SUMMARY REPORT

Caltrans

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN 2021

DISTRICT 9

CONTENTS

WHAT'S INSIDE THE SUMMARY REPORT?

This Summary Report of the District 9 Active Transportation Plan identifies and prioritizes needs for people walking and bicycling on and across the State Highway System (SHS) to inform future investments. The Plan's main output is a prioritized list and interactive map of location-based needs.

The following sections present key information about the planning process and identify next steps to support implementation:

STATEWIDE CONTEXT
This section describes how the goals of the statewide active transportation plan, ***Toward an Active California***, guided the development of this plan, and how this plan fulfills the next step in the process of addressing active transportation needs along the SHS.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT
This section details stakeholder and public engagement efforts to learn directly from people who use the District 9 SHS.

WALKING AND BICYCLING ON THE STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM
Maps, text, and charts in this section help to describe what it is like to walk or bicycle along state highways in District 9 today and where there are opportunities to replace driving with walking or bicycling trips.

NEEDS FOR PEOPLE WALKING AND BICYCLING ON THE STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM
The process for identifying and prioritizing location-based needs to address barriers and gaps for pedestrians and bicyclists on the District 9 SHS is described here.

NEXT STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION
The final section describes coordination, facilitation, and project development steps for Caltrans, local partners, and the public to implement the Plan's recommendations.

Cover photo: 2018 Bishop Director Ride

Ryan Dermody, District 9 Director

MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

I am pleased to present the Caltrans District 9 Active Transportation Plan (Plan) for Inyo, Mono, and eastern Kern counties. This Plan implements the State Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, ***Toward an Active California*** (2017), which established statewide policies, strategies, and actions to expand walking, biking, and transit use in the State of California.

The District 9 Active Transportation Plan guides our Caltrans project teams to create a network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities with connections to transit and other multi-modal facilities. Caltrans collaborated with our local and regional agencies and members of the public to develop this plan, and we will continue to work together on its implementation.

This data-driven plan began with an extensive inventory of our existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities. A comprehensive gaps and barriers analysis identified needs on and across the State Highway System. Data was also incorporated from local and regional plans. Throughout the process, engagement activities with partner agencies and the public informed the Plan.

The Caltrans District 9 team is already working to incorporate bicycle, pedestrian, and transit elements into our projects, embracing a Complete Streets approach from the planning stage through design and construction. This Plan provides valuable guidance by identifying and prioritizing needs based on the goals developed in coordination with our stakeholder groups and extensive input from the general public.

Ryan Dermody, *District 9 Director*

2018 Bishop Director Ride

KEY TERMS

The list below defines key terms as they are used throughout the District 9 Active Transportation Plan. Other jurisdictions and government agencies may interpret or use these terms differently.

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

State Highway System (SHS): Legislatively designated highway network that supports the movement of people and goods across California. The California SHS includes a variety of highway infrastructure assets, including but not limited to pavement lane miles, bridges, tunnels, and culverts. This document uses the terms highways, state highways, and Caltrans highways interchangeably to refer to the SHS.

Highway: State-owned roads, streets, parkways, and connected infrastructure elements such as on- and off-ramps, bridges, and tunnels.

Freeway: A divided highway with full control of access and two or more lanes for the exclusive use of motor vehicle traffic in each direction.[1] Highways that are not freeways are conventional highways.

Expressway: A high-speed divided highway with access partially or fully controlled.

Main Street: A street on the State Highway System that typically has a posted speed limit lower than 40 mph and serves pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and drivers within a community.[2]

Intercommunity Rural Connector: State highways that are the most viable walking and biking connection between small and rural communities or from those places to larger or more urban places.

Complete Street: A roadway that is planned, designed, operated, and maintained to provide safe mobility for all users, including bicyclists, pedestrians, transit vehicles, truckers, and motorists, appropriate to the function and context of the roadway. Every Complete Street looks different based on its context, community preferences, the types of road users, and their needs.[3]

Pedestrian: In this document, the terms pedestrian and walk are applied broadly to travel by all users of sidewalks, including people walking or rolling using a mobility assistance device such as a walker, stroller, or wheelchair.

Bicyclist: This document uses the term bicyclist broadly to include users of traditional bicycles and a wide variety of other human-powered devices that use typical bicycle facilities. This includes electric-assisted bicycles, recumbent bicycles, bicycles or tricycles adapted for use by those with disabilities, and many others.

ANALYSIS

Gap: Specific locations where pedestrian facilities (like sidewalks and crossing treatments) or bicycle facilities (like bike lanes) are missing or incomplete.

Barrier: A physical element that restricts the movements of pedestrians between elements of the pedestrian or bicycle network. Examples include an uncontrolled highway on- or off-ramp crossing or poor crosswalk visibility.

Location-based need: A specific location on the State Highway System where infrastructure changes would most benefit people walking or biking and best achieve the State's active transportation goals from ***Toward an Active California***. Examples include needs for people walking or biking across or along the highway.

Disadvantaged communities: The Plan defines these as Census Designated Places with a median household income less than 80% of the state's median household income.

1 Federal Highway Administration, "Freeway Management and Operations Handbook." https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/freewaymgmt/publications/frwy_mgmt_handbook/chapter1_02.htm

2 California Department of Transportation, Main Street, California." https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/design/documents/main-street-3rd-edition-a11y.pdf

3 Caltrans Office of Smart Mobility and Climate Change, "Complete Streets Program." https://dot.ca.gov/programs/transportation-planning/office-of-smart-mobility-climate-change/smart-mobility-active-transportation/complete-streets.

PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW OF THE PLAN

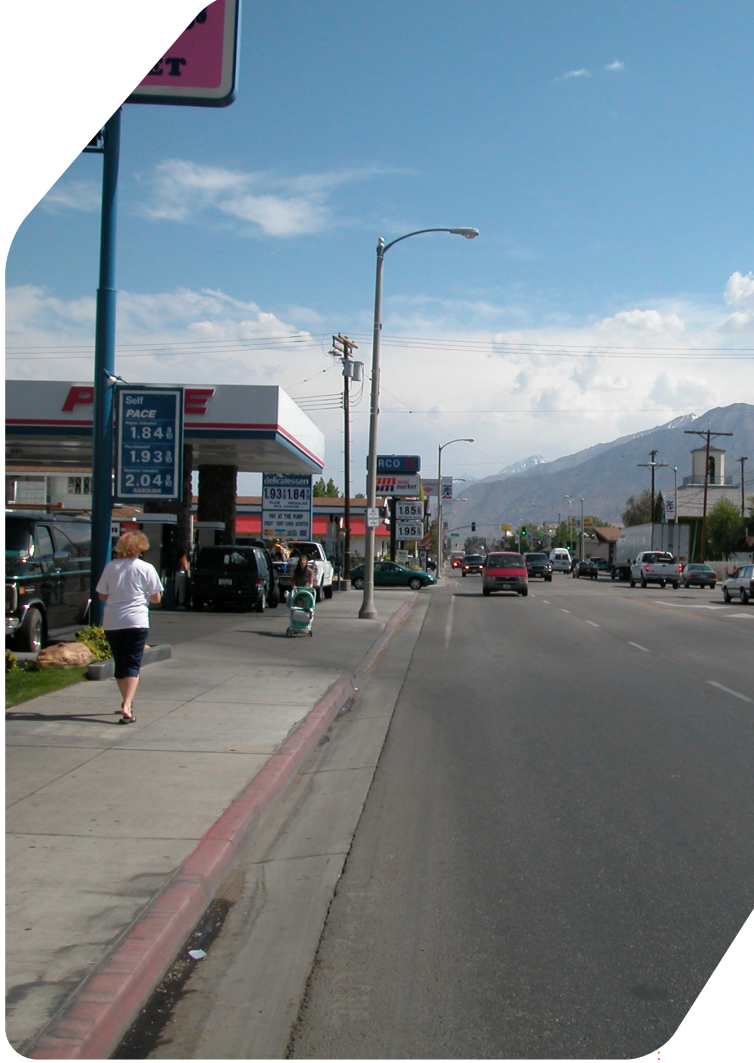
The District 9 Active Transportation Plan (Plan) advances the Vision Statement and Goals in ***Toward an Active California***, the statewide bicycle and pedestrian plan, and is part of a comprehensive planning process to identify locations with walking and bicycling needs in each Caltrans district across California. Caltrans staff and regional and agency partners will use the Plan to address high-priority needs along and across the State Highway System (SHS). Needs identified in the Plan will inform future investments on the SHS by Caltrans and local partners.

State highways play a critical role in towns and cities in District 9. They serve as main streets, provide access to transit and important destinations people visit every day, and often serve as the primary routes connecting communities. The Plan identifies challenges and potential solutions for walking and bicycling along and across Caltrans roadways. It recognizes that many people rely on Caltrans roadways to walk, bicycle, and connect to transit. Unique challenges in District 9 include extreme heat and cold conditions. District 9 also has the most diverse topography on California's SHS, with both its highest point (Tioga Pass) and its lowest point (Cottonball Basin in Death Valley).

