



11/12/2021

VIA EMAIL

Mikki McDaniel  
Senior Planner, Sacramento County Department of Transportation  
827 7th Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Sacramento County 2020-2021 Active Transportation Plan Update**

Dear Mikki McDaniel:

Sacramento County recently released the Draft Sacramento County 2020-2021 Active Transportation Plan Update for public review. Transportation projects that make it more convenient to walk, bike, and roll to get around improve community health due to increased physical activity, reduced vehicle emissions, and increased access to destinations for residents without access to a vehicle. The Active Transportation Plan is an important step in prioritizing projects that increase the prevalence of active transportation in lieu of driving.

WALKSacramento commends the County for undergoing a planning process with substantial opportunities for community feedback, and we are pleased to provide the following comments and suggestions on the Draft Plan.

**General Comments**

- As seen in Appendix B of the Draft Plan detailing the community engagement process, Equity consistently showed up as a high priority. The Draft Plan includes Equity as a goal and a project prioritization metric. We recommend making this commitment to equity more explicit by doing the following:
  - Apply an equity lens to each project prioritization category in Appendix D, in addition to the explicit “Equity” category (See below for detailed recommendations). Sacramento’s Environmental Justice (EJ) communities and vulnerable populations have been disproportionately impacted by low investment, poor air quality, and lack of access to services. It is imperative to integrate equity into every aspect of project analysis to begin to rectify historical disinvestment.
  - Prioritize transportation investments that improve access to critical services for vulnerable populations.
- We recognize that the Draft ATP is a high-level policy document that provides a framework for future investment and lays a solid foundation for the future of active transportation in Sacramento County. It is our hope that the County will work closely with partners, stakeholders, community-based organizations, and community members to further develop the strategies and implementation measures in the plan.

## **Chapter by Chapter Recommendations**

- **Executive Summary**

- On page 1 it states that the Active Transportation Plan will replace the Pedestrian Master Plan (2007) and the Bikeway Master Plan (2012) within the Sacramento County General Plan. The Pedestrian Master Plan and the Bikeway Master Plan contain important information about existing conditions, design guidelines and standards, and detailed maps that are not provided at the same level of detail in the Active Transportation Plan. We recommend referencing all three documents in the County General Plan and clarifying that the overall context and framework of the ATP should take precedence but that decisions relating to land use and transportation should also consider the detail provided in the Pedestrian Master Plan and the Bikeway Master Plan.

- **Chapter 1: Introduction, Vision, and Goals:**

- The seventh bulleted implementation measure for *Goal 1: Safety and Comfort* on page 8 proposes to increase the tree canopy coverage equitably across unincorporated communities. The tree canopy within all unincorporated communities is important, but it's especially important to shade pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the context of the Active Transportation Plan. The implementation measure should read "Increase tree canopy coverage (percent of land covered) over pedestrian and bicycle facilities equitably across unincorporated communities."

- **Chapter 4: Infrastructure Recommendations:**

The contents of this chapter, if implemented in its entirety would address comprehensive infrastructure improvements addressing needs for both pedestrians and bicyclists. Naturally, due to limited time and funding we understand that prioritization must be implemented and therefore we offer for your consideration the following comments which address the Plan's generality and themes:

- On pages 77 and 103 addressing the pedestrian and bicycle components, respectively, Step 2 states recommendations are to be based on, "...data-driven needs analysis..." and it is our hope that this needs analysis will not only incorporate the evaluation of locations with current bike usage, but include crash data where infrastructure is missing and congestion points where applied TDM and Complete Streets principles can elevate the use of walking or biking where demand is currently low.
- Figure 17 on page 79 indicates very few improvements in the South Sacramento community. This area, designated as an Environmental Justice community, is disproportionately burdened with higher rates of collisions involving both pedestrians and bicyclists. It is our hope to see more improvements utilizing the numerous infrastructure upgrades listed in Chapter 4, directed toward this community. Further, prioritization to implementing curb ramps should be offered to historic neighborhoods where modern ADA compliance was not implemented during development and therefore many intersections contain little to no sidewalk access for people utilizing mobility assistance devices such as wheelchairs, walkers, etc.

