

Chapter 5

Bicycle Safety Education and Promotion

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a review of existing bicycle education and promotion programs used by member agencies in Santa Clara County as well as recommendations for other programs that have proved successful elsewhere. This chapter also includes enforcement efforts focusing on safe bicycle behavior under the category of bicycle safety programs.

For the purposes of this chapter we have categorized programs and strategies whose focus is on encouraging bicycling as a mode of transportation as bicycle promotion, and those programs and strategies whose primary goal is to foster and encourage correct cycling behavior as bicycle safety education. Education programs and strategies range from hands-on instruction to group presentations to disseminating print materials such as safety tips on brochures, videos, and other modes. Promotion programs can range from large and small events to brochures and maps to financial incentives for bicycle commuters.

Promotional and educational elements can be mixed and matched, for example, including safety tips and education information on bike maps. Many promotional events are also opportunities to distribute safety brochures, give presentations and/or show safety videos. Many cities provide safety demonstrations as part of Bike-to-Work Day events.

The 1994 *Santa Clara County Bicycle Plan* included “Elements of a Bicycle Education Program,” listed essential components for a community bicycle education program. These elements are indicated in Table 5-1.



Table 5-1: Elements of a Bicycle Education Program

A well developed bicycle education program to improve skills would include the following elements:

A. In-School Bicycle Safety Training for Students.

- * Many students rely on their bicycles to get them to and from school. Regular training in the classroom and on-the-road will be the best method for learning the skills they will need to travel safely on the road and reduce the number of conflicts.
- * Local governments can play a role by designing or recommending programs and by providing funding.

B. Comprehensive Bicycle Education for Adults

- * Using a Bicycle Education course with emphasis in traffic skills for employees, students, community adult and continuing education through a variety of agencies.

C. Helmet Promotion

- * A serious goal is to encourage bicyclists of all ages to wear helmets which will reduce the number of serious injuries.

D. Public Programs/Promotion

- * Through public information programs and events such as “health fairs” and “commute fairs,” governments and employers can make information about bicycling more available. This approach is straightforward and can be effective but does not take the place of on-the-road training.

E. Enforcement

- * Enforcement of the serious violations could greatly reduce the accident rate, however enforcement must be accompanied with education.

The most common bicyclist violations:

- o Bicyclist riding against the direction of the traffic.
- o Bicyclist ignoring stop signs and traffic signals.
- o Bicyclist riding without lights at night

The most common motorist violations:

- o Right-turning motorists failing to yield when approaching the curb and cutting off bicyclists.
- o Left-turning motorists failing to yield to oncoming bicyclists.

- * Traffic school for roadway violators is recommended. This not only educates violators but would divert people from the court system, similar to the Juvenile Traffic Diversion Program in the City of Sunnyvale.

Source: 1994 Santa Clara County Bicycle Plan

BICYCLE SAFETY PROGRAMS

Bicycle safety programs can take many forms and can be directed at many different audiences including: child bicyclists; adult bicyclists; motorists; the community at-large, and even law enforcement officials. Children are at the greatest risk for injury from bicycle-related collisions; therefore they tend to receive the most attention regarding bicycle education strategies. Until recently, adult cyclists, motorists and law enforcement officials have been almost ignored. This section first addresses motorist education and enforcement strategies, then bicyclist education and finally, bicycle enforcement strategies.

Motorists' Education and Enforcement

Motorists are probably the most difficult group to reach in bicycle education. Existing motorist-oriented programs typically reach their intended audience only under specific circumstances. Some bicycle education material is distributed during driver education courses, driver licensing exams and traffic schools for violators, but these events will only occur once every several years and are generally felt to be ineffective in changing driving behavior.

Public awareness campaigns are most useful for educating motorists on how to safely share the road with bicyclists, while at the same time reminding bicyclists of their rights and responsibilities. Media campaigns, community events, and family activities can be useful in raising awareness regarding bicycle/motorist safety. Parents who attend bicycle education events with their children may learn something themselves about bicycle/motorist safety that can help to reinforce the safe-cycling of their children.

Existing Programs in the County

San Jose Street Smarts: In 2002, the City of San Jose launched a new program called Street Smarts, a traffic safety education program. Partially funded from a \$10,000 donation from AAA of Northern California, it is a public education campaign aimed at raising awareness.

