

# Bike Safety in San Mateo County

*Making Bicycling Safer in the County*

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*“Biking is one of the few activities that checks all the boxes at once — it’s active, practical, social, sustainable, stress-relieving, fun, and is a great family activity. Biking has the unique ability to elevate the mundane — it turns errands into adventures. More people on bikes keeps our streets safer, our air cleaner and our communities better connected.” Sonia Elkes, 2021 Bike Champion of the Year for San Mateo County Bay Area Bike to Work Website*

*“I often drive up Alpine Road near the Stanford golf course and I believe I would have a head-on crash with oncoming cars if I left a 3-foot margin between my car and the thoughtless bikers who ride out partially in the road. What is the best advice for that situation?” Comment on [Bicyclists Can Now Report 3’ Rule Violations Online](#) in *The Almanac* 5/12/2023.*

*“On the afternoon of Monday, April 10, bicyclist Lester Legarda was fatally struck by a driver on Cañada Road, a rural route popular among walkers, equestrians, and bicyclists. Details of the crash scene suggest that the collision speed was high. One solution to prevent future tragedies along Cañada is tantalizingly simple — reduce the 50-mph speed limit. Sure, drivers will likely continue to exceed the speed limit. But just like the paint on the road that defines where drivers are supposed to drive, posted speed limits set expectations for acceptable driver behavior.” [Reduce the speed limit on Canada Road](#) *San Mateo Daily Journal* 04/20/23.*

## **Bike Safety in San Mateo County: *Making Bicycling Safer in the County***

### **ISSUE**

As bicycle riding has become an ever more meaningful form of transportation, especially with the popularization of eBikes, the demand by County residents for safe micro-mobility solutions has soared. Are San Mateo County and its municipalities positioned to respond to safety concerns and meet those demands?

### **SUMMARY**

Whether for commuting or recreational purposes, residents in every jurisdiction of San Mateo County (SMC), as well as from the surrounding Bay Area counties, use bicycles. Because bicycles are widely available, for some the only mode of getting to and from work and jobs, and ridden in every jurisdiction, bicycle safety has become an increasingly important issue for SMC and its cities and towns. Without greater focus on bike safety, the number of riders will remain low, because people will avoid bicycling when they don't feel safe. The benefits of increasing bicycle riding are important to all residents of San Mateo County: reducing motor vehicles, healthy lifestyle and an inexpensive form of transportation. Accordingly, San Mateo County, and its cities and towns have a responsibility to make it safe for drivers and pedestrians, as well as bicyclists.

Due to differences in terrain, population density, and existing infrastructure, the 20 different municipalities and the unincorporated portions of the County have differing bicycle safety needs and requirements. Some cities are very hilly, making commuting to work, school, or transit stations nearly impossible. Others are more urban and accommodate many more commuting bicyclists. The County also has some areas that are primarily recreational biking destinations and areas that accommodate both commuting bicyclists and recreational bicyclists. As a result, each community also assigns a different level of importance to bicycle safety relative to other issues, such as crime, motor vehicle safety and public works improvement projects. And education and enforcement about bicycle laws varies from one jurisdiction to another.

Despite the differences among the jurisdictions, there are several commonalities. One is that cities and law enforcement do not consistently maintain records about bicycle near misses, accidents, or complaints; data is neither broadly available nor consistently maintained. Another commonality is that government entities focused on bicycling and/or improving bicycle safety do not communicate and collaborate with each other often enough, if at all. This makes it difficult to get accurate information on the number and severity of incidents and gauge how safe it is to bicycle in San Mateo County. Without data, and communication among the municipalities, San

Mateo County and its cities and towns lose out on available state and local funding to improve bicycle safety through physical improvement projects.

To improve bicycle safety and thereby increase ridership, San Mateo County and its cities and towns need to:

1. Create effective ways to educate bicycle riders and motorists about bicycle rules of the road to enhance predictability.
2. Develop consistent communications among government organizations responsible for bike safety (e.g., between law enforcement and public works).
3. Conduct enforcement details in each jurisdiction to ensure enforcement leads to education.
4. Collect accurate data about accidents and incidents that is crucial to supporting and justifying grant applications and funding from State and local agencies for physical improvements to infrastructure for bicyclists (e.g., connectivity of bicycle routes from one city to another), needed signage, and other engineering improvements.

## BACKGROUND

Why is bike safety an important topic?

Statistically, the safer a person feels riding a bike, the more likely they will use it as regular transportation; both as a commuter and a recreational user.

Fifty-three percent of Americans worry about being hit by a motor vehicle when riding a bicycle; 47% say they would be more likely to ride a bike if pathways were physically separated from motor vehicles.<sup>1</sup>

However, bicycle accident statistics, though better than in 1998, averaged 231 fatalities and injuries over the last ten years. The average was 203 fatalities the last three years, but the drop includes the pandemic shutdown and more people working from home. The source of the recent data is the California Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS<sup>2</sup>) database, managed by the California Highway Patrol. All law enforcement agencies are required to submit accident data to the database on a regular basis.