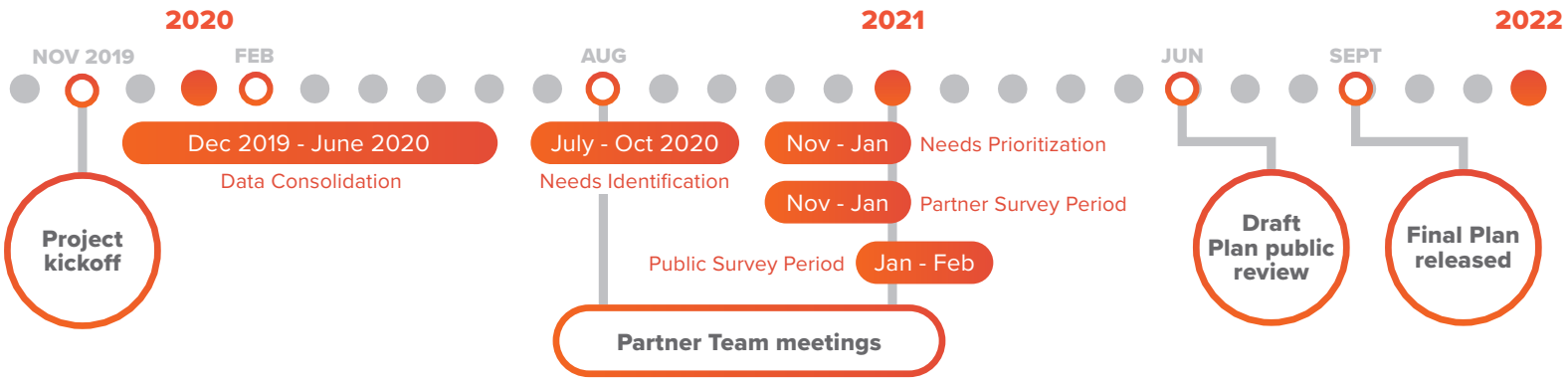
The Plan seeks to make it more convenient for everyone to walk and bicycle more by identifying needs and priorities for future investments. When more people can walk and bike because the roadways near them support those options, our communities experience improved air quality, health benefits, social equity, and economic vitality.

The District 9 Active Transportation Plan comprises two elements:

- This Summary Report provides a snapshot of active transportation on Caltrans roadways today, locations where significant needs exist for people walking and bicycling, and a description of next steps in the implementation process. A description of the methodology for the planning analysis is on the District 9 page of the ***Caltrans Active Transportation Plan*** website.
- A companion interactive online application (Story Map) provides an opportunity to view and interact with a series of District 9 maps that highlight the pedestrian and bicycling issues and opportunities described in this report. The ***Story Map*** is available at the Story Map website.



District 9 Active Transportation Plan Process Timeline



STATEWIDE CONTEXT

In alignment with the vision in the Caltrans statewide plan, ***Toward an Active California***, this Plan establishes methods for identifying and evaluating needs for people walking or bicycling on and across the SHS. It focuses on increasing social equity throughout the planning process, strengthening community partnerships, and improving connections between Caltrans facilities and local networks.

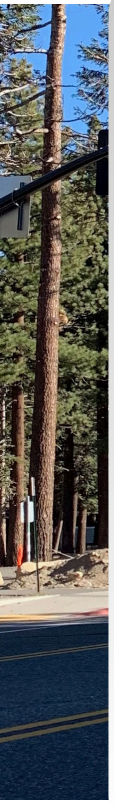
Toward an Active California outlines four goals, which guided the development of the District 9 Active Transportation Plan:

- **MOBILITY:** Reduce dependency on single-occupancy vehicle travel through mode shift to bicycling, walking, and transit.
- **SAFETY:** Facilitate safe travel for all users (modes) and abilities, as expressed through Toward Zero Deaths (Caltrans) and Vision Zero (local agencies) initiatives.
- **EQUITY:** Promote active transportation solutions that serve the communities within the district by improving accessibility and healthy transportation options for disadvantaged communities.
- **PRESERVATION:** Ensure District active transportation strategies and actions adequately discuss the long-term maintenance needs and resources required to maintain a state of good repair for the SHS.

The District 9 Active Transportation Plan is the second in a series of steps that will support the delivery of active transportation infrastructure in California, as shown in the graphic on the next page. The work will continue with Caltrans collaborating with local partners to identify, fund, construct, and maintain active transportation projects.

TOWARD AN ACTIVE CALIFORNIA VISION STATEMENT

By 2040, people in California of all ages, abilities, and incomes can safely, conveniently, and comfortably walk and bicycle for their transportation needs.



HOW CALTRANS MEETS ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

While Caltrans has addressed active transportation needs throughout the state in the past, the Active Transportation Plan is part of an updated process that aims to better meet those needs in the future. The five steps are described below.

STEP 1 ***Toward an Active California*** sets statewide active transportation vision, goals, and policy

STEP 2 The District 9 Active Transportation Plan locates needs on the State Highway System and establishes a baseline for assessing future progress

STEP 3 Projects that address those needs are identified by Caltrans and its partners in local agencies, community-based organizations, and the public

STEP 4 Projects are funded through state funding and grant programs or via local funding sources

STEP 5 Projects are constructed by Caltrans or by local agencies

VISION ZERO INITIATIVES

Vision Zero is an organizing framework for eliminating fatalities and serious injuries caused by traffic collisions. Agencies and jurisdictions around the world have adopted Vision Zero goals to reduce the loss of life and enhance safety on roadways through engineering and programming changes. A defining feature of Vision Zero plans is their ability to coordinate and focus the ongoing work of agency departments and partner jurisdictions towards this singular goal.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Caltrans District 9 staff undertook a three-pronged strategy to engage with the following groups for the Active Transportation Plan:

- **Caltrans Team (District 9 internal working group and management staff)**
- **Local Agencies and Stakeholders**
- **General Public**

A collaborative process within District 9 was used to ensure the best available data and knowledge was incorporated into the Plan and the Plan's location-based needs and priorities were well understood by all staff. To this end, a working group consisting of District 9 staff who work on active transportation planning issues regularly convened to communicate with, and solicit input from, other District staff.

External engagement included collaboration with partner agencies with mobility responsibilities and other organizations with a demonstrated interest in active transportation on or near the SHS. Presentations and discussions were held with public Local Transportation Commissions and Councils of Governments. Representatives from local and regional agencies and organizations attended webinars to learn about the ***District 9 Active Transportation Plan*** and how to use the interactive online map to provide input on location-based needs. These meetings offered the opportunity for stakeholders to share concerns, provide input on the process, and even identify specific locations on the SHS with gaps and barriers for people biking and walking.

In addition, members of the public were invited to provide input on active transportation issues relevant to their communities. Typically, engagement with the general public includes a variety of activities, such as in-person meetings, walk audits, social media, and surveys. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and related restrictions for in-person engagement, District 9 relied on publicly accessible interactive online maps and online tutorial workshops with agency partners to solicit input. District 9 also used social media posts, outreach to Native American tribes, stakeholder email lists, and content on the District 9 Active Transportation Plan website to raise awareness and direct the public to engagement and input opportunities. District 9 staff also conducted one-on-one phone meetings and provided support to local agency partners and the public when requested.

An online public survey (available in both English and Spanish) and an interactive map provided an opportunity for the public to identify and submit comments about SHS locations needing pedestrian and bicycle improvements. A similar interactive mapping tool was made available to regional and local agency partners and organizations. In combination, close to 500 comments were provided on these maps.

In addition to these public outreach and engagement efforts, more focused outreach will be needed to schools along the SHS, to people who do not have convenient access to the internet, and to historically underrepresented groups and/or people who do not have access to a vehicle. Much of this outreach will occur after this Plan is published as a continuous and collaborative endeavor between Caltrans, agency partners, community-based organizations, and the public.

HOW PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT INFORMED THIS PLAN

WHAT WE HEARD

Input received from stakeholders and members of the public ranged from more general statements about the state of active transportation in the district to specific location-based needs.

PARTICIPANTS MENTIONED THESE CHALLENGES:

- Not feeling comfortable crossing the highway
- Not feeling comfortable walking or biking along the highway
- High vehicle traffic volumes and/or speeds
- Feeling uncomfortable when walking or biking on narrow roadway shoulders
- A lack of crosswalks

PARTICIPANTS SHARED THEIR DESIRE FOR:

- Crosswalk improvements
- Better bikeway facilities
- Sidewalk gap closures

HOW WE BROUGHT THOSE INSIGHTS INTO THE PLAN

Public input along with the needs identified by local and regional planning agencies informed the location-based needs identified in this Plan. This was used to help identify over 80 location-based needs that are included in this Plan. Visit the project ***Story Map*** to see how this public and agency input relates to needs identified in the data analysis process.

NEXT STEPS FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

CONTINUING CONVERSATIONS

District 9 has been successful in obtaining stakeholder interest and feedback throughout this initial planning process. However, engagement with stakeholders is an ongoing process, and these conversations will evolve as the Plan's recommendations are implemented and projects are developed to ensure they reflect local community needs and priorities.

COORDINATION WITH ACTIVE AND ONGOING LOCAL AND REGIONAL PLANS

Local and regional public agencies provided active transportation infrastructure and planning data from completed and ongoing plans, as well as other input that was used to identify the location-based needs that are included in this Plan. Caltrans continues to collect information from stakeholders and the public about local needs through its online surveys and other efforts. Input that was available at the time this report was published are shown on the ***Story Map*** that accompanies this report. District staff will continue to monitor responses from the online surveys to inform future planning decisions.

