

Sonoma County Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee

Meeting Announcement

Date: Wednesday, June 21, 2023
Time: 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Place: Sonoma County Public Infrastructure
2300 County Center Dr., Room A212
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Staff: Steven Schmitz,
(707) 585-7516
steven@sctransit.com



Agenda:

- I. Introductions & Public Comments*** (10 Minutes)
- II. Approval of Agenda & Minutes** (5 Minutes)
- III. Staff Reports** (10 Minutes)
 - Amended Ordinance (Sec. 19-5) Restricting Camping on Public Property.
 - State Omni-Bike Bill (AB 1909) Regarding Class 3 Electric Bikes.
 - Update on Sonoma-Schellville Class I Pathway Project.
 - Status of Bicycle Friendly Communities Application.
 - Countywide Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan Update.
- IV. General Meeting:**
 - A. Review and Discuss Existing Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Near Jack London School in Santa Rosa. (30 minutes)
- V. Other Business & Announcements** (5 Minutes)
- VI. Next Meeting & Adjournment**

The next meeting of the Sonoma County BPAC is scheduled for Wednesday, Aug. 16, 2023.

*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.

Sonoma County Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee

February 15, 2023 Minutes

Page 2

Members in Attendance		Other Participants	
Chris Woodcock	1 st District (Chair)	Neil Hancock	2 nd District Resident
Joe Morgan	2 nd District	Roberto Delgado	Bike Sebastopol
Vin Hoagland	3 rd District	Zeno Swijtink	Bike Sebastopol
Amy Loukonen	4 th District	Emily Shartin	Bicycle Coalition
Collin Thoma	4 th District (Alt.)	Nader Dahu	Public Infrastructure
		Ken Tam	Regional Parks
		Steven Schmitz	SCBPAC Staff

Meeting Summary

I. Introductions and Public Comments

Self-introductions were made.

Chris Woodcock mentioned an issue that he encountered recently with construction signs being placed within the Class II bicycle lanes along Verano Avenue. Joe Morgan and Roberta Delgado said that they have also experienced construction signs blocking Class II bicycle lanes. Nader Dahu said that, while there is no internal departmental policy regarding the placement of construction signs, they generally follow the guidance of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). Staff said that a specific policy on the placement of construction signs can be proposed for the next update of the Sonoma County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

Amy Loukonen said that the Joe Rodota Trail has been closed, once again, to address the ongoing homeless encampment issues. Unfortunately, the homeless encampments are simply moving from one part of the trail to another, and the situation does not seem to have improved for a couple of years now. Something different needs to be tried to finally resolve the issue and reopen the entire trail for bicyclists and pedestrians.

II. Approval of Agenda and Minutes

The agenda for the February 15, 2023 meeting agenda was approved as presented. The minutes from the committee's December 21, 2022 meeting were approved as presented.

III. Staff Reports

State Route 1 Centerline Rumble Strip and Shoulder Areas. Staff said that Caltrans is proposing to install centerline rumble strips, wet-night visibility striping, and widen the shoulder to 6-feet at 50 spot locations along Highway 1 in Sonoma County to provide refuge for bicyclists when being passed by motorists. The purpose of the project is to reduce the number and severity of head-on, cross-centerline, and run-off collisions, as well as provide refuge areas for bicyclists. Public comments were due to Caltrans today, February 15.

Sonoma County Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee

February 15, 2023 Minutes

Page 3

Ken Tam said that Regional Parks submitted comments on the project asking Caltrans to coordinate with them where there may be opportunities for the shoulder widening to help improve sections of the California Coastal Trail along the Highway 1 corridor. Emily Shartin said that the Bicycle Coalition submitted a couple of letters expressing concern about the centerline rumble strips discouraging motorists from traveling over the double yellow lines to pass bicyclists with ample space, and advocating for continuous shoulders for bicyclists as opposed to only a limited number of refuge areas.

Verano Avenue and State Route 12 Ad-Hoc Committee. Staff said the Supervisor Gorin convened a meeting involving Caltrans and Public Infrastructure on February 6 to address unsafe pedestrian crossing issues at the intersection of Verano Avenue and Highway 12. An ad-hoc committee comprised primarily of staff is being formed soon to figure out what types of pedestrian facility improvements can be made to the intersection in both the short-term and long-term.

Status of Bicycle Friendly Communities. Staff reported that, due to a continued lack of adequate time to complete the Bicycle Friendly Communities application, the anticipated timeline to submit the application to the League of American Bicyclists is now August 2023. Zeno Swijtink said that Bike Sebastopol could offer to assist with parts of the application.

Sonoma County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Update. Staff said that the Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA) recently released a Request for Proposals for a consultant to assist with updating the Countywide Active Transportation Plan, which will include an update of the 2010 Sonoma County (Unincorporated) Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. The SCTA anticipates having a consultant on board within the next couple months and the estimated two-year update process would then begin in early summer. Staff from Regional Parks and Public Infrastructure have been identified to participate in the process, and staff from Permit Sonoma should be assigned soon.

Other Staff Reports. Ken Tam reported that the proposed Verano Hotel to be located on Verano Avenue across the street from Maxwell Regional Park is now moving through the Permit Sonoma review process. Part of that process will be the submittal of a Traffic Control Plan for the project's construction phases. This would be a good opportunity to make sure that such plans are appropriate for bicyclists and pedestrians. There are existing Class II bicycle lanes and a Class I pathway adjacent to the proposed hotel on Verano Avenue.