The Street Smarts public education campaign targets behaviors of drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists, and will use both advertising and a focused community relations effort to bring the messages about the need for behavior change to neighborhoods, schools and businesses. Specific behaviors that the campaign addresses are:

- Speeding
- Red light running
- Stop sign violations
- School zone compliance
- Crosswalk safety & compliance

To encourage greater regional participation in the Street Smarts program, the City of San José will be sharing creative materials developed for this campaign with any public agency at no cost, enabling other agencies to take advantage of the initial investment by San José to launch Street Smarts in their community. Currently, there are 180 school and 33 neighborhoods in San Jose participating in the program and 24 other communities in California have successfully adopted this program. This approach is expected to increase regional participation in the campaign to improve safety on Bay Area streets, and will better leverage public dollars. In addition, 16 Bay Area cities and public agencies are considering a regional partnership with San José.

Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition- We Share the Road: In June 2007, the Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition (SVBC), in partnership with sponsors Bikes Belong and the Stanford Trauma Center, launched a new campaign called “We Share the Road”. It is an outreach program designed to focus attention on increased safety for bicyclists and motorists who share the road. The program hopes that by promoting safety for all roadway users and generating goodwill among motorists and bicyclists, a peaceful coexistence can exist between the two.

The campaign kicked off with a “Share the Road Ride” in May 2007, in which SVBC with its collaborating partners embarked on a community ride to actively engage motorists in discussions on how to reverse the trend of increased cyclist collisions and improve safety for all roadway users. Cyclists also handed out free water bottles with safety discussion inserts at popular motorist stops such as gas stations and car washes to further spread awareness of the program. “We Share the Road” plans to create future events similar to this one in hopes of furthering its campaign on educating motorists and bicyclists to respect one another and to share to road.

Traffic Safe Communities Network (TSCN): Traffic Safe Communities Network is a collaborative program that emerged in Santa Clara County in 1998 from the need to address the rise in traffic-related fatalities and injuries in the county. Funded by a grant from Office of Traffic Safety (OTS), TSCN developed prevention and education projects such as the Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety pilot program which engaged middle school students in helmet and traffic safety education. The pilot program hopes that by targeting middle school students who use bicycles as a main source of transportation, they will become better educated in traffic safety by the time they graduate to automobiles.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety pilot program is also working on a Juvenile Traffic Diversion Program which offers youth and parents an opportunity to attend traffic safety classes together in lieu of paying citation fines for non-motor violations, such as failure to wear a helmet when riding a bicycle. These traffic safety classes are taught by local police officers and CHP, and funded by a grant from California Kids' Plate Program in cooperation with Stanford Hospital and Trauma Service Clinics.

Recommended Programs for the County

Traffic School for motorists with bicycle related infractions: Motorists who cause a bicycle-related accident or who commit a bicycle-related CVC violation would be sent to a “bicycle-themed” traffic school. The course content would focus on the California Vehicle Code with respect to bicycling and how to safely share the road under a variety of conditions. (Such programs are often called diversion programs, since violators are diverted from the court system and the violation is removed from the driver’s record.)

Bicyclists Safety Education

Bicyclists fall into several categories, young children, older children and adults. Different methods and programs of bicycle safety education are appropriate for the particular audience. Bicycle safety education is provided by various entities: schools, police departments, transportation /public works departments and bicycle advocacy organizations.

This section will first discuss bicycle safety education programs provided by cities, then by the Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition, and finally programs by VTA.

Cities and School Districts Education Programs

Table 5-2 shows a list of the cities in Santa Clara County and the types of bicycle education programs they have. As shown, not all cities provide bicycle education. The most common type of bicycle education is school-based. Many local school districts contract with bicycle education organizations such as Safe Moves for education in their elementary schools.