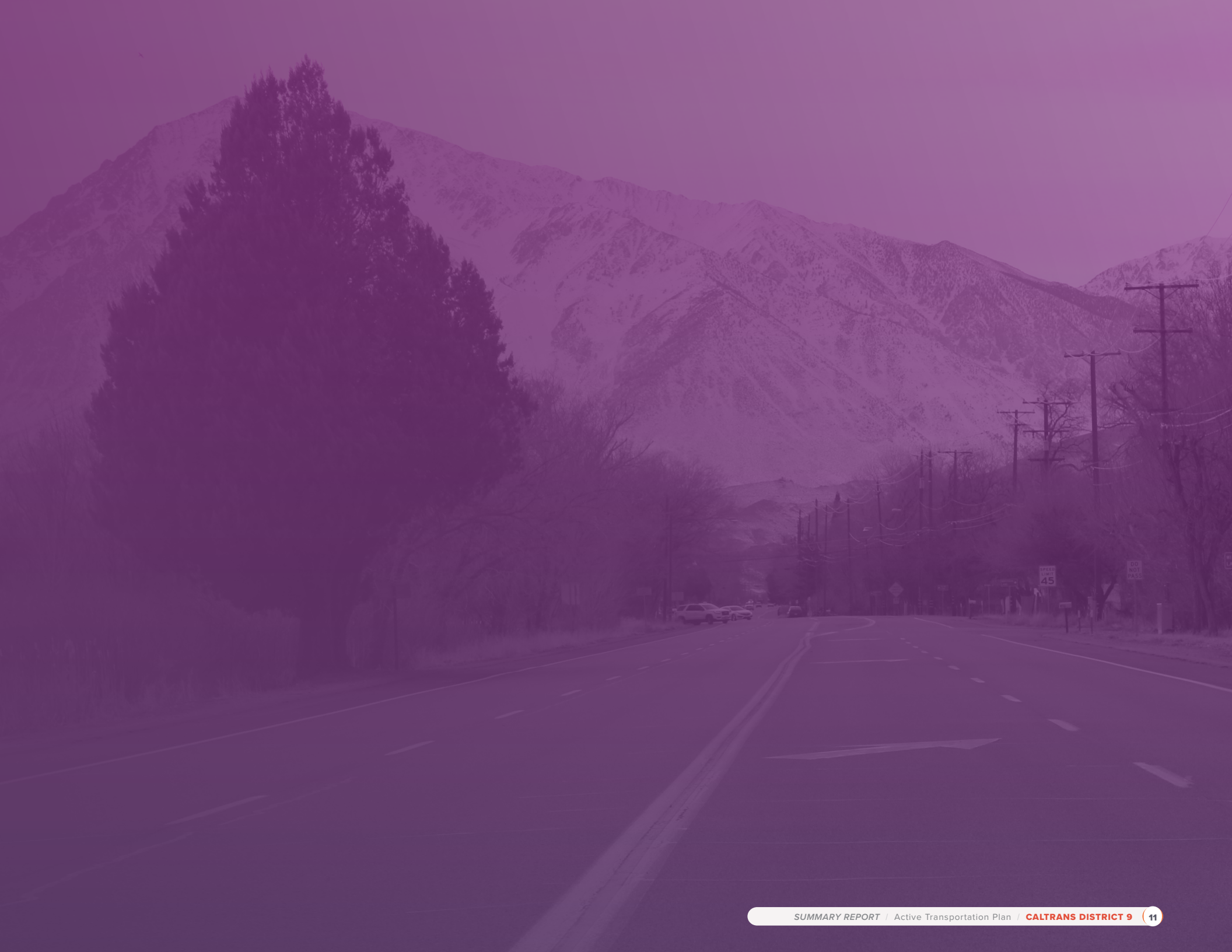
WALKING AND BICYCLING ON THE STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM

This section highlights key findings from the detailed analysis that was performed to better understand active transportation conditions and experiences along the SHS.

WHO USES THE STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM?

People walk and bicycle on the SHS for all kinds of reasons, including for daily needs like getting to work or school, for completing errands, or for activities like reaching trailheads.

Serving such diverse needs and travel purposes requires tailoring solutions to local contexts. People walking or bicycling on the SHS in urban/suburban and Main Street contexts may be making short trips for work, school, or shopping. Those in rural contexts, on the other hand, might be more likely to use the SHS for recreational purposes. Close engagement with local partners and the public during project development can help confirm how people bike and walk on highways in each place and which improvements can help best meet local needs.


SPEED LIMIT 45
DO NOT PASS

LAND USE CONTEXT OF THE STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM

There are over 2,600 centerline miles of roadways along the SHS in District 9. While District 9 is predominantly rural (96%), the SHS also serves many small towns and communities in urban/suburban (2%) and Main Street (2%) designated areas. The needs for pedestrian and bicycle accommodations will vary based on these land use contexts.

For example, the types of issues experienced by people walking along and crossing busy highways in Main Street contexts like US 395 in Bishop may be different from those on the same highway in rural areas. People use state highways differently depending on surrounding land uses. Generally, the SHS provides access for residents and travelers to small communities and recreational areas. Highways in cities or towns may see significant foot traffic, whereas rural roads may have few walking trips but an increased number of recreational bicyclists. This Plan identifies needs to serve all of these contexts. Its key focus is identifying gaps in the active transportation network to address user safety, access, connectivity, demand, and equity. Additionally, this Plan will help to determine and prioritize specific needs on routes that provide the only available connections between rural communities.

Intercommunity Rural Connectors are highways that provide the most viable walking and bicycling connections linking small and rural communities to each other and to larger or more urbanized places. Intercommunity Rural Connectors are often used for recreational bicycling. For example, US 6 in Mono County or SR 190 in Death Valley National Park both connect rural small towns and cities. A list of Intercommunity Rural Connectors is available on the District 9 page of the ***Caltrans Active Transportation Plans website***.

Main Streets along the SHS serve as the primary corridors for daily activities in many communities. Because Main Streets typically provide access to work, shopping, parks, and schools, it is critical that they are convenient for people bicycling, walking, and taking transit. They also strengthen the unique identities of communities. For example, Main Street highways like US 395 in Bishop and Big Pine and SR 178 in Ridgecrest provide access to restaurants, parks, and businesses. A list of Main Streets is available on the District 9 page of the ***Caltrans Active Transportation Plans website***.

The table on the next page describes each of the land use contexts. Main Streets may be found everywhere except in Agricultural Lands, and Intercommunity Rural Connectors typically connect Suburban Communities, Rural Towns, or Agricultural Lands. Each place type has general transportation priorities to serve its land use context and likely active transportation needs.

URBAN/SUBURBAN

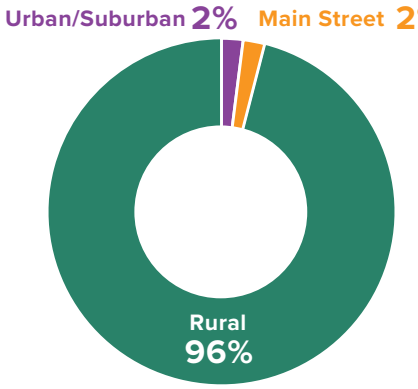
Highways within urban and suburban areas that don't function as Main Streets. This includes urban highways like SR 202 in Tehachapi and urban freeways like SR 14 in Rosamond.

MAIN STREET

Highways that provide direct access to commercial development, typically with frequent cross streets and on-street parking.

RURAL

Highways with minimal access to homes or structures through predominantly undeveloped or agricultural lands. Some segments of these highways serve as Intercommunity Rural Connectors.



Land use context of the State Highway System

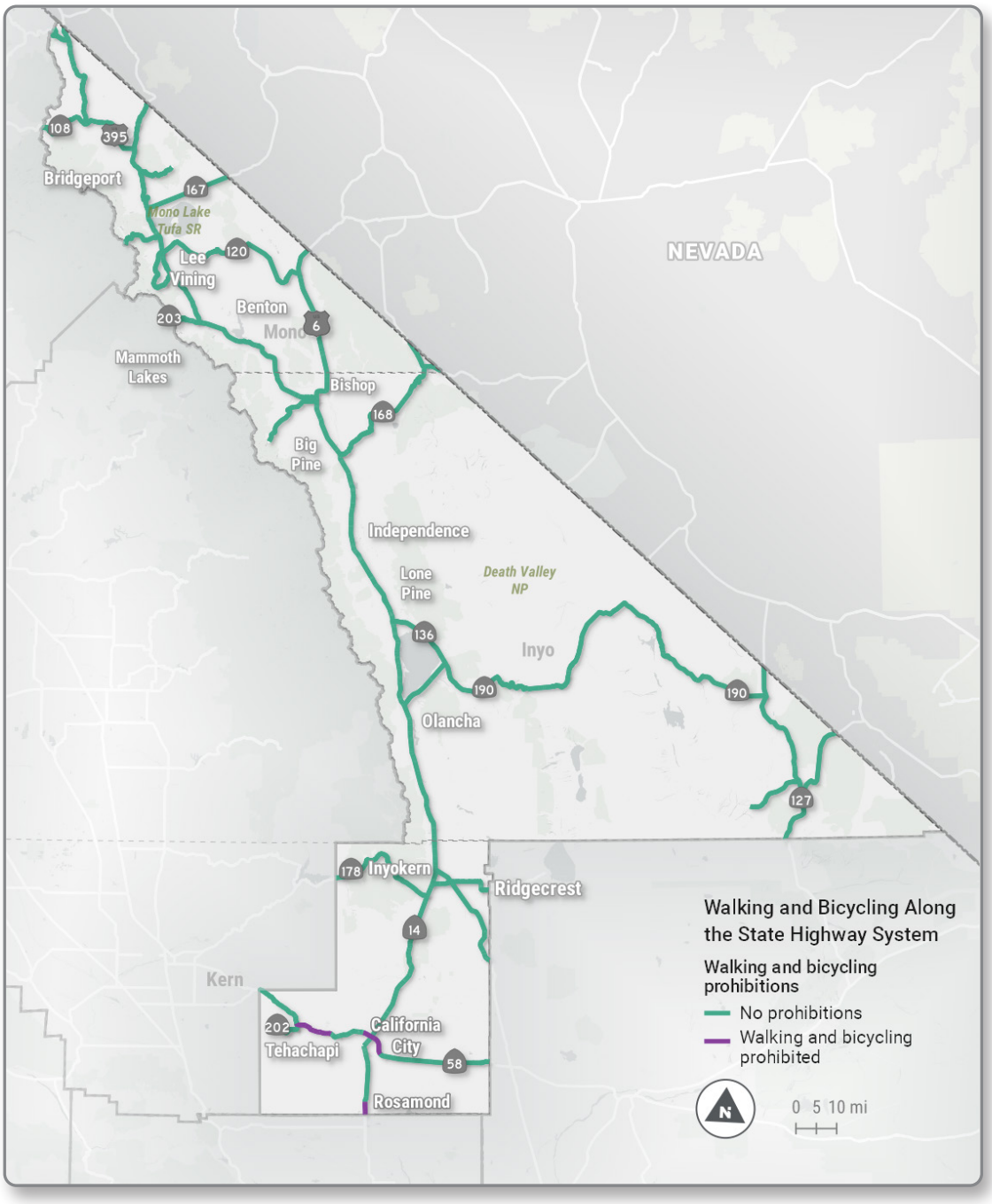
The SHS in District 9 is almost entirely rural in context.

