

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

6:15 - 8:30 PM, September 23rd, 2024

San José City Hall
200 East Santa Clara St., San José, CA
Committee Wing Rooms 118-120

(a) **Call to Order** – The meeting was called to order at 6:21 pm.

Members Present

Aarshdeep Kahlon, Chair
Minh Nguyen, Vice-Chair
Ben Kennedy
Deanna Chevas
Diane Solomon
Greg Koopman
Tim Claes
Gina LaBlanc

Members Absent

Ann Ferris
Gail Osmer
Jeffrey Englander

City Staff

Jessica Zenk, Deputy Director, Department of Transportation
Ramses Madou, Division Manager, Department of Transportation
Ryan Smith, Department of Transportation
Ann Jasper, Department of Transportation
Jim Bittner, Department of Transportation

City Council Liaison

Councilmember Pam Foley
Kyle Laveroni, Deputy Chief of Staff, Council District 9

Members of the Public

Akos Szoboszlay, Modern Transit Society
Haojun Li
Tuan Tu
Scott Mace, California Association of Bicycle Organizations
Kevin Pollack
Anthony Montes, Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition
Four additional members of the public (anonymous)

(b) **Approve Order of Business**

VTA BPAC Liaison not present, item (e)(2) to be removed from the Order of Business.

Motion to remove item (e)(2) and approve the Order of Business.

Motion: Ben Kennedy

Second: Tim Claes

Motion carried. Item (e)(2) removed from the Order of Business and approved without objection.

(c) **Public Forum**

Member of the public Akos Szoboszlay, president of the Modern Transit Society, has campaigned to allow cyclists on expressways in San José and other cities. According to Szoboszlay, the City of San José Department of Transportation fought to repeal the ordinance prohibiting cyclists but lost the vote in City Council. While the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors requires bike lanes, pedestrian paths, and sidewalks along expressways, the County of Santa Clara, Department of Roads and Airports planned to make its own plan to not require pedestrians. The County Board rejected the plan. Szoboszlay advocates for the City of San José to repeal the ordinance prohibiting pedestrians on expressways (San Jose Municipal Code section 11.32.070) to signal to

the County that San José wants pedestrians and cyclists along the facilities. Szoboszlay asked the Committee to write a letter to City Council to repeal the ordinance.

Member of the public Scott Mace, Central California District Director of the California Association of Bicycling Organizations (CABO), commented on a gap in the City's bike network, specifically in the Class III bikeways on North San Pedro Street between Hedding Street to Taylor Street. He also notes the lack of a crosswalk on one side of the intersection at North San Pedro and Taylor. To continue going south, one needs to use all three crosswalks instead. Mace asks for this to be addressed in the bike plan update.

Member of the public Kevin Pollack, a bicycle commuter who commutes from San José to Mountain View several times a week, reported a recent experience he while he was riding eastbound on Hedding Street towards Coleman Ave in the bike lane. A driver driving in the bike lane came up behind him and revved their engine several times until the light turned green. Pollack was startled by the experience and highlights the need for physical separation of bike lanes so that vehicles cannot drive in the bike lane. The non-emergency police line declined to take information from Pollack on the incident.

Member of the public Anthony Montes introduced himself as the new Associate Director of Advocacy and Development at the Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition (SVBC). Montes invited BPAC to SVBC's annual fundraiser, Ride to the Future, on October 6th, 2024. The fundraiser will go towards funding advocacy for projects along the San Francisco Bay Peninsula such as biking and walking along El Camino Real.

Member of the public Haojun Li is excited that Councilmember Foley is attending the meeting.

(d) Consent Calendar

(1) Approve August 26th, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the August 26th, 2024 consent calendar without discussion.

Motion: Deanna Chevas

Second: Ben Kennedy

Motion is approved without objection.

(e) Reports and Information

(1) San José BPAC Councilmember Liaison Update

Councilmember Pam Foley gave the following update:

Councilmember Foley is happy to hear all of the public comment and to see how BPAC has grown. The City Council listens to the feedback BPAC provides. In particular, the concern over trash and recycling carts in the bike lanes was brought to the City Council's attention by BPAC. There has since been some work accomplished regarding this issue, including mailers sent residencies showing where carts should be placed.