Table 5-2: Type of Bicycle Safety Education Program by Member Agency

| City/Agency | School Districts /1/ | Public Safety /2/ | City Planning/Public Works /3/ |
|--|---|---|--|
| Mountain View | Walk to School Day, bike safety presentations/rodeos for all elementary and middle schools (in conj. with the City) | Bike Rodeos and bike safety presentations | Public Works: Bike maps, low cost bike education classes, bicycling web page and bike safety presentations/rodeos for all elementary and middle schools |
| San José (John Brazil and the Draft Bicycle Plan) | Bike Rodeos, Walk to School Days | Operation Safe Passage, Police Bicycle Patrol | DOT: City Bike Map; Free Bicycling Skills classes; School Safety Program; StreetSmarts program; BTWD Energizer Stations & Mayor’s Ride; etc. |
| Sunnyvale (2006 Bicycle Plan) | ES- Annual Assembly MS- “Drive your bike” 3 session, (pilot project) | Youth diversion classes (<18); Field Education of young cyclists as needed Police Bicycle Patrol | City bike map; City bicycling web page; Annual Bicycle Safety Rodeo |
| Saratoga (2006 Comprehensive Bicycle Plan) | | | Safe Routes to School Program |
| Palo Alto | Walk to School Day, K-2 pedestrian education program in all elementary schools. 3-part education/rodeo for 3 rd graders, assemblies for 5 th /6 th graders | Police and firefighter participation in 3 rd grade rodeos | City Staff: School programs; prints and distributes bike maps; Adult School offers LAB classes for adults; Recreation Department offers LAB classes for middle school students |
| Los Gatos (Milly Sperath) | | | Newly started Bicycle Advisory Committee |

/1/School districts: format e.g. health or PE class, school day- assembly, an after school program.
 2/ Public safety/Police department: e.g. Positive Enforcement programs used (traffic school; diversion classes, warning tickets or good behavior “tickets”); Bike rodeos,
 3/ City planning or public works: e.g. bike to work day, city bicycle maps; special programs.

ES- elementary school, MS- middle school, HS –high school
 DOT- Dept of Transportation
 DPW- Dept. of Public Works
 PD- Planning Dept.
 BTWD- bike to work day

Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition

In 2004, the Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition (SVBC) began offering classes for adults and soon expanded to provide bicycle classes for children.

Adult Education: SVBC's classes are offered through various cities' adult education programs and they are available directly to businesses for the benefit of their employees. Classes can be taught as a series of lunchtime classes to fit conveniently into the workday.

Utilizing the cyclist education program of the League of American Bicyclists, taught by League Certified Instructors (LCIs), these class are divided into four topics:

1. *Street Skills* - total 4 hours in a classroom curriculum; learn how to safely and confidently use your bike for transportation.
2. *Road 1* - total 10 hours. This Course includes the entire *Street Skills* described above, plus a comprehensive 6-hour on-bike session where the theory learned in Street Skills is applied.
3. *Bike Maintenance & Commuter Classes* - Classes can be tailored to teach bike maintenance and/or specific techniques for commuting.
4. *LCI Seminars*-new LCI's are trained and certified.

Middle School Education: SVBC presented an interactive, age-appropriate course to over 8,000 middle school students across Santa Clara County in 2005-2006 and they will be teaching this curriculum to an additional 7,000 students for the 2007-2008 school year. The SVBC curriculum covers:

- the basics of traffic law
- basic bike and helmet fitting
- the most common types of bike crashes and how to avoid them
- how to position yourself properly on the road
- how to let drivers know your intentions
- how to deal with left turns and 4-way stops

Three key components of the middle school program are:

1. **Drive That Bike** game show presentation. Teams of students compete against each other to answer questions about bicycle and pedestrian safety. After each question the instructor explains which answer is correct using diagrams, photos and videos. This dynamic format engages the students by challenging them to think before the correct answer is revealed.

2. **On Bike Challenge.** An after-school event where students test their skills at various stations including an emergency stop, a snail race, and a shoulder check. A mechanic is usually available for minor adjustments. Prizes donated by Sports Basement are raffled off to kids completing various skill stations. Funding: SVBC Middle School Bicycle Education program was made possible by a grant from Kids' Plate.
3. **Helmet distribution.** Funded by the Almaden Cycling Touring Club (ACTC), SVBC is able to distribute helmets to participating middle school children that lack one. The distribution includes proper fitting instructions and demonstrations by volunteers.