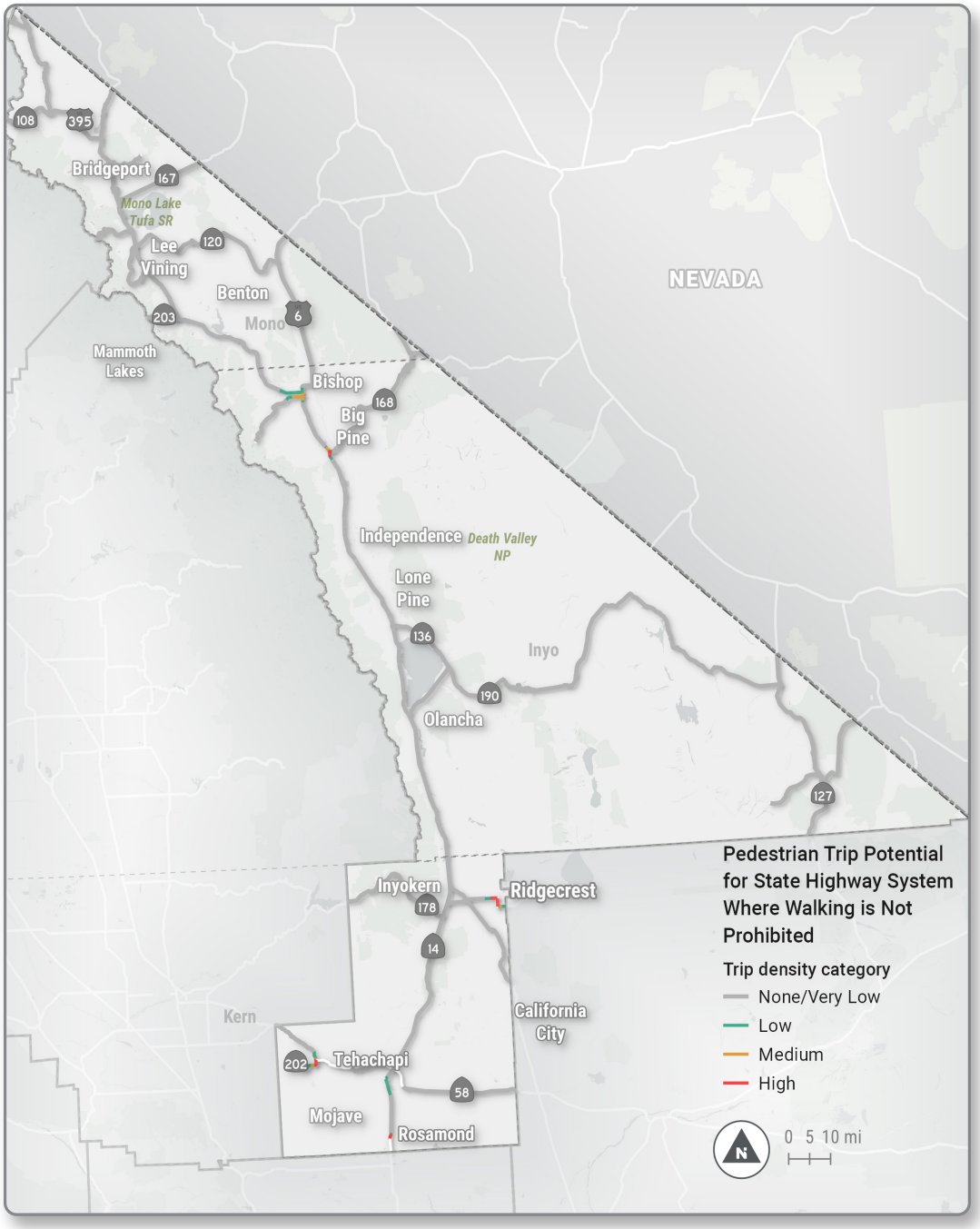
WALKING AND BICYCLING ON THE STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM

Walking and bicycling are permitted on 98 percent of the SHS in District 9. They are only prohibited on controlled access freeways in eastern Kern County (portions of SR 58 and SR 14). Because walking and bicycling are permitted on almost every part of the SHS, there are many opportunities to improve mobility for pedestrians and bicyclists throughout District 9.

Providing connectivity for walking and biking within urban/ suburban and Main Street areas are key to supporting active travel in the District. Improvement opportunities may include shoulder widening, dedicated walkways, bikeways, and crossing enhancements.

Caltrans and local agency partners will need to collaborate to provide for continuous pedestrian and bicycle networks in places where SHS segments either prohibit walking and bicycling or do not support low-stress walking and bicycling networks. These efforts should consider whether the local transportation network already offers convenient alternative routes and whether local plans have prioritized improvements to nearby walking and bicycling facilities.





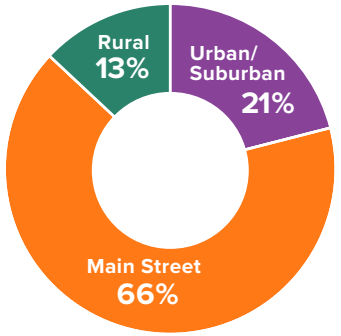
WALKING AND BICYCLING TRIP POTENTIAL

Land use patterns, demographics, and characteristics of the built environment influence the extent to which a person may choose to walk or bicycle for daily needs or recreation. Several factors can help estimate the likely demand for future walking or biking trips at a particular location.

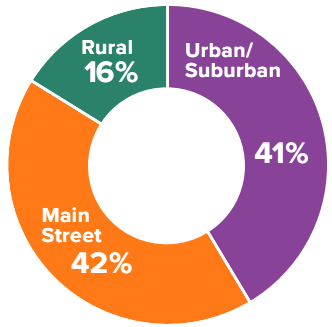
Distance is one of the simplest determinants of bicycle and pedestrian trips. Most able-bodied adults can comfortably make trips of less than 1 mile on foot or less than 3 miles by bicycle. Focusing infrastructure investments in places where such short trips are frequently taken by car is an effective way to encourage walking or bicycle travel instead.

Most areas with a high density of short trips (less than 3 miles) are in or near population centers like Bishop, Ridgecrest, and Tehachapi. Although the transportation analysis zones of the California State Travel Demand model are not detailed enough to show it, there also is potential to convert very short driving trips to walking trips in smaller communities such as in Bridgeport and Independence along US 395 and in Mojave along SR 14. Prioritizing pedestrian infrastructure investments in these areas will likely benefit the greatest number of people and has the greatest potential to encourage more walking trips in District 9.

Not surprisingly, very few short trips are made in rural parts of District 9, suggesting limited opportunity to convert vehicle trips to walking or bicycling in those areas. However, the public has expressed interest in commuter and recreational active travel on roads between places like Inyokern and Ridgecrest or Mammoth Lakes and Lee Vining. Areas where people travel short distances tend to be concentrated on urban/suburban and Main Street highways. While infrastructure that supports walking and bicycling will continue to be needed throughout District 9, prioritizing investments in population centers where short trips are concentrated can help meet the State's active transportation goals of increasing pedestrian and bicycle mode share.



