

# Sonoma County Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee

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## Meeting Announcement

**Date:** Wednesday, August 18, 2021  
**Time:** 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.  
**Place:** Zoom Meeting  
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83884593124>  
(669) 900-6833, ID # 838 8459 3124

**Staff:** Steven Schmitz  
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steven@sctransit.com



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## Agenda:

- I. Introductions & Public Comments\*** (10 Minutes)
- II. Approval of Agenda & Minutes** (5 Minutes)
- III. Staff Reports** (10 Minutes)
  - Application for LAB 'Bicycle Friendly Communities' Designation.
  - Comments to Permit Sonoma on Draft Winery Events Ordinance.
  - Transportation Authority's 2021 Funding Program Call for Projects.
  - Update from Health Services on Sonoma County Vision Zero Project.
- IV. General Meeting:**
  - A. Review Bohemian Highway Bridge Over Russian River Replacement Project in Monte Rio. (30 minutes)
  - B. Discuss Proposed E-Bike Policy for Trails and Class I Pathways Located in Unincorporated Areas. (30 minutes)
- V. Other Business & Announcements** (5 Minutes)
- VI. Next Meeting & Adjournment**

The next meeting of the Sonoma County BPAC is scheduled for Wednesday, Oct. 20, 2021.

\*Public Comment on Issues Not on the Agenda. Please limit comments to 3 minutes each. The Committee will hear public comments on non-agenda issues within the Committee's scope of authority. The Committee will hear public comments on non-agenda issues for up to 10 minutes, at which time they will hear scheduled agenda items. Any additional public comments will be heard at the conclusion of the items that are already on the agenda.

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Members in Attendance		Other Participants	
Chris Woodcock	1 <sup>st</sup> District (Chair)	Kristin Thigpin	Health Services
Joe Morgan	2 <sup>nd</sup> District	Gary Helfrich	Permit Sonoma
Vin Hoagland	3 <sup>rd</sup> District	Nader Dahu	Public Works
		Vincenzo Corazza	Public Works
		Amanda Bouillerce	Public Works
		Ken Tam	Regional Parks
		Mark Hansen	Sonoma Co. Transit
		Steven Schmitz	SCBPAC Staff

## **Meeting Summary**

### **I. Introductions and Public Comments**

Chris Woodcock called the meeting to order and self-introductions were made. Chris opened the floor to public comment. Joe Morgan commented that he was informed of a plan to use PG&E money for road improvements in Sonoma County. He said that he sent the list of road projects in the plan to staff and requested that that it be distributed to the rest of the committee members. Staff said clarified that this funding was a result of the Tubbs Fire lawsuit settlement with PG&E. The list would be distributed to the committee and Nader Dahu of Public Works confirmed that the projects would eventually be presented to the committee for their review and comments, similar to pavement preservation projects.

While Eris Weaver of the Bicycle Coalition was unable to attend the meeting due to her participation in the Ride of Silence, staff said that she provided written comments in advance that would be presented for the relevant agenda items during the meeting.

### **II. Approval of Agenda and Minutes**

The May 19, 2021 meeting agenda was approved as presented. The February 17, 2021 minutes were approved with the following corrections from Ken Tam. On page four, in the second paragraph, after 'Copeland Creek' Ken said that the word 'crossing' needs to be changed to 'trail.' On page seven, in the first paragraph, the words 'crossing' and 'spent' need to be deleted.

### **III. Staff Reports**

**Comments Submitted for Pavement Preservation Projects.** Staff gave an overview on the comments submitted on behalf of the committee for the 2021 pavement preservation projects. The first memo was submitted on March 19 and a second memo was sent out on April 21 for a second round of projects using federal OBAG funding. Staff said that most of

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the requests for bicycle improvements under this round of pavement preservation program projects were for new 'Pass Bikes 3 Ft Min' signs along Class 3 bicycle routes. Also, new Class 2 bicycle lanes were requested on a section of Stony Point Road near Petaluma.