A 2002-2003 SMC Civil Grand Jury titled, *Bike Safety in San Mateo County*<sup>3</sup>, questioned whether San Mateo County and the cities adequately consider and support safe bicycle travel? At that time, it was estimated that 46% of Americans bicycle for pleasure and 300,000 County residents bicycle at least occasionally. Commuting by bicycle was less than 1% in the County.

That year's Grand Jury found that bicycle infrastructure for safe travel needed improvement, but funding was an issue. It also found that communication and planning between the county and the cities on bicycle projects and safety could be improved. And that throughout SMC, bicycle

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<sup>1</sup> People for Bikes: <https://www.peopleforbikes.org/news/building-for-tomorrow>

<sup>2</sup> <https://iswitrs.chp.ca.gov/Reports/jsp/logout.do>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.sanmateocourt.org/court\\_divisions/grand\\_jury/2002reports.php?page=02SMC-Bicycle.html](https://www.sanmateocourt.org/court_divisions/grand_jury/2002reports.php?page=02SMC-Bicycle.html)

safety was not a high priority. The primary recommendation of the report was the county, and all cities should develop a long-term strategic bicycle and safety plan.

A few things have changed since then.

Over the years, the focus of cities and the county on improving bike and pedestrian forms of transportation has increased:

- Bicycle maps and routes are now generally available online.
- The City/County Association of Governments (C/CAG) updated their San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan in 2011<sup>4</sup> and 2021<sup>5</sup>.
- California enacted Assembly Bill 1358, **California Complete Streets Act of 2008**<sup>6</sup>, requiring all cities and counties to include complete streets policies as part of any substantial revision to the circulation element of their general plans; and cities and the County have adopted these complete streets policies, noting these policies in their Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans, or Active Transportation Plans.
- SMC and most of its municipalities have created and consistently upgraded their Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans.
- Unincorporated San Mateo County has created an Active Transportation Plan<sup>7</sup> (Active Transportation is a term often used to cover walking, bicycling, and other motorized devices as a primary mode of transportation).
- C/CAG, Unincorporated SMC and some cities have created Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committees to address active transportation improvements, safety issues, and other citizen related requests.

Meanwhile, the number of bicyclists in San Mateo County has not increased since 2002, according to the California Household Travel Survey, which is regularly used for data on the number of bicyclists in a community, but is restricted to commuting.

The 2002 and 2012 surveys showed only 1% of SMC's population rides bicycles as a form of transportation. Looking at the various municipalities' Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans, and the surveys and counts discussed in the plans, bicycle commute ridership still hovers at approximately 1% within SMC.

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<sup>4</sup> [https://ccag.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/CBPP\\_Main-Report\\_Sept2011\\_FINAL.pdf](https://ccag.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/CBPP_Main-Report_Sept2011_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [https://ccag.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/6\\_A1\\_San-Mateo-County-Comprehensive-Bicycle-and-Pedestrian-Plan-Update-Final-Plan.pdf](https://ccag.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/6_A1_San-Mateo-County-Comprehensive-Bicycle-and-Pedestrian-Plan-Update-Final-Plan.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/07-08/bill/asm/ab\\_1351-1400/ab\\_1358\\_bill\\_20080930\\_chaptered.pdf](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/07-08/bill/asm/ab_1351-1400/ab_1358_bill_20080930_chaptered.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.smcsustainability.org/livable-communities/active-transportation/unincorporated-smc-active-transportation-plan/>

It is important to note that the number of people in SMC using bicycles in lieu of a car has not increased in 20 years. This is in contrast to the estimated number of recreational bicyclists (46%) in SMC, who also use streets and bicycle paths and expect a safe ride<sup>8</sup>.

However, even with roadway and signage improvements over the past 20 years, there is much San Mateo cities and the county can do to improve bicycle safety.

## **DISCUSSION**

The merits of bicycle riding may seem self-evident, but a wide range of research reveals often surprising benefits to local economies, personal health, the environment, traffic congestion, and pedestrian safety that are unique to bicycle friendly communities.

### **Health Benefits**

Bicycle riding contributes to both physical and mental health. Regular exercise such as cycling can help prevent heart issues<sup>9</sup> such as stroke, heart attack, high blood pressure, and may also help prevent and manage type 2 diabetes.<sup>10</sup> Riding a bicycle is good for cognitive health and emotional well-being and can ease feelings of stress, depression, or anxiety.<sup>11</sup>

All in all, bicycling for only 30 minutes a day reduces a person's chances of diabetes, dementia, depression, colon cancer, cardiovascular disease, anxiety and high blood pressure by 40 percent or more.<sup>12</sup>

The World Health Organization has found that "If every adult EU citizen walked or cycled for 15 extra minutes per day, we'd have 100,000 fewer people dying prematurely, each year."<sup>13</sup>

### **Environmental Benefits**

Among the most obvious benefits of cycling is its benign effects on the environment. A solo driver in an average car releases about 1.1 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> per mile.<sup>14</sup> A standard compact to midsize car that travels 12,000 miles will emit 11,000 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub>.<sup>15</sup> The average car produces about 1.3 billion cubic yards of polluted air over the course of its lifespan plus worn tire particles, brake wear, and the emissions from other materials in the car also contribute to air