Pedestrian Short Trip Opportunity Zones



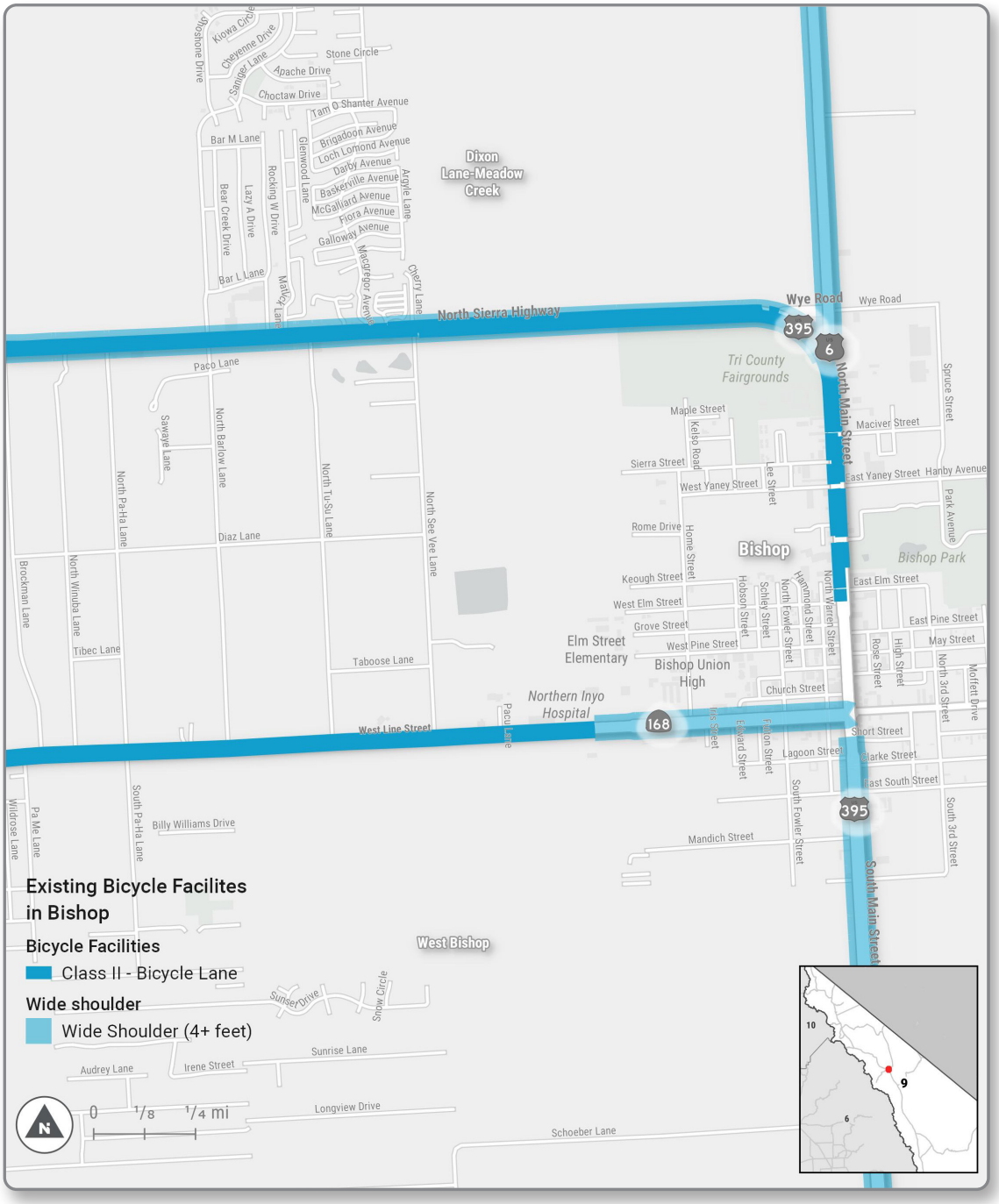
Bicycle Short Trip Opportunity Zones

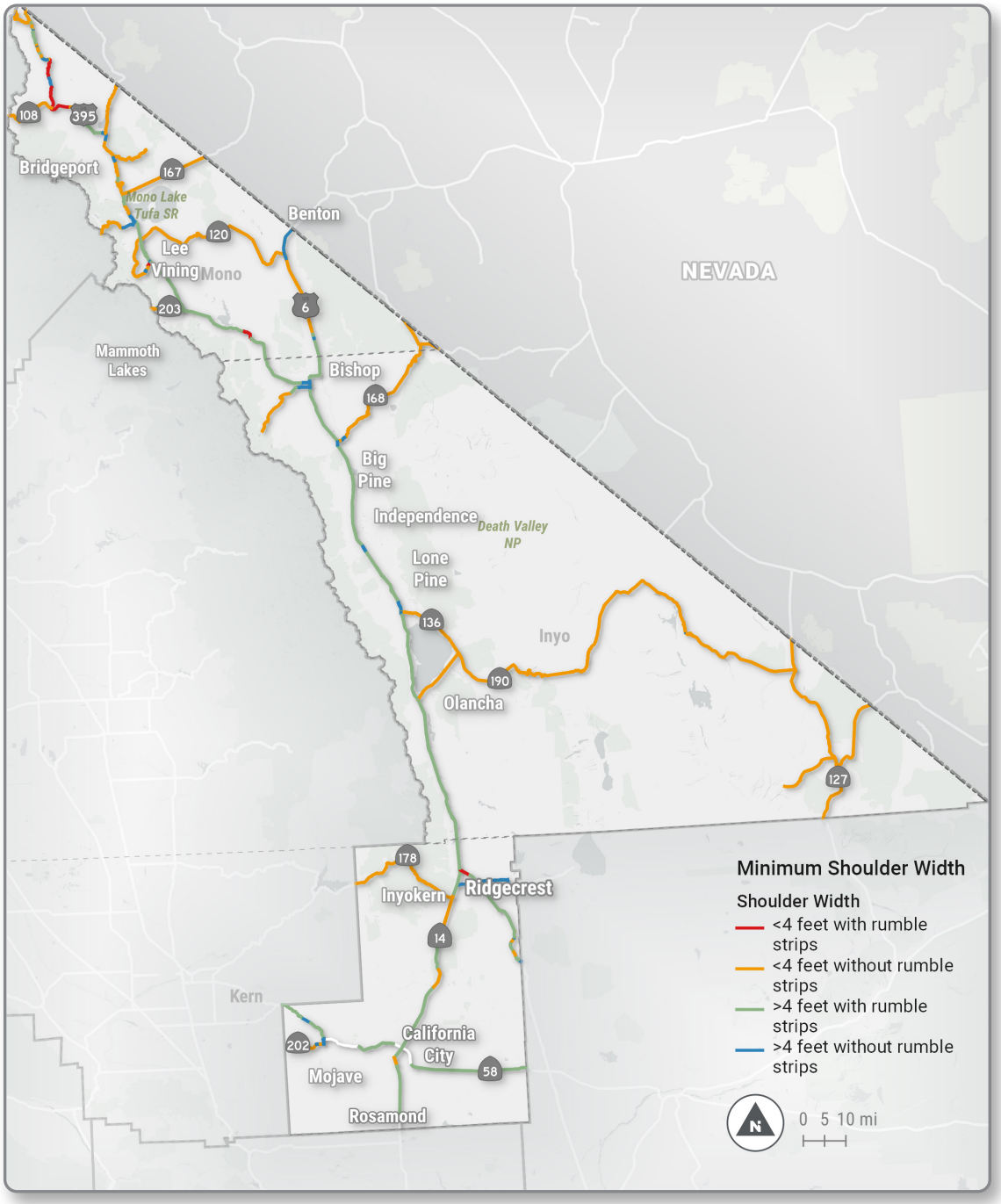
EXISTING BICYCLE FACILITIES

Bicycle infrastructure is most useful when it forms a complete network and offers a convenient and inviting experience. While people can bicycle on all state highways in California unless specifically prohibited from doing so, designated bicycle facilities are designed to increase the visibility, safety, comfort, and awareness of people bicycling. Caltrans organizes bicycle facilities into four classifications:

- Class I shared use paths are physically separated from vehicular roadways.
- Class II bicycle lanes provide dedicated space adjacent to vehicle travel lanes, either with or without painted buffers.
- Class III bicycle routes share the roadway lane or shoulder space with vehicles.
- Class IV separated bicycle lanes include hardened infrastructure, such as a raised curb or vertical posts, that provides the greatest degree of protection to bicyclists from vehicles within the roadway.

The map on this page shows an example of a Class II bike lane in Bishop. Data about bike facilities in other places in District 9 is available on the ***Story Map***, which is discussed on page 24.





District 9 has 112 miles of designated bikeways on the SHS, which consists of Class II bike lanes (8 miles) and Class III bike routes (104 miles). Nearly 80 percent of the Class II bike lane miles are along designated Main Streets and 90 percent of Class III bike routes are in rural areas. At the time of this Plan's development, there were no Class I shared use paths or Class IV separated bikeways on the SHS in District 9. Notably, there are Class I paths in Mammoth Lakes and Death Valley National Park on the SHS, but they are under the jurisdiction of local agencies. Bike facilities along Main Streets often provide access to destinations people visit frequently and are therefore important for supporting every day bike trips.

This Plan uses information about the presence of bikeways and adequate shoulders to determine where there are gaps in the low-stress bicycle network that new facilities would address. The following section provides more information about low-stress networks and where they are needed throughout the SHS.

BICYCLING ON HIGHWAY SHOULDERS

Roadway shoulders play an important role in supporting active transportation on the SHS. While not a formal bicycle facility classification, shoulders at least 4-feet wide can provide a useful and convenient connection within and between communities, especially rural ones.

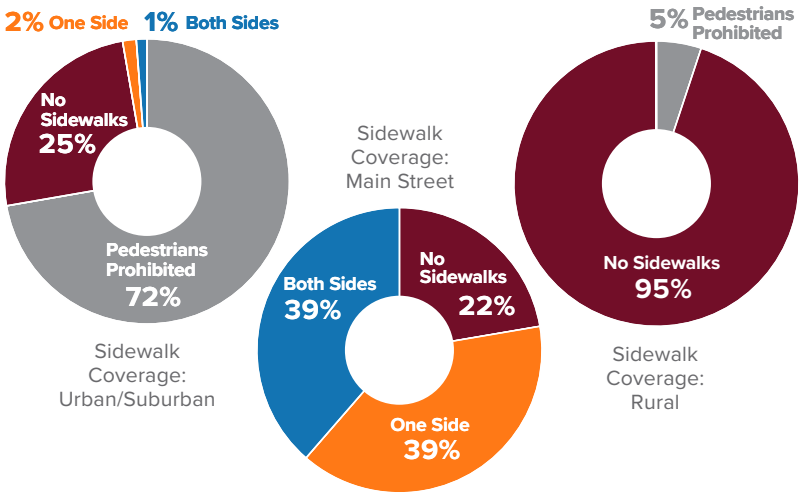
Many shoulders need to accommodate both bicycle and pedestrian travel where both user groups are likely to use the shoulder for travel. Maintaining wide shoulders can help accommodate both pedestrian and bicycle travel where insufficient space is available to install both a sidewalk and a dedicated bikeway.