VTA Bicycle Safety Education Programs

Currently VTA provides the bicycle safety information in the following ways:

- Safety tips- on the back of the Bikeways Map and on the VTA website
- Translation of materials into Spanish and other languages
- Sponsored several on bike -training classes conducted by the SVBC during Bike to Work Month
- VTA intends to partner with SVBC to deliver more bicycle safety education classes

Almaden Cycle Touring Club

Almaden Cycle Touring Club (ACTC) is a membership club of bicycle enthusiasts in the South San Francisco Area. ACTC offers a variety of bike-related events including club rides and instruction classes. Road bike riding instruction courses are offered through its Academy to teach proper riding techniques, safety, and fitness and health. Classes are given in three four-week sessions for a total of 12 weeks of cycling instruction taught in combination of lectures, demonstrations, practice, and supervised rides. Enrollment is open to everyone but students are required to become club members.

Bay Area Model for Bicycle Education Program

Cycles of Change: Cycles of Change is a year-round bicycle education program founded in 1998 as part of a community-based outreach program in East Oakland's San Antonio District. It strives not to only promote cycling as the most accessible, healthy, safe, and inexpensive means to travel, but also to provide youth a more positive alternative to violence. The success of the program is attributed to its distinct dual-component program of bicycle mechanics and adventure rides. Local youth can participate in both bicycle restoration workshops and also enjoy advanced bicycle adventures. Other services such as community repair shops, programs to earn bikes, and job/internship programs are made possible by the community's generous donation of bikes, helmets, and equipment and enabled thousands of students to participate in over 1200 bicycle field trips.

With its growing success, Cycles of Change is working towards expanding its mission of developing a bicycle education program in the county. In 2003, a two-year partnership with Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority (ACTIA) has provided Measure B funds to help further awareness of the program to other cities. In collaboration with schools and local-based bicycle organizations, Cycles of Change has provided the framework to help cities like Berkeley and Union City create after-school bicycle programs and helped integrate cycling into P.E. and science programs in Oakland schools.

Bicyclist Enforcement Programs

Bicycle enforcement is closely tied to law enforcement officer education and training; in order to increase the effectiveness of bicycle traffic enforcement in reducing crashes and improving safety, police officers need guidance on how best to approach offenders of different ages and abilities and also which violations should be earmarked for enforcement. If an agency chooses to have stepped-up bicycle traffic enforcement program, it should be accompanied by:

- a) a media campaign to inform residents that bicycling offenders will be cited, and
- b) a reduced fine schedule for bicyclists.

Positive enforcement techniques are recommended in lieu of traditional tickets. These include opportunities to link enforcement with education such as bicycle traffic schools, run in a manner similar to auto traffic schools, and which educate bicyclists on the safe and legal riding techniques. There is also the “warning stop” and a “good behavior reward” stop. These and others are described below.

Positive Enforcement Strategies

Bicycle Traffic Schools/ Diversion Programs: Traffic school for bicyclists who have received a citation for violating the rules of the road. It focuses on bicycling behavior, safe riding techniques and common collision causes.

Youth “Diversion” Programs: City police departments offer classes for youths stopped for bicycling violations (typically wrong-way or stop sign/signal violations). Parents are required to attend the safety class with their child, thereby providing the opportunity to educate both children and adults. Police personnel often teach these on a Saturday, sometimes by a bicycle-mounted patrol officer.

TSCN offers the Juvenile Traffic Diversion program in every city in the county except San Jose and Morgan Hill. TSCN is refining and improving the program by offering classes on a more regular basis and in multiple geographic areas so classes are more convenient. Classes to date have been full. OTS funding supports a part-time position to assist with administrative oversight. There is a \$10 charge for class participants and the fee pays for the speaker (an individual with a head injury) and helmets. The long-term goal is to have the court divert the tickets rather than TSCN oversee the administrative details.

Warning Stops: Police officers may stop cyclists who are behaving improperly or whose bicycle lacks required equipment such as lights at night. If an officer is properly prepared, these stops are opportunities for behavior-targeted education. Violation-specific handouts, ideally available in each language spoken in a jurisdiction, can help to reinforce each message. Bike shops sometimes work with law enforcement to add coupons to these handouts, good for discounts on helmets, lights, locks, and accessories.

“Good Driving” Stops and Rewards: Some police departments make “good bicycle driving” stops of youths, rewarding proper bicycle driver behavior with coupons for attractions and restaurants. Such programs are usually announced in advance to the community and coupled with other educational outreach and promotions.