Chris asked for clarification about two roads listed in the preservation program, a section of Dutton Ave and Corby Ave in the southwest Santa Rosa area. Staff responded that the two roads are getting incorporated by the City of Santa Rosa, and that the County was making improvements to the roads as a condition of this incorporation. Staff explained that no comments were provided for those two roads because they are now under the jurisdiction of the City of Santa Rosa.

**Report on Proposed State Legislation for Bikes and Pedestrians.** Staff reported on several current bills in the California State Legislature that were related to bicycles and pedestrians. Staff said that AB 43 is a proposal to allow local control over speed limits rather than mandating the use of the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile rule. AB 117 is an electric bike incentive pilot project that would add financial incentives for electric bikes to the existing incentive program for electric vehicles. AB 122 would allow bikes to treat stop signs as yield signs in most circumstances. AB 1238 would allow pedestrians to cross the street without a crosswalk and mid-block when conditions are safe. Finally, staff said that AB 550 would allow for the automated enforcement of speed limits using cameras.

**Status of Update to the 2010 County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.** Staff participated in a virtual meeting on March 25 with Gary Helfrich and Brian Oh of Permit Sonoma. Staff described the plan update process and that participation is needed from Permit Sonoma to proceed. Gary said that, while the previous plan update took three years, with a good template already provided from the 2010 plan and assuming adequate funding could be provided, this plan update is anticipated to take about one year.

Staff then described the various elements that would need updating in the plan and the scoping process required. However, until such time that a full update can proceed, technical corrections and policy corrections could be completed. Gary concurred, and stated that the technical corrections can pile up quickly. Kristin Thigpin then asked if there would be room for collaboration with Vision Zero on this plan update. Gary responded affirmatively given that Vision Zero was a large priority early on with the 2010 plan update.

Staff asked about Permit Sonoma's availability to work on the technical corrections within the next year. Gary answered that he thought was doable. Chris Woodcock asked about the scope of the technical corrections and described an example of a road that is mislabeled in the plan. Gary said that it would be a technical correction and he described a few other policy examples such as switching from LOS to VMT. Staff added that many of the technical corrections have already been compiled by Permit Sonoma. Gary said that, given his current project load, it would be helpful to continue to work with Brian Oh to recruit another planner at Permit Sonoma to provide additional assistance with the plan update.

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**Update from Health Services on Sonoma County Vision Zero Project.** Kirstin Thigpin began by introducing herself as the new project manager for Vision Zero, replacing Brittany Lobo. In Sonoma County, Department of Health Services partners with the Sonoma County Transportation Authority to implement the program. She described the recent data dashboard on traffic collisions as an example of the program's work. She plans to implement an action plan informed by a previous series of meetings known as the Vision Zero Advisory Committee. With their feedback in hand, she completed a Request for Proposals for a consultant to design and implement a community outreach plan and produce marketing materials related to Vision Zero in Sonoma County. She anticipates using three focus groups to facilitate discussion around the Vision Zero program in the coming months.

Chris Woodcock asked about the data source behind the data dashboard. Kirstin answered that it is based off SWITRS (Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System) data acquired through UC Berkeley's TIMS (Transportation Injury Mapping System). She then clarified that the dashboard is current as of the 2019 data, but 2020 data will be added when available. Vin Hoagland asked whether the dashboard covers cities or the entire county. Kristen answered that the dashboard examines all nine jurisdictions in Sonoma County as well as unincorporated areas. Kristen said she would look forward to continuing to provide updates on the Vision Zero program to the committee on a regular basis.

**Update on the Petaluma Blvd. South/Kastania Road Restriping Project.** Staff stated that while this staff report was not included on the agenda, Public Works had an update to provide. Nader Dahu provided an update on the green pavement markings and striping that were discussed during the previous meeting. Public Works has decided to use green thermoplastic striping as a pilot program at this intersection, to determine the material's effectiveness. The installation of the green striping is scheduled to take place this summer.