EXISTING SIDEWALKS AND CROSSWALKS

Sidewalks and crosswalks are fundamental elements of most pedestrian networks. Sidewalks may be present along both or one side of SHS roads, or entirely absent. More than three quarters of the district's SHS has sidewalks on at least one side in Main Street contexts. Crossing opportunities are most often present in urban/suburban and Main Street contexts, like US 395 in Big Pine, but crossing distances and traffic volumes may make getting across the highway inconvenient. Sidewalks and crosswalks are less often present in rural environments. Sidewalks are rarely located along freeways, which often prohibit pedestrian access. Caltrans considers pedestrian demand, land use, collision history, vehicular traffic volume and speed, crossing distances, and connection to local networks when deciding where to add sidewalks and crosswalks. Sidewalks and crosswalks that are connected, accessible, and in good condition can support increased walking along and across the SHS.

CLIMATE

Distinctly seasonal weather patterns in District 9 can pose several challenges to pedestrians. For example, accumulated snow occasionally blocks the use of sidewalks, while pedestrians may find it difficult to walk outside in extreme heat or high wind conditions. Additionally, freeze-thaw cycles, snow removal, and heat can deteriorate facility conditions significantly each season. This Plan uses climate extremes as a proxy for facility conditions when prioritizing needs. Extreme heat was quantified by averaging the low temperatures over 80 degrees Fahrenheit in the month of July, while extreme cold was quantified by averaging the low temperatures below 32 degrees Fahrenheit in the month of January. Subsequent analyses may identify and prioritize needs for critical locations where sidewalk conditions are fair or poor.



NEEDS FOR PEOPLE WALKING AND BICYCLING ON THE STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM

This Plan's primary output is a prioritized list of location-based needs, or specific locations on the SHS where infrastructure investments would most benefit people walking and bicycling and best achieve the goals identified in ***Toward an Active California***. To identify location-based needs, Caltrans conducted an assessment of gaps and barriers on the system that affect walking and bicycling. This information is available for review on the online ***Story Map***, or in table format on the District 9 page of the ***Caltrans Active Transportation Plans website***.

IDENTIFYING NEEDS

The need for walking and bicycling infrastructure along the SHS has been inventoried and documented by multiple sources over time but had not been consolidated into a single dataset. For this effort, pedestrian and bicycle needs were identified from local agency plans, public engagement efforts, and analysis of highway data from Caltrans and other sources, and then organized to provide a more complete picture of conditions along the District 9 SHS.

As a starting point, planned pedestrian and bicycle facilities along or across the SHS that were identified in plans adopted by city, county, or regional agencies were analyzed as potential needs. Because those plans were already vetted through a completed planning process, it was assumed that they warrant continued Caltrans planning and implementation support. In some cases, local plans identify the need for pedestrian and bicycle facilities that would cross a Caltrans roadway. In those instances, crossing needs at those locations are included in this Plan to support local networks. The District 9 page of the ***Caltrans Active Transportation Plans website*** has a list of local plans referred to in this planning process.

In addition, Caltrans collected data to identify needs through partner and public surveys and other engagement efforts. The feedback was used to confirm assumptions made about the potential needs identified from the local plans and will be used to inform the project development process in the future. Caltrans will continue to collect additional survey data beyond the publication of the Plan since needs and priorities will shift over time.

As it compiled the list of needs, the project team also conducted a detailed analysis of SHS segment data to identify needs in the following categories:

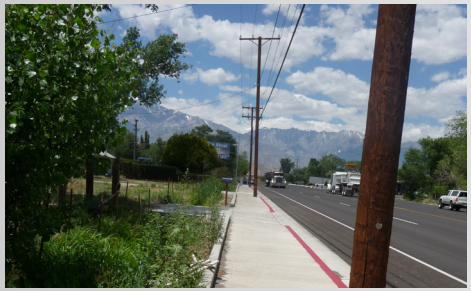
NEED TYPES

235 Pedestrian Needs
141 Bicycle Needs
50 Needs for both Bicycles and Pedestrians

Needs were identified for each of the following seven categories:

MAIN STREET SIDEWALK GAPS

Main Street locations lacking sidewalks on one or both sides of the road.



SIDEWALKS ALONG HIGHER-SPEED HIGHWAYS

SHS segments with sidewalks along roadways with a posted speed limit of 35 mph or higher, which have been identified as potentially stressful locations that may serve as barriers to walking and therefore merit additional study.

STRESSFUL PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

Intersections on conventional highways (that is, those that aren't freeways or expressways) that are stressful for pedestrians to cross. This analysis accounts for characteristics like the presence or absence of median islands and marked crossings, posted speed limits, and other factors.

STRESSFUL BICYCLE CROSSINGS

This metric applies a stress analysis (like the one used for pedestrian crossings) to places where people cross conventional state highways by bicycle.

STRESSFUL BICYCLE SEGMENTS

This metric applies the stress analysis to places on the SHS where bicycling is not prohibited. It considers factors like the presence of a bicycle facility (such as a bicycle lane), traffic speed, and traffic volume.

INFREQUENT CROSSINGS

Freeway segments that offer few accessible crossings (like bridges or undercrossings) for people walking and bicycling, limiting their opportunities to cross. This analysis considers the local land use (e.g., the presence of destinations on both sides of the road) but not the quality of the surrounding pedestrian and bicycle network.

FREEWAY CROSSING NEEDS

These needs are at locations that meet various gap criteria, including narrow sidewalks, a lack of sidewalks, an uncontrolled highway on- or off-ramp crossing, unmarked highway ramp crosswalks, or poor crosswalk visibility. A freeway crossing meeting at least one of these criteria is included as a need in this Plan.

The outputs of this analysis are a map and a list of location-based needs at specific locations where gaps and barriers may exist for people walking along or across the SHS. These needs can be viewed on the online ***Story Map, or in table format on the District 9 page of the Caltrans Active Transportation Plans website***.

IDENTIFYING PRIORITY LOCATIONS ALONG THE SHS

Locations with needs on the SHS were evaluated and prioritized according to the goals of ***Toward an Active California***. The purpose of this is to identify locations where needs may be best suited to move into Caltrans project development phases over time. Prioritization may be used as a factor to inform future Caltrans efforts in seeking competitive funds to implement the Plan.

The first step in the prioritization process was to break the SHS in the district into smaller segments, such as areas around freeway crossings or 1- to 3-mile segments between major intersections. These segments are scaled to roughly align with segments Caltrans uses to develop improvement projects on the SHS, which is helpful so that individual needs can be grouped with other projects on the system.

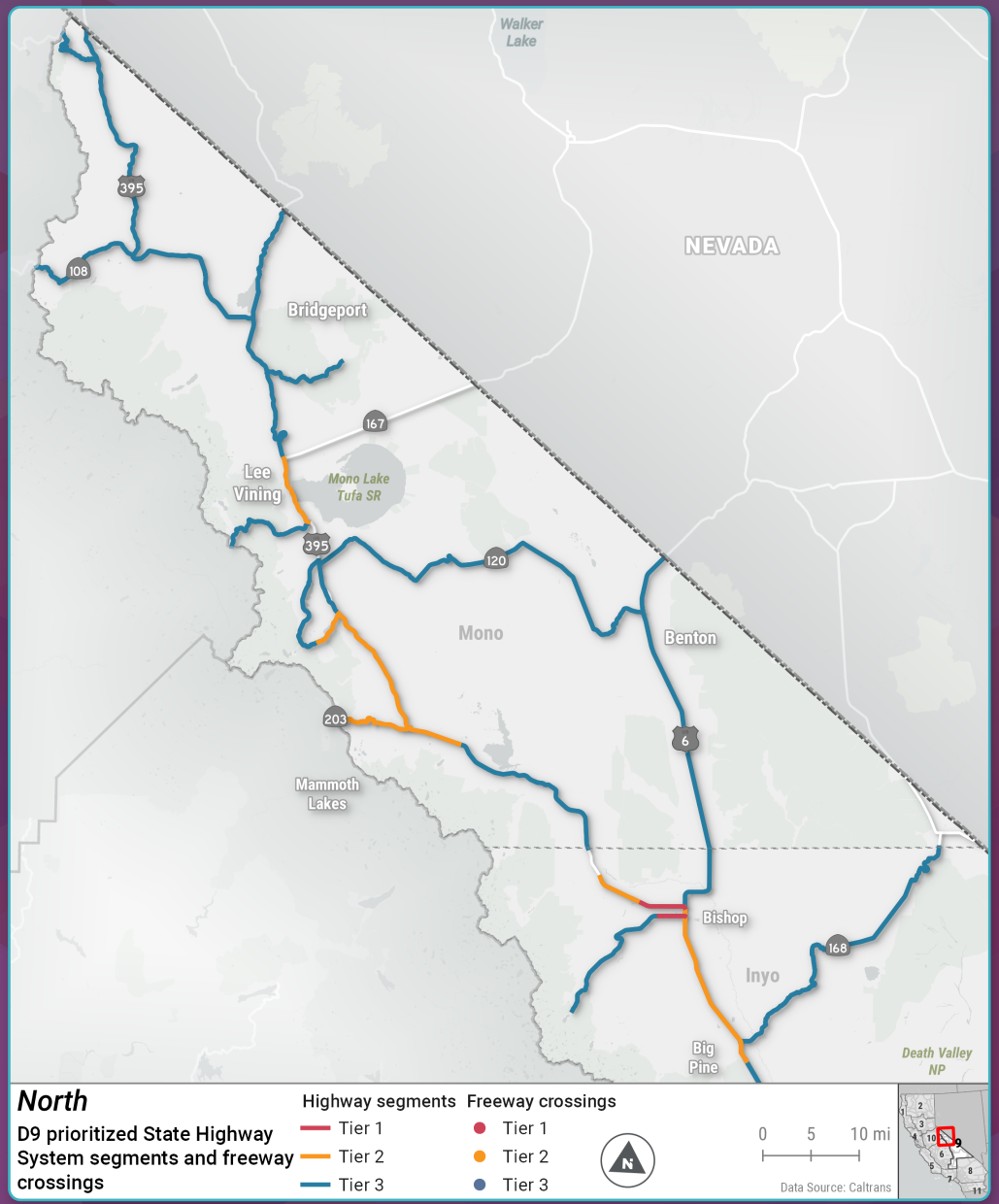
As a second step, each highway segment and freeway crossing on the SHS was then scored based on factors like those in the Walking and Bicycling on the State Highway System section of this report. These include the potential to shift short trips from driving to walking or bicycling, the history of nearby collisions involving people walking or bicycling, the nearby presence of a disadvantaged community, and the condition of sidewalks and crosswalks along the segment. The scoring calculations incorporated input from District 9 staff on weights and measures assigned to each goal from ***Toward an Active California***, reflecting the localized vision and priorities of partners and the public across the district, as summarized in the table on this page.

