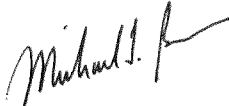



Date: _____ November 30, 2006
Committee Meeting Date: _____ December 13, 2006
Board Meeting Date: _____ N/A
ACTION _____ DISCUSSION X INFO _____

BOARD MEMORANDUM

TO: Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority
Board of Directors

THROUGH: Michael T. Burns 
General Manager

FROM: Carolyn M. Gonot 
Chief Development Officer

SUBJECT: Bicycle Plan Update - Capital Project Needs:
Safe Routes to Transit and Across Barrier Connections

BACKGROUND:

VTA staff is currently undertaking an update to the Countywide Bicycle Plan. An update to the 2000 Countywide Bicycle Plan will include administrative and technical changes resulting from the VTA Board actions, incorporate implemented projects, and reflect new needs and priorities of Member Agencies since many of them have prepared or updated their bicycle plans in the past five years. One area of update is the capital projects needs. The first component of the bikeway capital projects is the Cross County Bicycle Corridors (CCBC). At the November Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) meeting, the cross county bicycle corridors were presented for discussion and are scheduled to be acted on at the December BPAC meeting. The second part of the 2006/07 Countywide Bicycle Plan addresses specific capital projects. Two other categories of capital projects are Safe Routes to Transit (SR2T) and Across Barrier Connections (ABCs).

DISCUSSION:

The benefits of identifying specific capital projects within the Bicycle Plan include:

- Puts VTA and Member Agencies in a better position for future state or outside funding sources;
- Aids VTA in more accurately identifying the current funding shortfall for bicycle and pedestrian mobility projects;

- Aids Member Agencies in transportation and land use planning and in conditioning developers to provide pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

Safe Routes to Transit (SR2T)

Since the 2000 Countywide Bicycle Plan, there has been an emphasis on Safe Routes to Transit and Livable Communities in transportation funding priorities. Since VTA is the major transit operator, it makes good planning sense for VTA to help plan for safe and convenient routes to the major transit centers it operates. Potential projects are eligible for the Safe Routes to Transit grants managed by MTC on behalf of Regional Measure 2. A ready list of projects will put VTA and Member Agencies in a better position to apply during the next Call for Projects in early 2007. Member Agencies were asked to identify projects that improve bike access to transit centers; Caltrain, ACE or Amtrak stations; and/or light rail stations. The list of projects identified by Member Agencies for Caltrain, ACE and Amtrak stations is presented in Table 1.

Across Barrier Connections (ABCs).

One of the concepts of Livable Communities is to de-emphasize travel by auto in favor of quieter, less polluting modes such as walking and biking. By providing connections across the major barriers in the county, walking and biking distances can be reduced dramatically, thereby increasing their feasibility for more types of trips. Fully one-fourth of the bicycle-project-wish-list compiled by the Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition is comprised of overcrossings (bridges) or undercrossings (tunnels).

Figure 2-2 from the 2000 Bicycle Plan (see Attachment A), illustrates how freeways, rivers, creeks and railroad tracks crisscross the county creating impermeable barriers for pedestrians and bicyclists. Even when roadways cross these barriers, there may not be adequate accommodations for bicycles and/or pedestrians.

To assess the extent to which these barriers restrict nonmotorized mobility, VTA and Member Agencies conducted an inventory of every freeway, waterway and railroad crossing in the developed parts of the County i.e. all bridges, tunnels and at-grade rail crossings for both motor vehicles and for nonmotorized users. These are referred to collectively as Across Barrier Connections (ABCs). The locations of all the ABCs were plotted on a map. The presence or absence of bike lanes, shoulders and sidewalks on the arterial and collector roadways was noted. If an arterial or collector roadway has a bike lane or wide shoulder, it was considered to have adequate bicycle provisions. If it did not, it was rated as having inadequate bike provisions. All local roadways and all ped /bike-only bridge tunnels and ped /bike-only at-grade crossings were also considered adequate.

Each gap of a mile or more between crossings with adequate bicycle provisions was logged and mapped. Those segments that lack adjacent land uses and therefore have no existing demand for crossing were filtered out. The preliminary results of this inventory and analysis are listed in Table 2. Later steps in the bike plan update will further refine and prioritize this list.

Prepared by: Michelle DeRobertis, Senior Transportation Planner
Reviewed by: Chris Augenstein, Transportation Planning Manager

**Table 1
Safe Routes to Transit Potential Projects**

City	Bike Improvement*	Transit station
Gilroy	Bike lanes on Church Street Bike lanes on Chestnut Street Bike Lanes on Railroad Street and Egleberry Street	Gilroy Caltrain
Morgan Hill	Bike lanes on Main Avenue, between Butterfield Blvd. and HWY 101, and Bike Lanes on Diana Avenue, between Butterfield Blvd and HWY 101.	Morgan Hill Caltrain
San Jose	Safe crossing** of tracks to east side land uses at Caltrain station	Blossom Hill Caltrain & Capitol Caltrain
Santa Clara	Spot improvements to access Ace /Amtrak station along frontage to Lafayette Rd and from other directions Safe crossing** of tracks to east side land uses at Caltrain Station– e.g. extension of Planned Caltrain tunnel to east side of UPRR tracks	Great America Ace/Amtrak Santa Clara Caltrain
Sunnyvale	Safe crossing** of tracks to northside land uses at Caltrain station	
Countywide	Countywide signage program for consistency and uniformity to sign bike routes to all commuter rail stations in the county	16 Caltrain / ACE/Amtrak stations
*This table only includes cities that have a regional transit station that would be eligible to receive funds under Regional Measure 2 Safe Routes to Transit program.		
** “Safe Crossing” includes overcrossings, tunnels and signalized atgrade crossings.		

(Table will be provided at the BPAC Meeting)

Table 2

Locations Without Adequate Bike Access Across Regional Barrier

Barrier	Existing Inadequate Roadway ABC's	Existing Adequate Roadway ABC's	Ped/bike only ABC's (adequate)
I-280			
I-680			
I-880/SR 17			
SR 237			
SR 85			
SR 87			
US 101			
Caltrain tracks			
UP/ ACE tracks			
Coyote Creek			
Guadalupe River			
Saratoga Creek			
Los Gatos Creek			
San Tomas Aquino Creek			
<p>ABC = Across Barrier Connection – that portion of a roadway that crosses over or under (or at-grade if railroad) a freeway, railroad or waterway, i.e. the grade separated part of the roadway or an at-grade crossing of railroad tracks or a bike/ped only bridge, tunnel or at-grade crossing</p> <p>Inadequate Roadway ABC = a roadway is considered to provide inadequate bike access if it is a collector or arterial and does not have bike lane or wide shoulders.</p> <p>Adequate Roadway ABC = a roadway is considered to provide adequate bike access if it is a collector or arterial roadway and it has bike lanes or wide shoulders or it is a local road with traffic low volumes.</p>			