The Councilmember has also been heavily involved with AB 645, the Speed System Safety Pilot ("Speed Cameras"), including securing funding and approval for cameras at the state

level. The legislation was signed by the governor; the City is in the process of implementing it.

The Councilmember also serves as the Vision Zero Chair. Councilmember Foley's district, Council District 9, has several Vision Zero corridors. Quick build protected bike lanes were added to Hillsdale Avenue. Councilmember Foley was part of the City Council action that adopted the policy to remove minimum parking requirements on new development. San José is one of the first major cities in the country to do so. The Transit First policy was started in San José and is now a part of VTA's work as well. The Councilmember notes that, while the Vision Zero Task Force is sunsetting, the work will still be performed at the Department of Transportation with the Vision Zero team. The team is still focused on analyzing streets, implementing street safety projects and programs, advocating for funds, and pursuing grants. Vision Zero work will continue and will be overseen by the Transportation and Environment Committee (T&E), of which Councilmember Foley is a part of.

Ramses Madou, Policy and Sustainability Division Manager with the Department of Transportation, presented the T&E and Vision Zero reporting plan for BPAC. The plan is for BPAC to have an official agenda item at T&E, calendared alongside the Bike Plan and Trails update in May and the Vision Zero update in November. BPAC may continue to comment on T&E items in other meetings as it sees fit. The Vision Zero team will present to BPAC twice per year before it presents to T&E so that BPAC may make comments at T&E as necessary. The next steps are to get the schedule cleared by the City Manager's Office, integrate with City Council and the City Manager's Office processes and agendas, and hold a one-year evaluation of the process in the future.

Discussion following the update

Public comment:

Member of the public Tuan Tu commented on vehicles blocking the bike lane on Cherry Avenue by Willow Glen Middle and High School between Curtner Avenue and Fulai Court. When parents drop off their kids, they drive over the bike lane curb separation because the curbs are not tall enough to stop them. Additionally, Tu thanked Councilmember Foley for attending the meeting and commented that BeautifySJ does not consider blocked trails a high priority.

Member of the public Haojun Li thanked Councilmember Foley for her advocacy. Li commented that New York City is considering a bill that would allow public photo evidence to be submitted for ticketing. Li commented that New York City currently has a bill that allows the public to submit a video of trucks idling that sends a citation directly to the driver. Committee Member Minh Nguyen asked if there could be a system where the public could take photos of bike lane obstructions to send to the police for citation.

Councilmember Foley responded that a police officer or city owned and operated camera needs to take the picture for official witness. The public may report the incident, but by the time the police arrive on the scene, the offender may no longer be there to be cited. The City can work on educating people to not park in the bike lane.

Jessica Zenk, Deputy Director of the Department of Transportation, added that Parking Compliance have been more aggressive about ticketing drivers in the bike lane in the past couple of years. Zenk suggested sending specific locations to active.transportation@sanjoseca.gov so that the City may track reports and send any hotspots to Parking Compliance for additional monitoring.

Committee comment:

Committee Member Diane Solomon thanked staff for their work to set up the T&E reporting plan. Solomon asked Councilmember Foley to give notice to BPAC when there will be community meetings about the speed cameras. Solomon noted that while the public often asks for more police presence for safety, there are more traffic fatalities in the city than homicides. Solomon asked if Councilmember Foley's office could work on identifying a specific ordinance or law that could be used against road rage. Solomon also noted that she talked to the Guadalupe River Park rangers about which agency is responsible for trash on the trail and will continue to work on that question.

Councilmember Foley responded that while the City has funding for the Police Department's Traffic Enforcement Unit, it has been difficult to hire enough qualified officers for the team.

Solomon reiterated that people have a perception that there is need for more officers for homicide, but traffic fatalities are a larger issue.

Committee Member Gina LaBlanc seconds the amount of work it took to get AB 645 passed. LaBlanc commented that San Francisco will be rolling out its program in January 2025 but San José is projected to roll out its program in late 2025. LaBlanc encourages the City to find ways to implement the program sooner and is happy that the City received eight million dollars in grant funding for the program. LaBlanc commented that San Francisco's program will give a warning out for the first offense and will work with Families for Safe Streets to include a picture and reason for why traffic safety is important. LaBlanc encourages the San José program do the same. In response to Pollack's experience as reported during Public Forum, LaBlanc suggests having a system in 311 where people can report near misses so they can be tracked and hotspots can be identified.