District 9 goals, weights, and measures to prioritize needs.

GOAL	WEIGHT	MEASURE(S)
Safety	40%	Reported collision density
Equity	20%	US Census identified disadvantaged community
Mobility	20%	Short-distance travel demand; access to transit; tourism zones (i.e. areas with tourism destinations, tourism economic base); access to schools and community centers
Preservation	20%	Extreme hot or cold climate

Finally, scored segments were ranked and sorted into three tiers based on their relative intensity of need, with Tier 1 representing the highest intensity. The maps following this section show prioritized highway segments in District 9. All of the location-based needs on each highway segment are assigned the same score and tier as the segment itself.

This process provides a way to compare intensity of need at different locations on the SHS. The prioritized needs can be used to support project development decisions, both on individual projects and by informing Caltrans Complete Streets performance targets. Needs at a given location should always be considered for incorporation into nearby projects on the SHS, regardless of their assigned tier.



North

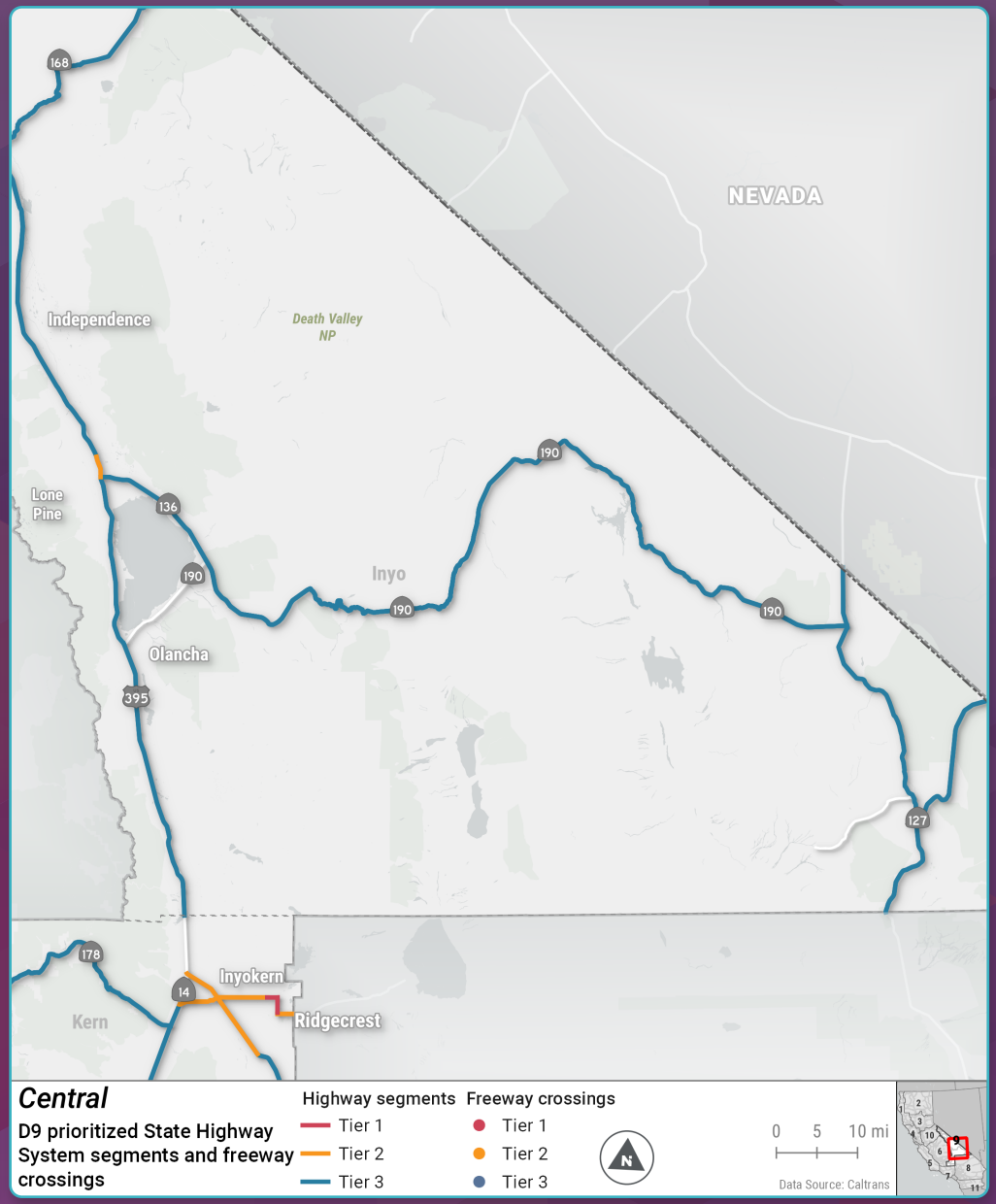
D9 prioritized State Highway System segments and freeway crossings

Highway segments
- Tier 1
- Tier 2
- Tier 3

Freeway crossings
- Tier 1
- Tier 2
- Tier 3

0 5 10 mi

Data Source: Caltrans



Central

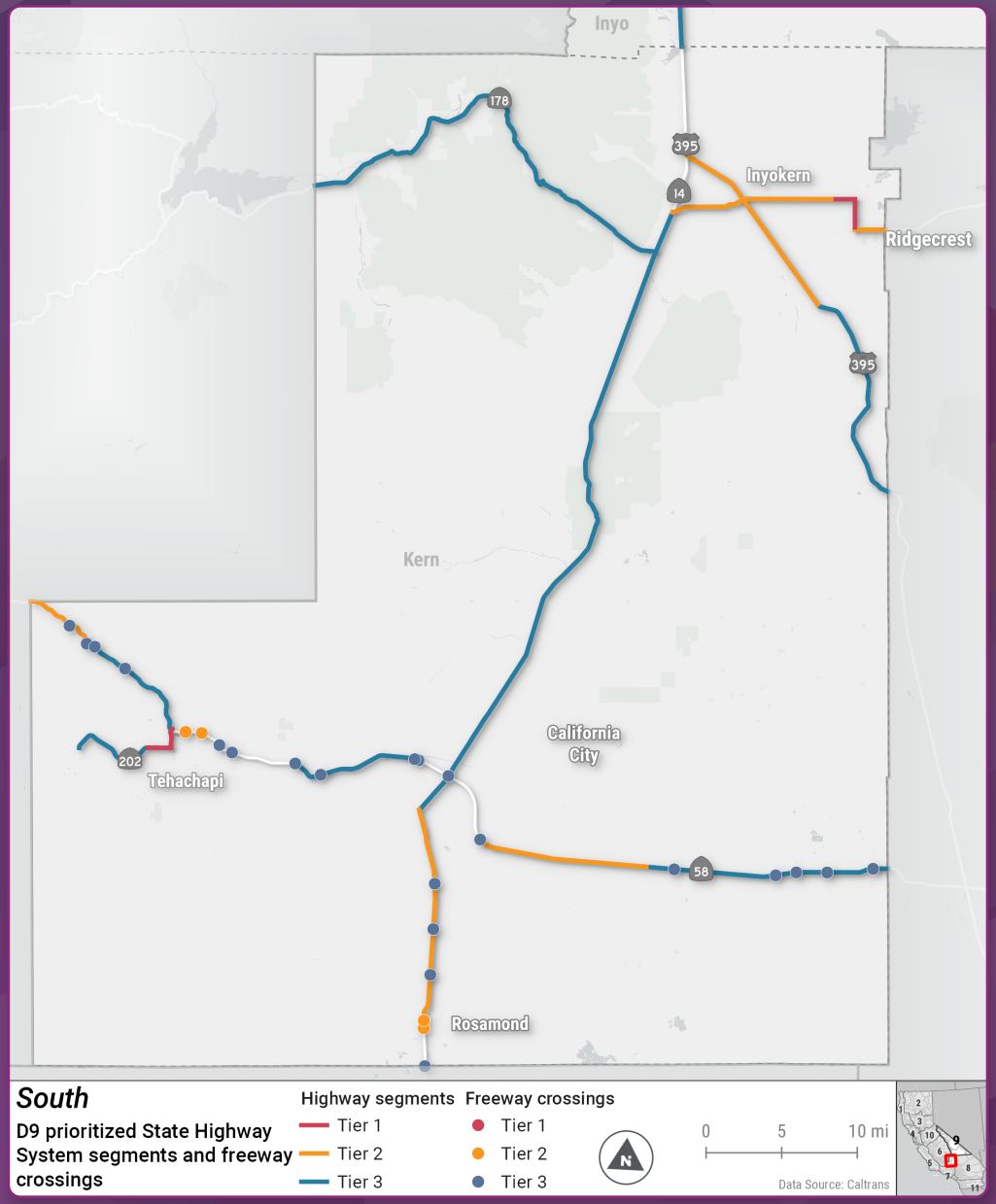
D9 prioritized State Highway System segments and freeway crossings

Highway segments
- Tier 1
- Tier 2
- Tier 3

Freeway crossings
- Tier 1
- Tier 2
- Tier 3

0 5 10 mi

Data Source: Caltrans



STORY MAP

This Summary Report has a companion ***Story Map***. This interactive mapping tool provides greater detail on a full range of existing conditions measures and illustrates the individual and prioritized needs. The map also provides additional information about each need:

- Whether the location of a need is along or across the highway
- Whether the need affects people walking or bicycling
- Relative priority (Tier 1, Tier 2, or Tier 3)
- Prioritization goal score

This information can help partners and the public understand where needs and opportunities exist in their local community, the nature of those needs, and how those needs relate to the full picture of active transportation efforts across District 9.