Nader added that, while thermoplastic striping is not the preferred choice by bicyclists, it is more durable than paint. Chris Woodcock asked about the difference and Nader stated that thermoplastic becomes more slippery than paint when it's wet. Joe Morgan said that, while the striping is definitely an improvement and appreciated, green paint is preferable.

**Other Updates.** Ken Tam of Regional Parks announced the recent approval of matching grant program funding from the Open Space District. The program includes funding for a section of the Bodega Bay Trail project and the Copeland Creek Trail project. Ken reminded the committee that Regional Parks had previously requested \$200,000 in TDA Article 3 funding as a local match to help leverage additional funding.

Ken then provided an update on the timeline for these two projects. In both cases, they are waiting for regulatory permits to be completed. For the Copeland Creek Trail project, they are potentially looking at advertising for bids later this summer. They are still working through the coastal development permit application process for the Bodega Bay Trail and, therefore, a timeline for bids is not yet available.

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In response to Joe Morgan's previous request for an update on the Petaluma - Sebastopol Trail project, Ken said that Regional Parks was in the process of putting together a request for proposals and project scope for a more detailed preliminary engineering design. The previous feasibility study was more of a high-level document to conceptually identify the alignment and now a more detailed 30% engineering design was required to move the project forward. The primary focus of the project is the trail section nearest to Sebastopol.

Regarding the Sonoma Valley Trail project, Ken said that Regional Parks had hired two consultants to prepare a preliminary engineering design. Ken said that the vast majority of the time spent will be negotiating for right-of-way easements. Several easements have been secured from businesses and through development applications, but Regional Parks will need additional time to negotiate with some private landowners in the area.

Finally, staff reported on a proposed pedestrian sidewalk improvement project along Mark West Springs Road just east of Old Redwood Highway. The project was not chosen for a recent round of funding through the Sonoma County Transportation Authority, but Nader Dahu clarified that a second round of funding would hopefully present another opportunity for this project to move forward.

## **IV. General Meeting**

**A. Discuss Applying for a 'Bicycle Friendly Communities' Designation from the League of American Bicyclists for the Unincorporated Areas.** Staff outlined the Bicycle Friendly Communities (BFA) program administered by the League of American Bicyclists. It is an award, ranked from bronze to gold, provided to communities depending on how bicycle-friendly it is determined to be. Several jurisdictions in Sonoma County have been successful in applying to the BFA program. Staff said that Eris Weaver of the Bicycle Coalition had recently proposed applying for a designation for the County's unincorporated areas.

Staff proposed a separate group to facilitate the process, whether in an unofficial capacity or as an ad-hoc committee. It was envisioned that the group would bring together several committee members alongside staff from Public Works, Regional Parks, and Permit Sonoma, as well the Bicycle Coalition. Staff said that Eris Weaver included her support for applying for a BFA designation in a written comment provided prior to the meeting.

Vin Hoagland stated that the application seemed very intensive and, if someone was willing to take the lead on the process he would be happy to contribute within the limits of his expertise. Chris Woodcock said that he thought it was a great idea and added that he would be willing to help as well. Amanda Bouillercce said this item fell within her purview and she would be willing to join as a representative for Public Works. Ken Tam said that he would discuss the possibility of finding a person at Regional Parks to participate, depending on the amount of time required. Chris acknowledged that the overall time commitment and allocation of work for this project needs to be determined.

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Vin asked for clarification about who reviews the BFA application and staff responded that it is the League of American Bicyclists. Chris added that it is essentially a report card based on several factors, including existing bicycle facilities, planned infrastructure, and potential for future improvements. Vin then asked for clarification on who would officially submit the application and staff responded that it would be the County of Sonoma.