Madou responded that DOT is working as fast as they can to deploy the speed camera program. Madou also responded that automatic detection of near misses is a technology the City has thought about, though it is very difficult to implement in practice.

Committee Member Ben Kennedy thanked Councilmember Foley for attending the meeting. Kennedy noted that the City has an aggressive goal to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips to 46% by 2030. As Councilmember Foley previously noted that she drives to City Hall, Kennedy asked why she does not bike and how the City can do more to encourage and change people's perspectives on other transportation modes.

Councilmember Foley responded she feels unsafe commuting by bicycle from her home. Councilmember Foley said that we could change perspectives with more education to drivers. Slow Down San José was a campaign done through Vision Zero in 2023. San José's car culture is strong. Narrowing streets and implementing the Transit First policy will help shift perception, but it will take time. Councilmember Foley also said that the penalties for the speed cameras are not high enough.

Committee Member Tim Claes agreed that it takes a generation to change behavior, thus focusing on children's education will be impactful. The San José Bike Plan measures progress of bicycle lane miles but does not measure other measures, such as the number of high visibility crosswalks, leading pedestrian intervals, red curbs, and son needed for school safety. Claes wants to see more funding for school safety. The San Jose Police Department will present in a future meeting and Claes will press on the subject of video being used as evidence.

Committee Member Greg Koopman thanked Councilmember Foley for attending the meeting. Koopman is the Vice President of a neighborhood association in District 10 that consists of approximately 1,000 homes. Koopman asked how the speed cameras will be deployed such that thousands of people will not get tickets on the first day, considering the pervasiveness of speeding in the city. Koopman asked if the laws regarding speed cameras can be used to push a policy that allows the public to take videos for evidence. Koopman asked if the speed cameras will only be documenting speeding.

Councilmember Foley responded that there will only be 33 speed cameras deployed throughout the city in areas known for speeding. There will be community outreach on where and when the cameras will be placed. The first ticket is a warning, and the following offenses have penalties based on how much over the speed limit the offending vehicle is travelling. Councilmember Liaison Kyle Laveroni added that enforcement starts at 11 miles an hour over the speed limit and starts at a \$50 ticket. The intention is not to generate money for the city but to slow down drivers. There is a plan for significant signage around the speed camera locations so everyone is clear where they are. Councilmember Foley said that the laws for speed cameras were passed by the California State Legislature; the City cannot change that law or policy. Madou responded that by law the speed cameras can only be used to take images of speeding offenses and images may only be kept for a fixed period of time. The speed cameras will not be recording video.

Committee Chair Aarshdeep Kahlon brought to Councilmember Foley's attention that in the previous meeting, BeautifySJ said that clearing encampments on trails is a lower priority than clearing encampments on roads. Kahlon said this is a barrier to getting more cyclists in the city and trail usage for commuting, and that he would like to see more movement on this issue. Kahlon also commented that the City has many plans but runs into issues with funding. The City is trying to develop more densely to get more revenue, but developers are also running into funding issues. Kahlon encourages the City to push for mid-level density and look at laws that can allow developers to build for cheaper. Kahlon points to Evergreen Village Square as an example of a walkable area with commercial street fronts and encourages more creative thinking in creating safe neighborhoods.

(2) Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) BPAC Update

Item removed from the agenda during item (b).

(f) New and Returning Business

(1) School Safety and Walk n' Roll Program Updates

Ann Jasper and Jim Bittner, Department of Transportation, gave the following presentation:

The goal of Walk n' Roll is to increase the number of K-12 students who walk, bike, or use a scooter to school safely. Programs include safety assemblies, bike rodeos, walk and roll days, and International Walk to School Day. San José Walk n' Roll started in 2012. There are currently about 90 schools enrolled in the program, mostly elementary schools. The program is primarily funded through the 2016 Measure B sales tax measure. There is grant funding to work with James Lick High School and Overfelt High School on a comprehensive bike program and bike mechanic apprenticeship program. The Bay Area Bikemobile, funded by MTC, does free bike repairs and attends events as much as possible.