NEXT STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

This District 9 Active Transportation Plan is a critical step toward implementing the Caltrans statewide vision for improving the walking and bicycling experience along and across the SHS. Caltrans and partners at local agencies and community-based organizations all have important roles to play in supporting highway improvement projects that meet the needs of multi-modal users, including those needs identified in the Plan. Next steps for project implementation are described below.

NEXT STEPS FOR CALTRANS

LEVERAGE LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

The Plan will be used to help identify subsequent planning efforts and develop projects located on or near the SHS. Caltrans and local agency staff will meet early in the project planning and development process to coordinate on project purpose and need, design, and community engagement. This coordination can occur independently or as part of other stakeholder engagement efforts. Site visits with local partners can provide further understanding of the local context and the connectivity needs between the local pedestrian or bicycle network and the SHS.

IDENTIFY AND INITIATE PROJECTS

The pedestrian and bicycling needs in the Plan provide baseline information that Caltrans will use to further understand issues at specific locations and to identify potential improvements. Caltrans has further detail on the location-based needs identified in the Plan, which the public can view on the project ***Story Map***.

The Plan includes a robust set of GIS data that can be accessed via public web applications or GIS applications internal to Caltrans. These applications are interactive platforms that assist Caltrans planners and project teams in identifying project elements that address pedestrian and bicycle travel needs.

USE RESOURCES TO SELECT IMPROVEMENTS

Caltrans recently developed a ***Complete Streets Elements Toolbox***, which translates complex statewide policies into easily accessible concepts and practices for effective Complete Streets implementation. The Toolbox focuses on roadway elements that prioritize multi-modal travel and assists project staff in identifying Complete Streets elements which meet relevant policy goals and objectives. The Toolbox aligns with the State Highway Operations Protection Program process and can be used during project development to select appropriate improvements that address the needs in the Plan.

HOW WILL THIS PLAN IMPROVE OUTCOMES FOR PEOPLE WALKING AND BICYCLING?

The data analysis and findings from this study process will:

- Inform and serve as an input to the Caltrans project identification and development processes
- Foster coordination and alignment between state, regional, and local planning and project development
- Elevate the profile of active transportation in asset management and other data-driven decision-making processes
- Support competitive funding applications
- Help integrate active transportation needs into other types of projects
- Inform planning and project development activities at District 9 and statewide.

Other resources include the ***Highway Design Manual***, the ***California Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices***, and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) ***Bikeway Selection Guide***. These resources are intended to supplement, but not replace, professional planning and engineering judgment.

OBTAIN PROJECT FUNDING

Caltrans views all transportation projects as opportunities to accommodate the needs of people walking and bicycling on the SHS, and many funding programs require consideration of Complete Streets elements during project development. Funding is often the most challenging part of implementing any kind of project on the SHS. These are three primary funding mechanisms for projects to meet the active transportation needs outlined in the Plan:

- The ***State Highway Operation and Protection Program*** (SHOPP) is the Caltrans "fix-it-first" program, which funds repair and preservation, emergency repairs, safety improvements, and some highway operational improvements on the SHS. The needs identified in the Plan can be incorporated into the SHOPP to generate additional benefits beyond the primary purpose of the project. The baseline needs from the Plan will directly contribute to establishing performance targets specifically for active transportation.
- The ***Active Transportation Program*** directs funds to local and regional agencies through a competitive selection process. The Plan helps identify and prioritize improvements that might be most competitive for these funds.
- ***Senate Bill 1 (SB 1)*** establishes local and State transportation programs and funding to repair and enhance roads, bridges, transit, and other transportation assets.

Other grant programs provide funding for bicycle and pedestrian improvements:

- Caltrans can coordinate with partner agencies that are eligible to apply for funds through the ***Highway Safety Improvement Program and the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program***.

- ***Local and regional jurisdictions*** may also contribute project funds to meet the capital needs of projects in the Plan. Funds generated by local sales tax measures, for example, can be used for matching grants or to provide additional financial leverage for projects.
- Bicycle and pedestrian improvements may be constructed using ***development project mitigation funding***. Such projects could provide multi-modal access, such as a trail connections, sidewalks, or bicycle facilities, on or parallel to SHS roads.

NEXT STEPS FOR LOCAL AND REGIONAL JURISDICTIONS AND STAKEHOLDERS

COORDINATE AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

Local knowledge and expertise are critical for understanding the needs of people walking and bicycling at specific locations. This level of insight allows Caltrans and local agencies to identify, fund, and implement projects that successfully address those needs. Communities throughout District 9 can help gather and share knowledge to advance projects. For example, members of the public can advocate for their local or regional government to initiate a study of local needs. Local and regional agencies can likewise lead planning studies that identify relevant funding sources. This step should include community engagement to understand the public's experiences and priorities. Funding for planning efforts is available through Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grants, Urban Greening Grants, Transformative Climate Communities Program, and other initiatives.

Project needs may also be incorporated into local general plans, specific plans, or other planning documents to address the gaps identified in this Plan. Consistency across plans is a key factor in making projects attractive for funding.

PARTNER WITH CALTRANS TO DEVELOP PROJECTS

Local agencies are key partners with Caltrans, as they provide information on local needs and priorities related to the SHS. Coordination can strengthen projects, whether led by Caltrans or by local agencies, so that they better address needs for people walking and bicycling on the SHS as well as on connecting streets and roads. Local partners can provide critical input about how incorporating active transportation elements into projects will provide improved connections to the local road network. The ***State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) Viewer*** is a publicly accessible source for information on planned SHS projects.

A range of projects in District 9 are the result of successful partnership between Caltrans and local agency partners. One example comes from Bridgeport, in Mono County, where Complete Streets elements were added to a designated Main Street on US 395. New sidewalks, bicycle lanes, crosswalks, and back-in angled parking were incorporated into a pavement project. These improvements are consistent with the Main Street Revitalization Plan for US 395 through Bridgeport.

SEEK FUNDING TO BUILD PROJECTS

Projects or plans on the SHS frequently include funds provided directly from Caltrans, such as through its Active Transportation Program or Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program. In addition to grant funding, Caltrans is also seeking opportunities to fund active transportation needs by incorporating them into projects funded by the State Highway Operation and Protection Program, which is described above. Project funding packages sometimes include additional sources, such as local or regional sales tax measures, grants from the California Air Resources Board (e.g., Sustainable Transportation Equity Projects), funds from regional partners, funds from the Transportation Demand Act, other gas tax revenue, or general funds.

DATA SHARING

Good data from across the region, including data collected during this planning effort and data gathered from our partners, is the cornerstone of the District 9 Active Transportation Plan. To improve planning and coordination in District 9 and throughout the state, Caltrans commits to sharing data whenever possible and encourages other public agencies and organizations in the region to do the same. The District 9 Regional Planner or Complete Streets Coordinator are available to coordinate data sharing efforts; see page 29 for Caltrans contact information.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following organizations and individuals contributed significantly to the Plan's development and were instrumental in its completion:

DISTRICT 9 PARTNER TEAM

- County of Mono, Local Transportation Commission
- County of Inyo, Local Transportation Commission
- Kern County, Council of Governments
- City of Bishop
- Town of Mammoth Lakes
- City of California City
- City of Tehachapi
- City of Ridgecrest
- Tribal Partners
- Regional/Local Planning Advisory Groups

CALTRANS PROJECT TEAM

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- Austin West
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- D9 Public Information Office
- D9 Planning/Asset Management
- D9 Traffic Operations/Maintenance

CONSULTANT TEAM

- Toole Design
- WSP
- Cambridge Systematics

CONTACTING CALTRANS

Additional information about this planning effort can be found on the District 9 Active Transportation Plan webpage at catplan.org/district-9. The Caltrans District 9 Public Information Officer can provide additional information about upcoming projects in your community, take your input, and coordinate on project identification, development, and implementation. Contact the Public Information Officer at ***D9PublicInfo@dot.ca.gov***. For additional information or assistance contact the Public Information Office or submit a Customer Service Request.

District 9 Public Information Officer:
D9PublicInfo@dot.ca.gov

Public Information Office:
https://dot.ca.gov/programs/public-affairs

Customer Service Request: ***https://csr.dot.ca.gov/***

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN 2021

SUMMARY REPORT

Caltrans

DISTRICT 9