

1 . Introduction

BICYCLING IS INCREASINGLY recognized as an important component of the transportation system. Not only can it reduce traffic, air pollution and energy consumption, it can also improve the health and quality of life of our residents and communities. The City of Richmond is among those far-sighted cities that recognizes the contribution that bicycling can make to mobility, environmental quality and community vitality. The City's General Plan—the master planning document for the community—contains numerous policies and action items to make Richmond a bicycle-friendly city; these include developing citywide bicycle routes and safe routes to schools, implementing traffic calming strategies, expanding the network of multi-use paths and identifying priority safety improvements.

One of the most important purposes of the Richmond Bicycle Master Plan (BMP) is to set in motion the policies and action items from the General Plan. The BMP does this primarily by proposing a system of

bikeways connecting neighborhoods and key activity centers throughout the city, and also by including recommendations for increasing the supply of bicycle parking and improving cyclists' safety. This chapter describes the process to develop the BMP (including the extent of public involvement), describes the contents of the plan and outlines how those contents meet the requirements of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) for bicycle plans.

HISTORY OF TRANSPORTATION IN RICHMOND

Richmond has a rich history of what today would be described as sustainable transportation. Richmond was founded and plotted in the pre-automobile era.

- Block sizes are small and conducive to walking and bicycling as they promote route directness, lower auto speeds and spreading

traffic across multiple narrow streets (as opposed to suburban models of limited number of very wide through streets like are found in the Hilltop Area).

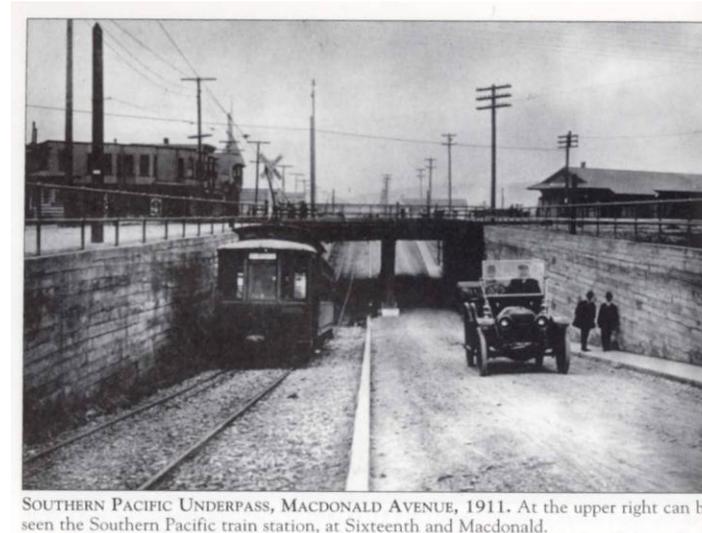
- Transit was and is an integral part of Richmond with a major BART/AMTRAK station and robust bus service. In the 1940's Richmond also had streetcar transit service (the Key System) on portions of Cutting Boulevard and Macdonald Avenue.
- Richmond also has neighborhood-scaled schools, well-distributed commercial corridors, and a Downtown district with historic treasures and great character.

With the advent of the automobile, I-80 and the Richmond-San-Rafael Bridge were built. Still later, I-580, the Richmond Parkway and BART were built. These facilities, along with the freight rail systems that were largely built to serve the Richmond Shipyards and other industrial uses, such as Chevron, along the waterfront have created a number of barriers to walking and bicycling in Richmond.

This Plan, along with the Pedestrian Master Plan that was created concurrently, seek to reintroduce opportunities for non-auto modes as envisioned in the City's General Plan. There are tremendous opportunities to expand walking and bicycling facilities as many roads in Richmond are oversized to their current or projected auto travel needs. Cutting Boulevard is the most obvious example, but Harbour Way, Carlson Boulevard, Barrett Avenue are also good examples of streets where existing traffic lanes could be removed and converted to space for walker and bikers.

Re-envisioning Richmond's transportation system as a multi-modal system is key to City and State objectives for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Perhaps more importantly, it is key to helping the City

achieve an active and healthy community and creating economic development opportunities.



SOUTHERN PACIFIC UNDERPASS, MACDONALD AVENUE, 1911. At the upper right can be seen the Southern Pacific train station, at Sixteenth and Macdonald.