In the 2023-3024 school year, there were 30 safety assemblies, 23 bike rodeos, 34 International Walk to School Day events, and six Viva EscuelaSJ events. So far in fall 2024, 13 safety assemblies have been conducted with 16 more scheduled, 4 bike rodeos conducted with three more scheduled, 34 schools participating in International Walk to School Day, and one Viva EscuelaSJ conducted and two more scheduled.

Walk and Roll Days have a 50% average student participation rate. Parent volunteers hold walking school buses and bike trains. 10-15 community partners participate at each Viva EscuelaSJ to hand out prizes and have fun. All residents and businesses within one quarter mile of a Viva EscuelaSJ closure are notified.

The School Safety Program started less than one year ago. The catalyst for the program was a tragedy near Castlemont Elementary School where a child was hit walking in a crosswalk. The San José Rules and Open Government Committee then created a policy in 2022 to prioritize safe routes to school by accelerating hiring for adult crossing guards, providing metrics for success, and pursuing grant opportunities. The policy also made systemic changes to the Traffic Safety Program to provide specific support for school districts and bring budget requests to City Council. The policy increases enforcement and education around schools.

In February 2023, a survey was sent to all K-12 schools in San José, including public, charter, and private schools of all grades. Eighty percent of schools responded. From the survey, 30 new schools expressed interest in Walk n' Roll and were added to the program. Top concerns for the schools were crosswalk safety and school circulation. The School Safety Program was partially funded in June 2023. A pilot project was conducted in July/August 2023 to enhance school crosswalks to high visibility in one location per Council District. Eighty-one school crosswalks were enhanced before the first day of school as part of the pilot. The program was then fully funded through Measure B Congestion Relief excess funds from November 2023 to July 2024.

Moving forward, the first program deliverable is school access and circulation studies for all K-12 schools citywide. This includes passenger loading zones, timed parking zones, parking

restrictions, and school crosswalk enhancements/new installations in close coordination with schools. The program plans to conduct studies for 35 schools per year for the next five to seven years. Twelve schools have been completed to date; 20 schools are in progress.

The second program deliverable is to upgrade all school crosswalks to high visibility markings citywide. The goal is to enhance 100 crosswalks per year for the next five to seven years. As of the end of Fiscal Year 2023-2024, there are 847 enhanced school crosswalks. The majority of enhancements were through ongoing pavement maintenance, capital projects, and development projects between 2017-2024. 106 crosswalks were enhanced by the School Safety Program. 172 crosswalk enhancements by the School Safety Program are planned for fiscal year 2024-2025. 233 crosswalk enhancements are planned through pavement maintenance. Pavement maintenance will now enhance school crosswalks as part of their regular procedure when they repave streets by schools. 75% of schools will be enhanced by June 2025.

Discussion following the presentation

Committee comment:

Claes appreciates the work done so far with the School Safety Program, however Claes would like to see more quick build projects that will slow down vehicle speeds, particularly at corners. Claes hopes that maintenance for the crosswalks is budgeted for. Claes commented that the City should also study streets that are not directly next to the school that may still pose safety concerns for children travelling to school. Claes suggested expanding the Walk n' Roll training to teachers so that all schools can have bike rodeos and safety assemblies every year without a DOT staff member. This could be similar to annual fire drills. Claes also asked how the City measures success.

Jasper responded that during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Walk n' Roll team started to train teachers, but it was difficult because different grades have different education curriculum to work around. The trainings were online during the pandemic and did not gain traction. Few teachers were interested in participating. The team can consider restarting the program now. The challenge for in-school bike rodeos is the availability of bikes for students who do not own bikes, however the Walk n' Roll team is interested in working on this more.

Bittner responded that the School Safety Program works closely with the City's quick-build team to identify locations around schools for improvements.

Nguyen asked what issues were found with Andrew Hill and Overfelt High Schools and what can be improved.

Bittner responded that there is congestion on Senter Road from Andrew Hill High School and a nearby Rocketship School, and the City is currently working with the schools on strategies. One strategy for elementary schools is to offset the start time for lower grades and upper grades. The program is working with schools to adjust start times and loading zones within the framework of the law.

