

MEETING NOTES

PROJECT	Caltrans Bay Area Bike Highways	ORGANIZER	Elliot Goodrich
SUBJECT	Working Group Meeting #3	DATE	August 27, 2021
VENUE	Zoom Meeting	TIME	10:00–11:30 a.m.

Meeting Overview:

This meeting was the third in a series of Stakeholder Working Group (SWG) meetings convened by Caltrans Bay Area to solicit input at key intervals of the planning process for the Caltrans Bay Area Bike Highway Study (the project). This meeting provided an update on the project timeline and objectives, design guidance for the implementation of Bike Highways in the Bay Area, and a review of corridors under consideration following the completion of the suitability and feasibility analyses.

Participants were divided into breakout groups by geographic area to discuss considerations for corridor selection and their suggestions to facilitate region-wide implementation of bike highways. The following document provides a summary of comments received throughout the meeting. It is complemented by feedback received via ConceptBoard (see link below), which was developed by the project team to allow participants to share ideas and feedback on the topics at hand. Notes included in this document have been organized thematically (not chronologically).

SWG members suggested it would be helpful to create design guidance for how bike highways would interface with/serve the following:

- Rural highways
- Recreation and transportation needs
- Various land use types
- Existing infrastructure
- Corridors adjacent to water
- Sensitive environmental areas
- Corridors that span multiple municipalities
- Areas where there is limited excess ROW
- Existing transit options
- Regional parks and natural settings
- Arterial state highways
- New mobility/e-bikes
- Grade separation
- Wayfinding from local to regional routes
- Rail crossings
- Underutilized spaces
- Existing on-street parking

ConceptBoard: <https://app.conceptboard.com/board/4kog-4sp1-hd13-zom4-9s3n>

EAST BAY / NORTH BAY	SAN FRANCISCO / PENINSULA
Project Team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mauricio Hernández, Project Manager, Alta Planning + Design • Regina Merrill, Circlepoint 	Project Team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brett Hondorp, Principal, Alta Planning + Design • Libby Nachman, Assistant Project Manager, Alta Planning + Design • Ivy Morrison, Circlepoint
Caltrans Bay Area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elliot Goodrich, Caltrans Bay Area, Project Manager, Associate Transportation Planner 	Caltrans Bay Area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sergio Ruiz, Caltrans Bay Area, Complete Streets Coordinator

EAST BAY / NORTH BAY**Working Group Members**

- Ben Kaufman, Rails to Trails Conservancy
- Diana Meehan, Napa Valley Transportation Authority (NVTA)
- Chris Marks, Alameda CTC
- Colin Clarke, Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA)
- Eris Weaver, Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition (SCBC)
- Lee Huo, Bay Trail Project
- Warren Wells, Marin County Bicycle Coalition (MCBC)

SAN FRANCISCO / PENINSULA**Working Group Members**

- Lola Torney, Valley Transportation Authority (VTA)
- Mike Pickford, San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA)
- Mikaela Hiatt, City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County (C/CAG)
- Sandhya Laddha, Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition (SVBC)
- Scott McDonald, Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM)
- Toshi Shepard-Ohta, Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)
- Nicola Szibbo, Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)

Project Updates

Since the last meeting in February, the project team completed the suitability and feasibility assessments completed an analysis of results for the first community survey. Prior to the third meeting, the Caltrans team shared the final design guidance memo for which SWG members were asked to provide input on it. Some members of the group provided comments and Caltrans staff will share an updated memo with their feedback incorporated.

The project team also reviewed the project objectives which were further solidified to:

- Identifying a network of bike highways on Caltrans right-of-way (ROW);
- Providing a set of tools to jurisdictions to assist with implementation;
- Providing conceptual design best practices and example typologies across a diversity of land uses, regions and populations;
- Identifying appropriate terminology for this facility type.

Bike Highway Design

In the Bay Area and California, Bike Highways may best be thought as a route “overlay” intended for a specific type of user (i.e., higher speed, longer distance cycling), rather than a single specific facility type. The project team provided an overview of current design considerations relating to speed, width, grade, route identification and wayfinding, lighting, materials and surface, intersections and crossings, transitions when moving from a bike highway to another facility, and amenities.