Image Source: Images of America: Richmond, Donald Bastin, 2003

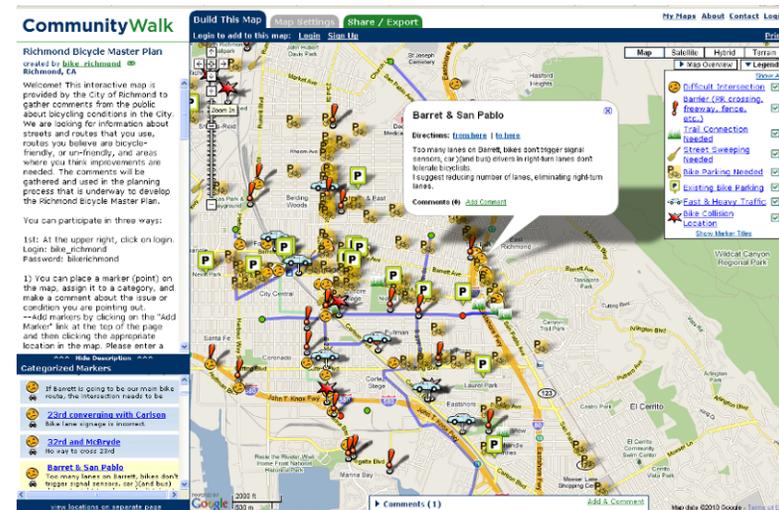
PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

This section addresses Caltrans' Bicycle Transportation Account (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." The BTA is an annual program providing state funds for city and county projects that improve safety and convenience for bicycle commuters.

To ensure that the Bicycle Master Plan reflects the interests and priorities of the Richmond community-at-large, agency and public outreach was a high priority throughout the course of the project.

Outreach activities included the following:

- Regular meetings with Richmond Planning, Engineering, and Re-development Agency staff
- Regular meetings with the Richmond Bicycle/ Pedestrian Advisory Committee (RBPAC)
- A day-long public workshop and "bike-about"
- Participation in community-led bike rides throughout Richmond
- An interactive on-line map for the Richmond community to post issues and opportunities related to existing and future conditions
- Close coordination with the Richmond Pedestrian Plan outreach efforts.



CONTENTS OF THE RICHMOND BICYCLE MASTER PLAN

The BMP consists of the following sections:

- **Executive Summary**
- **Chapter 1, Introduction**
- **Chapter 2, Related Plans:** Summarizes key plans, programs, policies and other planning efforts that will affect and be affected by implementation of the BMP.
- **Chapter 3, Policy Framework:** Formulates the vision, goals, objectives and policies of the BMP.
- **Chapter 4, Existing Bicycle Network:** Discusses existing local conditions relevant to bicycling, including commuting statistics, the city's land use patterns, existing bikeways, challenges to bicycling in Richmond and key opportunities for increasing the number of cyclists.
- **Chapter 5, Proposed Bicycle Network:** Establishes a proposed network of bikeways connecting neighborhoods and key activity centers throughout the city, and includes a map of the network and a list of proposed segments.
- **Chapter 6, Bicycle Parking:** Describes the main types of bicycle parking, provides a list and map of locations in Richmond where bicycle parking can be found and, perhaps most importantly, makes recommendations for increasing the supply of parking.
- **Chapter 7, Collisions:** Analyzes data on traffic collisions involving bicyclists, identifies collision hotspots and recommends to the City

a set of monitoring, evaluation and reporting actions related to collisions.

- **Chapter 8, Support Programs:** Describes existing bicycle safety and education programs in Richmond, and recommends additional or enhanced programs with the potential to improve the state of bicycling in the city.
- **Chapter 9, Funding and Implementation:** Estimates costs to build the proposed bikeway network, prioritizes individual projects on the proposed network and summarizes the main funding sources and programs for bicycle improvements.
- **Appendix A, Design Guidelines:** Provides standards and guidelines for the design of on- and off-street bikeways, bicycle parking, signage and maintenance of facilities.

BTA-REQUIRED ELEMENTS IN THE BMP

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 BMP where these requirements are addressed.

- ▶ **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 1-1 | Conformance with BTA requirements

<i>Requirement</i>	<i>Chapter(s)</i>
a. Number of existing and future bicycle commuters	4
b. Land use and settlement patterns	4
c. Existing and proposed bikeways	5, 6
d. Existing and proposed bicycle parking facilities	7
e. Existing and proposed access to other transportation modes	5, 6
f. Facilities for changing and storing clothes and equipment	7
g. Bicycle safety, education and law enforcement programs	9
h. Citizen and community involvement in development of the plan	1
i. Coordination and consistency with other plans	2
j. Projects proposed in the plan and their priority for implementation	10
k. Past expenditures for bicycle facilities and future financial needs	10

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