Jasper responded that there will be about 15 bike safety education courses at Overfelt High School and a bike repair and maintenance course. With the completion of the courses, students can earn a bike of their own. There will be a student task force to lead an upper grade walk and roll program. Students will also have an opportunity for a bike mechanic apprenticeship. The programs will start in early 2025 and run for two full school years.

Kennedy asked if the School Safety Program collects feedback on street enhancements from parents.

The program does not actively collect feedback from parents because they are only there for a short period of time compared to administrators who oversee the entire drop off period. However, school administrators may receive feedback from parents, which can be passed onto the program.

Kahlon suggested distributing information to high school students and their parents through student emails, if available.

Koopman asked how requests from the public to look at particular schools are processed.

Bittner responded that if the team gets a call or email from members of the public or city council offices, the team will send out engineers to investigate the issue at the school. Additionally, the program has a list of schools that are prioritized based on previous survey data where the team can take a proactive approach. The needs of the school and the needs of the community need to be balanced.

Kahlon suggested collecting the common themes and lessons learned into a brochure that they can send out to schools so that the administrators know what kind of solutions are out there and can think about what their priorities are.

Bittner responded that the team is working on creating a central email and a website that shows the program's upcoming projects, FAQs, and guides for what schools can do.

Solomon showed appreciation for the program.

LaBlanc asked if the program has heard concerns about speed around schools. The speed limit is currently 25 miles per hour near schools, but some cities have lowered that to 15 miles an hour around schools. LaBlanc also noted that while Viva EscuelaSJ is great, many cities have school streets programs that close off the street for drop off and pick up every day.

Bittner responded that rather than speeding, reckless driving in the morning has been an issue with the morning work commute overlapping with school drop off times.

Jasper responded that Walk n' Roll would like to expand Viva EscuelaSJ. Currently, each Viva EscuelaSJ costs several thousand dollars, however the team is looking into ways to streamline these costs.

Claes suggested changing streets in front of schools to one-way streets to make room for wider bike lanes.

(2) Diridon Station Planning Update

Ramses Madou, Division Manager, Department of Transportation, gave the following presentation:

Madou showed a video of the Diridon Station redesign plan. The video showed the elevated track option with a concourse underneath for through access and retail. The concourse will also provide access to VTA light rail and the future BART station. The project is currently at the 5% design phase. The video can be viewed at diridonsj.org.

Currently, 116 trains run through Diridon Station. It is expected that 458 trains will run through the station by 2040, increasing the daily ridership from 17,000 passengers to 100,000 passengers per day. Madou noted that train stations serve a community function as well as a transit function, and that the City is designing the project in a way that people will want to go to the station for transit and for other purposes. The City is working on maximizing development around the station by combining work from the Diridon Station Area Plan, the Downtown Transportation Plan, the Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan, and the Downtown West Mixed-Use Plan.

The project is in the Project Refinement phase with two recommended alternatives identified for further analysis. Both alternatives have similar concourse configurations with programmable space for retail, community centers, and other amenities. San Fernando Street will have a two-way cycle track that leads to a bike facilities area.

The first alternative has at-grade tracks and a recessed concourse. This alternative has fewer street impacts compared to the second alternative. This alternative may cost between \$3-6 billion dollars. The second alternative keeps the station at grade and raises the tracks about 20 feet. Where the tracks are raised, the cross streets will then be raised to be at-grade. This alternative may cost between \$5-10 billion dollars.

The team is continuing to engage with the community by holding open houses and community meetings with nearby neighborhood associations.

Discussion following the presentation

Public comment:

Li commented that flooding is an issue on Santa Clara Street. Li hopes the flooding will be addressed if the recessed corridor alternative is chosen. Li commented that the bike lane gets narrower when it goes underneath the tracks on Santa Clara Street. Li also commented that bus connection to the future Diridon Station should be the best option.

Madou responded that the video and current concept are still in early phases and there is still a lot of work to be done to get the specific engineering designs. The City is also starting work on a Santa Clara Street redesign in a separate project.

Montes asked to what extent the City is working with the Diridon West development for long term planning of the area.