A full account of design considerations can be found in the [Design Considerations Memo](#) (Password: BKHghwD4)

Corridors Under Consideration

The project team provided an overview of the prioritization methodology. This included suitability and feasibility analyses, which took into account equity, potential demand, existing demand, geographic balancing, available space, and engineering considerations. Stakeholders asked about how “available space” (i.e., ROW) was defined), about the source of the data utilized and whether safety data was considered. Other questions requested information about what happens if there isn’t excess ROW on which to fit a bike highway, and how different land use contexts factored into considerations. The project team noted that potential corridors were determined using high-level data with the primary goal

of identifying corridors that could facilitate high-capacity long distance travel. Once corridors are selected, there will be an opportunity to consider additional data that should be factored into design and implementation of a bike highway.

The project team re-emphasized that the bike highway should be viewed as an overlay rather than a new bikeway classification. The final scoring and selection of a corridor will not reflect the highest priority for implementation. However, the final corridor selection will be used to develop templates for bike highway implementation that could be replicated throughout the Bay Area.

Breakout Groups

Following the project overview and updates on design guidance, attendees were separated into two virtual breakout rooms by geographic location to discuss parameters and considerations for concept corridor selection and how the concept development task facilitates regionwide implementation. A summary of discussion highlights from each group is provided below.

North Bay / East Bay Discussion Highlights

Considerations for Corridor Selection

SWG members in the North Bay and East Bay group wanted to know more about how collision and fatality data factored into corridor identification. Some felt that corridors that are high injury networks (such as Highway 12 in Santa Rosa) should be prioritized so that a safe option for bikes can be created in these places. Although different land uses and typologies are a factor in the design considerations, some members also expressed concerns about the different needs among the diverse areas within the Caltrans Bay Area region and how broad concepts might not be applicable to all. For example, the North Bay is more rural and less dense; some members felt that the needs of this community were not as highly prioritized in comparison to those of urban communities.

SWG members also wanted to know how a bike highway would work on rural highways and within existing freeway ROW and traffic, particularly as there are some very narrow stretches on existing roads. Although the project team is developing typologies for rural, urban and suburban locations, members noted that rural highway types are not one-size-fits-all, citing the differences between SR 29 and SR 128 in Napa County as an example. The project team noted that their goal is to develop treatments and attributes that should be a checklist for different typologies.

Other considerations discussed included engineering challenges in designing a bike highway that spans different land use types and waterways, conflicting ROW within different parts of the District, connections to regional parks, sound barriers, parallel facilities not in Caltrans ROW, how to retrofit and narrow freeways that were overbuilt to create safe, comfortable spaces, what type of user is prioritized (e.g. recreational vs. commuter), and environmental challenges for corridors that are adjacent to water, such as SR 37.

Region-Wide Implementation

To help facilitate region-wide implementation, SWG members discussed overcoming limitations posed by existing infrastructure, such as freeways, train lines, and sewer systems, and barriers like on-street parking. They also noted that there may be challenges in working with local municipalities to accomplish this, so high-level direction for implementation from Caltrans as a respected transportation organization could lead towards easier implementation. Some noted that as the different typologies proposed are site specific, making general suggestions about how to implement them could be challenging. They also

suggested providing solutions for what happens if a bike highway crosses multiple jurisdictions, guides for when there isn't extra ROW, and suggestions for what to do when compromises on constraints cannot be made. A vision for a type of facility that serves competing needs, such as those of recreational users vs. commuters, was also desired, and several members also expressed that navigating projects with Caltrans itself can be challenging. Streamlining this process could allow more projects to be implemented.

San Francisco / Peninsula Discussion Highlights

Considerations for Corridor Selection

The SWG members in the San Francisco and Peninsula had questions about different feasibility scores for tunnels and bridges, if the San Francisco – Oakland Bay Bridge was competing with other corridors and if other bridges were under consideration. They noted it would be helpful to have guidance on typologies for an access-controlled facility with a parallel local roadway, coastal areas, regional parks and natural settings, and arterial state highways. They also said guidance on how to build trails that don't affect water resources, speeds for new mobility/e-bikes, and how to avoid conflicts at grade separation would be helpful. Design concepts they felt would be helpful to illustrate included how a bike highway would interact with transit options, wayfinding from local to regional routes, what happens at rail crossings, concepts for underutilized space under freeways in urban areas, and showing what potential tradeoffs there might be to implement a bike highway, such as reducing parking or narrowing/removing lanes. It was noted in San Francisco, where parking is already limited, this may be a particularly important factor to consider.

Region-Wide Implementation

SWG members in this group discussed examining underutilized urban areas and studying how local and regional routes interface. Members in this group also noted it would be helpful if there was a document that could help local agencies work with Caltrans to get permits for implementation.

Next Steps

The Project Team thanked all members for attending and presented the next steps for the project:

- Selection of example corridors for typology development
- Public Outreach around Selected Corridors
- Concept Development