IV. General Meeting

A. Regional Parks to Present updated Draft Design Alternatives for County Class I Trail Entry / Exit Points. Ken Tam said that Regional Parks recently hired a local traffic engineering firm, W-Trans, to investigate different alternatives to the existing bollard design interface between public roadways/private driveways and Class I trails. The draft report said that the County could consider one or a combination of the following design alternatives as

Sonoma County Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee

February 15, 2023 Minutes

Page 4

potential replacements to bollards: signage, gates, speed bumps or humps, curb ramps, chicanes, and split paths. In assessing the use of these options, several factors should be considered including cost, maintenance needs, available right-of-way, terrain, visibility, existing vegetation, lighting or the ability to provide reflectivity, the volume and mix of non-motorized users, potential for motor vehicle intrusion, and the need to provide a consistent approach along a trail so that users recognize their presence and purpose. After receiving feedback from this committee, the next steps will be to share the draft report and seek feedback from the nine incorporated cities in the County as well as the Sonoma County Water Agency and Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit.

Vin Hoagland wondered how often motor vehicles have actually been seen entering Class I pathways in Sonoma County. Ken responded that it doesn't happen very often, but motor vehicles have entered Regional Parks Class I pathways on occasion. When it does happen, it is considered a liability issue and, therefore, Regional Parks has always been proactive in designing Class I pathway entries and exits with either bollards or gates. Roberta Delgado said that she sent an e-mail to Ken on February 10 with suggestions from Eris Weaver, Emily Shartin and her of the Bicycle Coalition on the design alternatives. Any type of bollard or gate needs to be designed to adequately accommodate both bicyclists and pedestrians. Also, consideration should be given to removing all bollards except for those locations where incursions by motor vehicles has been determined to be a prevalent issue.

Emily Shartin said that there does not seem to be a 'one size fits all' solution, but that all the suggested options may need to be tested at various locations to help with making decisions on the best design alternatives. She also asked whether flexible bollards are still being considered as an option. Ken responded that flexible bollards are being considered but they are not effective as a physical deterrent in preventing motor vehicles from entering Class I pathways. Collin Thoma echoed Roberta's previous comment that gates are not preferred and must be designed to accommodate persons with disabilities, especially those with mobility devices.

Zeno Swijtink expressed concern that, for those who are not members of the committee, a staff report for this item was not included with the agenda. This makes it very difficult for the public to be prepared to make meaningful comments during the meeting. Ken apologized and acknowledged that it would be good practice in the future to post any reports on the committee's webpage along with the agendas. Ken said that the design alternatives topic would be brought back to the committee for further review after receiving feedback from the other various jurisdictions and agencies in the County.

B. Review / Approve Draft TDA Article 3 Three-Year Funding Plan. Staff gave a brief summary of the purpose of the Transportation Development Act (TDA) Article 3 Three-Year Funding Plan to the committee. The unincorporated County areas receive approximately \$175,000 in TDA Article 3 funding per year and, including prior year carryover funding, there is approximately \$1 million available to program toward bicycle and pedestrian projects over

Sonoma County Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee

February 15, 2023 Minutes

Page 5

the next three fiscal years. A large portion of that amount, \$600,000, has been programmed for the Arnold Drive Class II bicycle lane project in fiscal year 2024-25. For the upcoming fiscal year 2023-24, TDA Article 3 funding is proposed for the Bodega Bay Trail Class I (North Harbor) project, Crocker Street (Cloverdale) Bike and Pedestrian Bridge, and Sonoma County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Update. In addition to the Arnold Drive Class II bicycle lane project, TDA Article 3 funding is proposed for various other Class I pathway and Class II bicycle lane projects located in the unincorporated County areas during fiscal years 2023-25 and 2025-26. At the end of the three-year funding period, the balance of TDA Article 3 funding for the unincorporated County areas will be approximately \$30,000.

Zeno Swijtink asked why there is such a large carryover from previous years adding up to almost \$1 million in funding. Staff explained that, often, projects are not ready to move forward and TDA article 3 funding needs to be bumped to the next fiscal year and, therefore, carryover funding can sometimes accrue to a rather large amount over several fiscal years. Funding for the Arnold Drive Class II bicycle lane project, for example, has been bumped several times of the past few years, which represents over half of the TDA Article 3 funding available to be programmed. Ken Tam added that a project's environmental review process can cause delays and that the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process must be completed before agencies can apply for TDA Article 3 funding. With no questions from the committee, the County's Three-Year Funding Plan for fiscal year 2023-24 was unanimously approved by the committee (Joe Morgan motion and Vin Hoagland second).

V. Other Business & Announcements

Staff announced that Joe Morgan has agreed to continue to serve as the representative for the County unincorporated areas on the Sonoma County Transportation Authority's Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee. Ken Tam announced that Regional Parks has been given approval by the Board of Supervisors to move forward with securing necessary right-of-way acquisitions from Union Pacific railroad for the proposed Sonoma-Schelville Class I pathway project to be located along 8th Street East in the unincorporated areas to the east of the City of Sonoma.

Staff said that Governor Newsom ended the pandemic's emergency declaration as of March 1 and, therefore, the committee's next meeting will need to be in-person. Staff is currently looking for a meeting space that can accommodate hybrid (virtual and in-person) meetings.

VI. Next Meeting & Adjournment

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for April 19, 2023.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:45 p.m.