79, Figure 6
f. Facilities for changing and storing clothes and equipment	82-83
g. Bicycle safety, education and law enforcement programs	83-88
h. Citizen and community involvement in development of the plan	3-4
i. Coordination and consistency with other plans	Chapter 3
j. Projects proposed in the plan and their priority for implementation	Chapter 6, Figures 1-5, Chapter 9, Appendix D
k. Past expenditures for bicycle facilities and future financial needs	19-20