Reduced Bail for Bicycle Citations: In 1994, California law was changed to enable local authorities to reduce fines for bicycle offenses. Previously, bicyclists were (and in most cases still are) fined at the same rates as motor vehicle offenders. For example, a bicyclist who did not come to a complete stop at a stop sign is subject to a ticket for the same fine amount as a motorist. These fines are up to and exceed \$200, depending on the infraction. The legislature considered this to be draconian and unfair. Since points are not applied to the bicyclist’s driving record, the legislature decided it would be consistent to also not fine them at the same rates as if they were drivers of a motor vehicle. The decision whether to opt in and to determine the actual fine structures was delegated to local authorities.

To date in Santa Clara County, three cities, Morgan Hill, Cupertino, and Palo Alto have taken advantage of this bill and have reduced the bicycle infraction fines accordingly as shown in Appendix E1. A consistent policy across the county and a consistent bail schedule would be appropriate and fair.

BICYCLE PROMOTION PROGRAMS

Bicycle promotion programs aim to assist with, and generate enthusiasm for bicycling as transportation. Marketing bicycling as a viable transportation option is a key component of encouraging the use of bicycles as a means of transportation.

Promoting the bicycle program by local agencies takes different forms than private employers. Cities can pass policies and ordinances, as well as provide infrastructure, whereas employers focus on encouraging their employees to bicycle to work. These programs range from simply providing showers and bicycle racks or basic information on bicycling to hosting major Bike-to-Work events, providing financial incentives for bicyclists, or providing bicycle mentors and in-house classes on bicycling. The strategies used by cities, VTA, and employers are described below.

Many local bicycle advocacy clubs also organize activities to promote bicycling, often in conjunction with local agencies.

City Bicycle Promotion Programs

Cities can promote the usage of bicycles for local transportation in various ways, for example for the general public via public events, as an employer via incentives and through city policies. This section describes various options available to Member Agencies.

Events and Bike to Work Day

Most cities sponsor or cosponsor an energizer station on Bike to Work Day in May. Public health fairs also present an opportunity to provide helmet fittings, bike safety checks and other aids for safe biking.

City Lunch Campaign

Cities can also work with businesses and organizations to find interesting and fun ways to promote a bike/walk program. The City of Palo Alto has a year-long campaign called “Palo Alto Walks and Rolls” which provides the city many events throughout the year to encourage walking and biking as a means for local transportation. One of the week long events which coincide with the same week as Walk to School Day and bike parade from City Hall is the lunch campaign. Sixteen restaurants offer raffle entries for a week to anyone who arrived to lunch on foot, bike, or public transportation. It provides a great incentive to those who participate and also presents another opportunity for city-wide promotion of the campaign.

City Policies

Ordinances for developer provision of Bike Parking, Showers and Lockers are essential to ensure that all new developments are designed with appropriate bike commuting infrastructure. More detail on Member Agencies’ policies for parking and showers is presented in Chapter 6.

Employee Incentives

This is presented under “Employer Promotion Programs” on page 5-14.

Bicycle-Friendly Community Awards Program

Cities who actively promote bicycling as a safe and viable transportation mode can apply to for the League of American Bicyclists’ awards program. Cities who apply to be recognized as a “bicycle-friendly community” can demonstrate all the ways they support and accommodate bicyclists in their town, even allowing for a chance to show-off their level of recognition with either a bronze, silver, gold, or platinum plaque. The level of designation is based on how well cities meet the five categories used for judging: Engineering, Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, and Evaluation & Planning. Each city must demonstrate significant achievements in these categories; those with more significant achievements in more categories receive higher levels of award designation. Currently, there are four cities and one university in Santa Clara County recognized as bicycle-friendly communities. Table 5-3 presents which cities and communities in Santa Clara County (and the Bay Area) were recognized for this award and how many categories each city excelled in to receive their level of designation:

Table 5-3: Bicycle-Friendly Communities in the Bay Area

| Cities | Award | Engineering | Education | Encouragement | Enforcement | Evaluation |
|---------------------------|--------|-------------|-----------|---------------|-------------|------------|
| Palo Alto | Gold | ★ | ★ | ★ | | |
| Mountain View | Bronze | ★ | | | | |
| San Jose | Bronze | ★ | | | | |
| Sunnyvale | Bronze | ★ | | ★ | | |
| Stanford University | Gold | ★ | ★ | | ★ | ★ |
| Presidio of San Francisco | Silver | ★ | | ★ | | ★ |
| San Francisco | Gold | ★ | | ★ | ★ | ★ |