- Bulb Outs are described and illustrated on page 118 in the section containing recommendations for bicycle infrastructure. However, other than slowing traffic so pedestrians and bicyclists are safer, the primary benefits of bulb outs are the increased visibility and shorter crossing distances for pedestrians. The Bulb Out page should be moved to the *Pedestrian Recommendations* section and the text should be revised to reference benefits to bicyclists.
- The discussion of bicycle parking on page 125 states that new development must provide bicycle parking based on Zoning Code section 5.9.9. We recommend the next amendment to the Zoning Code clarify requirements for Multiple Family uses in Table 5.29, and expand the design standards given in 5.9.9.C., as proposed in the *Bike Rack Installation Programs* paragraph on page 150.
- The *Wayfinding* section on page 131 discusses types of wayfinding signs, limitations imposed by the CA MUTCD, and local implementations. Potential active transportation users are more likely to adopt walking and biking as a mode of travel if they know of convenient travel routes. Wayfinding signs are one way to educate the public on active transportation routes. We encourage the County to begin work on developing a wayfinding network and adopting standards for wayfinding signage that could be adopted soon after the approval of the 11<sup>th</sup> edition of the MUTCD and the subsequent update to the 2014 CA MUTCD.
- We would like to reinforce our support for the inclusion of expanding both the proximity and degree of speed reductions near school zones. As with all mentions of speed reductions pertaining to both the pedestrian and bicycle components including Bike Boulevards, it is critically important to utilize physical traffic calming measures in conjunction with signs and educational tools. It is widely documented that signs alone generate little to no enforcement of speed reductions.
- The bicycle component of the plan, like the pedestrian component, addresses the use of a desirable wide range of projects, however lacks specifics as to their implementation or timelines. It is our hope that bicycle improvements will prioritize community access to goods and services utilizing the [Mineta Transportation Institute's Low Stress Bike Network](#) methodology. This will ensure that both timeliness and safety are prioritized in the network implementation. Further emphasis for the bike network to be closely coordinated with county wide transit connections, furthering the accessibility afforded by bikes when utilized within multi-modal trips.
- Concerning the wayfinding signage, we fully support the inclusion of travel times for all active transportation signs. For those who do not travel by active modes, a disconnect can exist between distance to travel and real time it takes to travel by pedestrian and cycling means.
- In conclusion of our recommendations of Chapter 4, we are happy to see the types and breadth of infrastructure improvements being considered. It is our desire and strong hope that the individual infrastructure types and locations are closely coordinated to best serve their respective location and community. In addition, prioritization of facility upgrades should be given to communities whose residents make up high concentrations of our most vulnerable populations.

- **Chapter 6: Implementation and Funding**

- The *Bicycle Projects* section, starting on page 181, discusses and lists priority projects. Detection and signal activation can increase the number and improve the safety of bicyclists, and although the construction costs are not insignificant, there is no mention of bicycle detection and/or bicycle push buttons at intersections in Chapter 6 nor *Appendix C: Recommendation Details*. Please consider including bicycle detection and signal activation in the list of prioritized bicycle projects.
- Reconstruction or maintenance operations by the County are opportunities to implement the bicycle network by marking fresh pavement with bicycle facilities identified in the Active Transportation Plan and the Bicycle Master Plan. We recommend adding a maintenance policy (see page 203) to take advantage of such opportunities by including a policy similar to Bicycle Master Plan Policy 3-1, such as "Stripe bicycle facilities in accordance with the Bicycle Master Plan and the Active Transportation Plan when performing street resurfacing or reconstruction projects."

- **Appendix D: Prioritization Methodology:**

- On page 639 (Table D-1) "Equity" is bolded like a category but contains no subcategories. Is it missing subcategories? In Table D-2, "Equity" is included as a subcategory of "Connectivity and Access". This appears to be inconsistent with Figure 22 on page 155. It looks like "Equity" should be its own category.
- On page 640, it states "An appropriate weight for each prioritization category will be in consultation with the county and other relevant stakeholders". Flexibility to adapt to changing needs is important but should be accompanied by transparency. This section should provide detail on what kind of stakeholder feedback might result in revisions to the example criteria weighting shown in Table D-2, and describe what "consultation" means in the context of plan implementation.
- Integrate equity into all the prioritization categories (Table D-1) as follows:
  - In the "Safety and Comfort" category, the "Crash Frequency" subcategory should provide the highest number of points for projects that are "located on a High Injury Corridor, and located in an EJ community", followed by projects that are "located on a High Injury Corridor".
  - In the "Connectivity and Access" category, the "School and Transit (Bus or Rail Accessibility)" subcategory should award the highest number of points to "projects within a half-mile radius of a school in an EJ community and an existing or planned transit line", with the next highest points awarded to a "project within a half-mile radius of a school and an existing or planned transit line".
  - In the "Implementation" category, the highest points in the "Community Need" subcategory should be awarded to a "project that was identified during public engagement for the ATP as a problem area or desired improvement in an EJ community", with the next highest points awarded to a "project identified during public engagement for the ATP as a problem area or desired improvement".

- We recommend revising the example weighting of Prioritization categories (Table D-2) as follows:
  - The “Equity” category is weighted too low and should be revised to 20% weight from 10%.
  - The “Safety and Comfort” category should be revised to 30% (from 40%) of the total weight, with 20% and 10% weights for Crash Frequency and User Comfort, respectively.
  - The “Connectivity and Access” category should remain at 30% of the total weight.
  - The “Implementation” category should remain at 20% overall. Within the “Implementation” category, the Feasibility/Complexity and Community Need subcategories should be weighted equally at 10% to come to 20% of the total.

WALKSsacramento is working to support increased physical activity such as walking and bicycling in local neighborhoods as well as helping to create community environments that support walking and bicycling. The benefits include improved public health and physical fitness, better air quality, a stronger sense of cohesion and safety in neighborhoods, and more sustainable communities and local economies. WALKSsacramento again commends the County on the development of the Draft Active Transportation Plan. The goals and implementation measures laid out in this Plan will play an important role in improving access to destinations in Sacramento County, and in improving the quality of life and health of all its residents. WALKSsacramento looks forward to continued collaboration with the County on the implementation of the Active Transportation Plan.

Thank you for considering our comments. If you have any questions, please contact Kathryn Canepa at [kcanepa@walksacramento.org](mailto:kcanepa@walksacramento.org).

Sincerely,

Kathryn Canepa  
Project Manager