



Caltrans photo by Sergio Ruiz

*A greater percentage of people commute by bicycle in San Francisco and the Bay Area than California as a whole, and a new plan from Caltrans lays out and ranks proposed projects that could boost those numbers. Caltrans seeks to triple bicycling rates in the state by 2020 from 2010 levels.*

## Plan Lays Paths for Bay Area Bicycling Growth

### Caltrans District Considers Challenges, Priorities for its Already-Popular Network

Caltrans has identified dozens of potential projects in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area to encourage bicycling and meet state ridership goals. A plan prepared by Caltrans region District 4 builds on the [“Toward an Active California”](#) statewide report released last year, a blueprint to triple the amount of bicycling and double rates of walking and transit use in California by 2020 from 2010 levels.

Caltrans staff and consultants identified existing bicycle networks in the Bay Area, and then worked to prioritize specific projects that could be undertaken in-house or in collaboration with other public agencies in District 4. With nearly 1,400 miles of state highways in the Bay Area, Caltrans plays an important role in connecting and expanding the regional transit network.

The proposed improvements range from simple striping or signage on existing facilities to more extensive enhancements, such as new trails, bike lanes or highway crossings. Priorities were arranged according to demand, cost, amount of local support, whether a community

considered disadvantaged was involved, and quality of existing services.

The report lists projects ranked in the top tier of importance in each of the nine counties, each with an estimated cost of at least \$250,000 and reaching over \$7 million in some cases. They include:

- The Napa Valley Vine Trail, a planned 47-mile walking and biking network from the Vallejo Ferry Terminal to Calistoga along State Route 29.
- The Lincoln Hill Pathway, part of Marin County’s planned North-South Greenway, a 25-mile bicycle and pedestrian corridor that parallels US 101 from the Golden Gate Bridge to Novato.
- A bicycle path along the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge West Span between Yerba Buena Island and downtown San Francisco.
- Currently under construction, the US 101 bicycle and pedestrian overcrossing in East Palo Alto will connect communities on each side of the busy freeway.

In District 4, the percentage of commuters using bicycles is about 1.8 percent, slightly more than the 1.5

percent for California as a whole, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey. In some sections of the Bay Area, such as San Francisco, the percentage of bicycle commuters is 2 percent or more, according to the District 4 report.

This snapshot of bicycling usage aligns with provisions in [Caltrans' 2015-2020 Strategic Management Plan](#) that champion more biking and walking as ways to preserve the environment, improve public health and promote a healthy lifestyle, increase transportation opportunities, and support efficient land use.

The report estimates that it would take several billion dollars to fully upgrade bicycle infrastructure in the Bay Area. Existing funding sources such as the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP), the Active Transportation Program that encourages sustainable ways of travel, and the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) are available for projects, the report said. Money may also come from the Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017 (Senate Bill 1).

Caltrans conducted extensive outreach in preparing the District 4 plan. A technical advisory committee of representatives from agencies, cities and advocacy groups from all nine Bay Area counties provided guidance.

In addition, input was received from almost 3,500 people who responded to an online survey, six focus groups were convened across the Bay Area, and a webinar

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was held as part of the outreach.

Going forward, the plan will help guide investments by Caltrans and other jurisdictions. Officials in District 4 will, among other steps:

- Continue to track bicycle-related investments in the Bay Area;
- Advise local agency partners on improvement projects;
- Explore opportunities to partner with local agencies on pilot projects and events promoting bicycling;
- Strengthen engagement with low-income, minority, rural and tribal communities during planning and project development to ensure their mobility needs are met.
- Work with local agency partners and stakeholders to make a transportation network that prioritizes safety. **MM**

Source: Caltrans District 4 Bike Plan



Caltrans conducted extensive outreach as it prepared a new bike plan for the nine-county Bay Area. Officials conducted a survey, created a technical advisory committee and met with representatives of community and advocacy groups. This tour showed off separated bikeways in San Francisco.