Source: <http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/communities/>, 2008

Signing and mapping

Signs: Often a city may have short bike paths or pedestrian short cuts, for example to schools and shopping centers and even major bridges over creeks and freeways. However, there is no signage or guidance telling bicyclists how to access them. Another common example is a trailhead that may be difficult to identify as such. Way-finding signs directing bicyclists and pedestrians to these connections are cost-effective ways to increase biking and walking to shops, schools and other sites. At trail heads, a schematic diagram of the trail is invaluable for the new user who is unfamiliar with the trail system.

Bike Maps: A bicycle route map is one of the items most frequently requested by both commuter and recreational cyclists. The purpose of a bike map is to show cyclists routes they would otherwise have to discover by trial and error, or by driving. Maps provide information on facility types (e.g. bicycle lane, route, or path) and often motor traffic levels. Many route maps include detailed bicycle-as-driver safety tips, typically on the back.

Several Santa Clara County cities including Sunnyvale, Santa Clara and Mountain View and San Jose publish bike route maps of their cities. Table 5-4 indicates these and other maps that cover a portion or all of Santa Clara County. Unless otherwise indicated, the maps are free.

Cities such as Cupertino and Saratoga have defrayed production costs of their bike maps by having them published by their Chamber of Commerce, which incorporates advertising for local businesses. Some cities have gone beyond the traditional folding paper map. San Francisco and San Jose have both published their maps in the Pacific Bell yellow pages telephone book. Stanford University publishes a fold-out mid-Peninsula bike route map in its internal directory/phone book.

Table 5-4: Bicycle Maps in Santa Clara County

| <i>Regional Maps</i> |
|--|
| San Francisco Bay Trail, 9 county maps, 2003. \$3.50 each/\$15.00 set. http://store.abag.ca.gov/maps.asp |
| Santa Clara County Bikeways, 2008. http://www.vta.org/schedules/gmaps/index.html |
| <i>City Maps</i> |
| Campbell http://www.ci.campbell.ca.us/PublicWorks/Resources/Bike%20Facilities%20Map.pdf |
| Cupertino, Cupertino Chamber of Commerce; Phone: 408-252-7054 http://www.cupertino.org/downloads/index.asp?Type=Pdf&Name=Cupertino%20Bikeways%20Map&Location=cupertino_bikeways_map.pdf |
| Milpitas, under development; Phone: 408-586-3335 |
| Mountain View, 2006; Phone: 650-903-6311 http://www.mountainview.gov/civica/filebank/blobdload.asp?BlobID=2944 |
| Morgan Hill, 2003; Phone: 408-729-7247 http://ca-morganhill.civicplus.com/admin/DocumentView.asp?DID=1485 |
| Palo Alto, Phone: 650-329-2520 http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civica/filebank/blobdload.asp?BlobID=7292 |
| San Jose, 2006; Phone: 408-535-3500 http://www.sanjoseca.gov/transportation/supportFiles/bikeped/SJ_Bike_MAP.pdf |
| Santa Clara, Phone: 408-615-3000 http://santaclaraca.gov/pdf/collateral/3032-SantaClaraBikeMap.pdf |

Saratoga, Phone: 408-868-1200

<http://www.saratoga.ca.us/boards-commissions/pdf/bike%20map.pdf>

Sunnyvale, Phone: 408-730-7415

<http://sunnyvale.ca.gov/NR/rdonlyres/6910B78E-9483-48F8-AB54-8689A46A1120/0/SunnyvaleBikeMapFinalmapside.pdf>

VTA Bicycle Promotion Strategies

Countywide Maps

VTA publishes a countywide Bikeways Map which illustrates all existing bikeways in the county and rates all arterials that don't have bike lanes as to their difficulty. In addition, VTA shares its base map with Member Agencies for a modest fee. Also, Member Agencies may use the bicycle safety tip icons on their local maps for a modest fee.

The map is distributed free to the public. It is also available on the VTA Website. In addition, VTA has produced an interactive bikeways map on its website which includes information about trails heads and light rail stations with links to the VTA light rail schedule.