Madou responded that the project team is in constant communication with the Diridon West development, the SAP Center, and the San Jose Sharks NHL team, as well as other stakeholders. Diridon West development has slowed, however the development is still committed to the area because of the future transit connectivity.

Committee comment:

Claes asked how much bike capacity is currently being envisioned at the station. Claes also asked why cyclists take their bikes on trains rather than leaving it at the station, which is the common practice in other countries.

Madou will follow up on the bike capacity estimate. Madou responded that the first- and last-mile problem is much larger in the US, so people often need to bike on both ends of the trip. People in the US also tend to buy more expensive bikes and prefer to keep their bikes nearby.

Kennedy asked what assumptions were used to predict the huge increase in transit service to the station.

Madou responded that there is an assumption that the Diridon West development will continue at some point, so their estimates are used in the Diridon Station project. The models were updated with reduced passenger estimates from previous levels based on updated assumptions in the area.

Koopman commented that the raised track design accommodates bicycle movement better because the cross streets will stay level.

Kahlon would like the bike lanes to be physically separated. Kahlon seconds the comment about flooding and is in favor of the raised track design to accommodate potentially larger storms in the future.

Solomon commented that California High Speed Rail (CAHSR) is not projected to arrive in San José for a long time and asked whether the Diridon Station design can be smaller for now and then expanded when CAHSR actually arrives in San José. The only certainty for transit in the area, according to Solomon, is that Caltrain just electrified their trains. The Diridon West development is still not certain. Solomon also commented that the Gardner community is concerned about how much disruption construction will cause in the neighborhood.

Madou responded that the constructability of the project is being worked out now, however in general, long-term projects should be built all at once to reduce costs and minimize disruption. The Diridon Station Project is not just for CAHSR; it is a project for all public transportation.

Kahlon asked how the station design is accommodating buses.

Madou responded that buses will be kept on Santa Clara Street to have the fastest bus service possible. Buses will not need to turn into the station. A site just north of the

station has been purchased to hold inactive VTA buses or potentially Greyhound buses along with passenger drop-off space.

(3) Review Transportation & Environment Committee Workplan

Solomon proposed the following comments:

Regarding agenda item (1) Climate Smart San José Plan Semi-Annual Report: BPAC supports the City's Climate Smart initiative. The October Annual Report to T&E included the Bike Plan 2025 and bike share expansion, however there are no meaningful bike share services in East San José. There are no stations near Eastridge Shopping Center, San José City College, Evergreen Valley College, or San José's underserved south side. Please seek to decrease VMT (vehicle-miles-travelled) by prioritizing and funding the bike network. Please continue to remove parking spaces, and prioritize transit first initiatives, and implement Bike Plan 2025.

Regarding agenda item (3) Vehicle Concerns and Service Improvements Status Report: last December, BPAC received a presentation from Jennifer Seguin on the City's Street Sweeping Program. 70% of San José's parking violations are given on the East Side because East San Jose streets have parking restrictions for sweeping while other neighborhoods do not. Please remedy this inequity. Parking violation fines go to San José's general fund; please redirect the funds to support Climate Smart initiatives to improve bicycle, pedestrian, and transit first initiatives.

Claes commented that agenda item (3) is not related to active transportation and proposed removing it.

Zenk clarified that agenda item (3) is on abandoned vehicle abatement. Parking violations are not in the scope of the report.

Motion to approve the comments for agenda item (1) for the T&E Committee by Committee Member Diane Solomon representing BPAC.

Motion: Ben Kennedy

Second: Deanna Chevas

The motion is approved without objection.

(g) Committee Comments

(1) Chairperson's Comments

Kahlon thanks the committee and members of the public for their active participation.

(2) Committee Member Comments

Kennedy shared appreciation for committee and staff support for Viva CalleSJ and that a lot of feedback from the public was received. People also liked the maps at the table. Solomon made a checklist to keep future events running smoothly.

Solomon proposed drafting a letter of support in response to the prohibition of pedestrians on the expressways. Solomon also thanked Montes from SVBC for coming to the meeting. Solomon hopes that the BPAC will continue to have a SVBC staff member on the committee.

(h) Adjourn – This meeting was adjourned at 9:01 pm.