Joe Morgan suggested the possibility of assigning pieces of the application to different committee representatives based on districts. Staff said that Eris Weaver had worked with City of Santa Rosa on their application and, therefore, likely had good experience to draw on. Staff added that the County of San Mateo County recently applied and earned a bronze BFA designation. As a similar county in the San Francisco Bay Area with suburban and rural characteristics, they could be a good resource to look towards. With no further discussion, direction was provided to staff to prepare a memo on behalf of the committee outlining the BFA application process and formally inviting interested parties to participate.

**B. Review the Committee's Draft Comments Prepared for the Sonoma County Local Coastal Plan.** Gary provided a brief introduction to the Local Coastal Plan. He started by showing a map to the committee of the Coastal Zone boundary. The plan only applies to the boundary shown in the map he presented. It is a state planning document and is comprised of a plan, a zoning code, and an administrative manual. It is certified by the Coastal Commission and preempts local control and some state control, including Caltrans highway design. Gary continued by noting that bicycle and pedestrian access were very high priorities in the plan because they are seen as a form of coastal access. He stressed that the language will be stronger in this document than other bicycle plans because it is the sole source of planning guidance for bicycle projects in the Coastal Zone.

Gary next described Permit Sonoma's intention for implementing bicycle infrastructure policy with this plan. Rather than create new policies specific to the Local Coastal Plan, they intended to replicate and strengthen policies from the 2010 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. However, coastal protections make right-of-way takings difficult. Therefore, projects will need to prioritize such things as developing Class 2 bicycle lanes in the uphill direction along stretches of Highway 1. Any agency making non-emergency repairs on roads covered by the Local Coastal Plan will be required to design the projects called for in the plan. This is a very good opportunity to determine how roads are designed in the Coastal Zone.

In response to written comments provided by Eris Weaver prior to the meeting, Gary said that the request to include Class 4 bike lane designations in the document is not applicable to any road in the Coastal Zone. He also responded to a concern he has heard from both Bicycle Coalition and other transportation advocates that parking should be limited in the Coastal Zone and bus shuttle service should be provided. Gary said that this idea is a non-starter because public access is the primary goal of the Coastal Commission and limiting parking is considered a limitation of access. Finally, he agreed that the recommendation to replace the word 'accident' with 'collision' throughout the document was a good one.

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Chris Woodcock asked Gary what he was looking for in terms of feedback for the plan. Gary responded that he was most interested in areas where roads could be designed more safely without the need to change the right-of-way width. While the Local Coastal Plan can have strong mandates, the highest priority will always be protecting coastal resources, and sometimes this prevents the construction of bicycle facilities. Joe Morgan asked about the extent to which this plan applies to roads leading into the Coastal Zone, like Coleman Valley Road. Gary clarified that it only applies to the portions of roads that are within the Coastal Zone, not the entire road. Gary then reiterated that while acquiring more right-of-way for roads is not impossible, it would require intensive study of surrounding coastal resources.

Staff went through the other comments included in the committee's draft memo, such as the removal of Policy CT-3u. Gary said that policies such as this, unrelated to development, are good candidates to strike from the Local Coastal Plan. Joe asked for clarification on this point, and if Gary planned to remove the two policies discussed. Gary stated that Policy CT-3u and CT-3i do not have a place in the Local Coastal Plan. Staff finished by reading off the other comments around strengthening the language of some policies and removing mentions of LOS. The committee could submit these comments with the changes discussed and more comments could still be submitted at later stages in the process.

Gary then outlined the schedule for adoption of the Local Coastal Plan. The draft is going to the Planning Commission in July, to the Board of Supervisors in August, and to the Coastal Commission in November. Each meeting is an opportunity to provide additional public input. With no further discussion, Vin Hoagland motioned and Chris Woodcock seconded and the committee approved the committee's memo containing comments on the Local Coastal Plan.

## **V. Other Business & Announcements**

Staff announced that Bike to Wherever Day would take place on Friday, May 21. There was no other business or announcements.

## **VI. Next Meeting & Adjournment**

The next meeting was scheduled for August 18, 2021 and staff said that the review of the Monte Rio Bridge Replacement project would be included on the agenda. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8 pm.