Bikes Onboard VTA Transit Vehicles

VTA permits bicycles on its buses and light rail vehicles. A description of VTA's program is presented on page 6-7.

Promotion Activities and Campaigns

VTA also promotes bicycling in the following ways:

- Bike to Work Week
- Take One newsletters
- Use of media regarding projects with bicycle components
- Focused targeted marketing

Employer Bicycle Promotion Programs

Facilities

The most common type of bicycle program provided by employers is support facilities including secure bicycle parking and showers. With these facilities, more people are likely to bicycle and the public's awareness of bicycling for transportation is increased. In most cases, the presence of secure parking, in particular, can determine whether a person will bicycle to work at all. Bicycle parking and support facilities in Santa Clara County are described in detail in Chapter 6.

General Support

In addition to necessary facilities, many Santa Clara County employers also provide general information on bicycling to work. This information often includes bike maps, referrals to local bicycle advocacy groups, information on company bicycle policies, and networking with the company's other bicycle commuters.

Incentives

Several Santa Clara County employers offer incentives for commuters who bicycle to work. These incentives offer either cash or convenience.

Cash Incentives: There are many types of cash incentives that can be used to encourage bike commuting. Soliciting sponsorships from stores, restaurants and other retailers can mitigate the cost of these programs. However, cash incentives are taxable for companies (and putting them through payroll can be a hassle), so prizes are more popular rewards. These incentives include:

- Cash dividends for each day of bicycling, similar to a transit subsidy
- Monthly drawings for prizes
- Mileage reimbursement for business travel by bike
- Gift certificates or discount coupons at bicycle stores, restaurants or other retail businesses
- Bike purchase financing
- Parking cash-out program

Convenience Incentives: One of the major obstacles to bicycle commuting is the perceived inconvenience factor. The following list of programs addresses these concerns.

- “Guaranteed ride home” provides a ride to employees who use an alternative mode for commute and need a ride due to an emergency
- Fleet bicycles for business or errands
- Trial or loaner commute bikes
- On-site bicycle repair kits
- On-call bicycle repair services
- Flexible hours
- Showers and locker rooms (or gym membership)
- Relaxed dress codes.

Bike Mentors

A number of employers will refer employees who are interested in starting to bicycle to work to bicycling enthusiasts at their site. Experienced cyclists share their knowledge about bicycle commuting and provide the new cyclist with advice on good routes to use, how to ride safely in traffic, bicycle gear needed for commuting, how to lock and/or secure parking for their bicycle, and how to pump a tire or perform minor repairs. Often times, the experienced cyclist will ride with the new cyclist to work once or twice. Bay Area Bicycle Coalition has a Bike Buddy program that matches experienced cyclists with new cyclists in their area to help them adapt to commuting by bicycle.

Employer-Based Bicycle Clubs (also known as Bicycle User Groups (BUGS))

Many employers have found that organizing bicycle clubs and sponsoring quarterly meetings is a good way to introduce cyclists to each other and give potential commuters a forum for learning about bicycle commuting. Potential meeting topics can range from "How to Fix a Flat in 10 Minutes" to "Bike Commuter Fashion Tips." However, the main reason to bring bicyclists together is to give them a chance to share information and find potential riding partners, especially for those who are just beginning or contemplating a bike commute.

Appendix E2 presents a list of Santa Clara County employers with extensive bicycle-promotion programs. All of these companies provide general information on biking and facilities including showers, lockers and/or indoor parking, and bike racks.

Summary of Recommended Bicycle Safety & Education and Promotion Programs for VTA

VTA would like to expand its bicycle program activities. Future activities could include:

- Apply for Bicycle Friendly Community status;
- Work with TSCN and others to expand "Juvenile Diversion" traffic safety classes for youths stopped for bicycling violations;
- Assist as appropriate in developing a Traffic School for motorists with bicycle related infractions;
- Countywide Route Signing of the Cross County Bicycle Corridors ;
- Sponsor Bike tours of VTA projects;
- VTA intends to partner with SVBC to deliver more bicycle safety education classes;
- Coordinate with member agencies on a consistent policy across the county regarding a reasonable and fair bail schedule for bike-related infractions consistent with California law.