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<sup>8</sup>[https://ccag.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/6\\_A1\\_San-Mateo-County-Comprehensive-Bicycle-and-Pedestrian-Plan-Update-Final-Plan.pdf](https://ccag.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/6_A1_San-Mateo-County-Comprehensive-Bicycle-and-Pedestrian-Plan-Update-Final-Plan.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/exercise-and-the-heart>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4942105/>

<sup>11</sup><https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/minding-the-body/201505/bicycling-can-sharpen-your-thinking-and-improve-your-mood>

<sup>12</sup> [https://www.exerciseismedicine.org/assets/page\\_documents/EIMFactSheet\\_2014.pdf](https://www.exerciseismedicine.org/assets/page_documents/EIMFactSheet_2014.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> <https://ecf.com/news-and-events/news/walking-and-cycling-reduce-congestion>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.sharetheroad.ca/what-are-the-environmental-traffic-congestion-benefits-of-cycling--s16223>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.treehugger.com/cars-are-causing-air-pollution-we-breathe-new-study-finds-4856825>

pollution.<sup>16</sup> Recent research in Europe found that traveling by bicycle instead of by car once a day decreases your transportation carbon footprint by 67%.<sup>17</sup>

## **Traffic**

As active transportation choices like walking and bicycling gain attention and popularity, researchers are beginning to investigate the role these travel modes can play in reducing traffic congestion.<sup>18</sup> Studies show that measures taken to promote bicycling and walking have a positive effect on congestion.

Research in Washington, DC identified a causal effect of the presence of a bike-share station on traffic congestion. The result is a 2-to-3% reduction in traffic congestion that can be attributed to the bike-share station within the sample.<sup>19</sup>

## **Economic Benefits**

Among the more surprising findings is the positive economic impact from an increase in bicycle usage but studies show that the bicycle-related economy creates jobs, economic activity, and cost savings.<sup>20</sup>

Bicycle trails and facilities have a positive, statistically significant impact on home values; a 2006 study in Minneapolis found that the median home values rose \$510 for every quarter mile they were located closer to an off-street bikeway.<sup>21</sup>

Indianapolis' Cultural Trail, an 8-mile network of separated bike and pedestrian lanes, has reinvigorated a number of struggling business districts and sparked a whopping \$1 billion in increased property values.<sup>22</sup>

And in an era when streets and sidewalks across the county are in various states of disrepair, bicycle projects can significantly reduce the cost of maintaining and expanding our transportation systems.<sup>23</sup> Even protected bicycle lanes are "dirt cheap to build compared to road projects," says Gabe Klein, a partner at Fontinalis, a venture capitalist firm founded by Ford Motor Co. Chairman Bill Ford. Cities everywhere need to be more efficient about the money they spend to move people. "We need to get more use from the streets we already have."

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<sup>16</sup> <https://www.scholaradvisor.com/essay-examples-for-college/bicycle-helps-reduce-air-pollution/>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1361920921000687>

<sup>18</sup> <https://kawarthanow.com/2019/01/17/reduce-traffic-congestion-bikes-can-do-that>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.resources.org/archives/commentary-does-bicycle-infrastructure-reduce-traffic-congestion/>

<sup>20</sup> <https://railyards.com/blog/7-benefits-of-bike-friendly-communities>

<sup>21</sup> <https://smartcity.press/bicycle-infrastructure-in-smart-city/>

<sup>22</sup> <https://indyculturaltrail.org/2015/07/23/economic-impact-figures-released/>

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/getting-around/info-2016/why-bicycling-infrastructure-is-good-for-people-who-dont-ride-bikes.html>

Research indicates that investments in cycling infrastructure generate more jobs per dollar spent than investments in road-only infrastructure; cycling projects create a total of 11.4 local jobs for each \$1 million spent while road-only projects create 9.6 jobs per \$1 million.<sup>24</sup>

Bicycle friendly communities are important to millennial job seekers and functional bicycle infrastructures help companies attract talent. “States and cities are competing for the most mobile generation ever and so the job creators and the innovators are really pushing for these amenities.”<sup>25</sup>

## **Safety**

The most comprehensive study of bicycle and road safety to date finds that building safe facilities for cyclists is one of the biggest factors in road safety for everyone. Bicycling infrastructure -- specifically, separated and protected bike lanes -- leads to fewer fatalities and better road-safety outcomes for all road users.<sup>26</sup>

Davis, CA was the first city to gain “platinum” status by the League of American Bicyclists and is often referred to as the “bicycle capital of America.” From 1996 to 2007, Davis only had nine fatal road crashes. Despite having the largest percentage of bike commuters in the United States, none of these accidents involved a bicyclist. With a fatal crash rate of less than 1.5 per 100,000 residents, far fewer people are killed on Davis’ roads than in the U.S. as a whole, which averaged 14.5 fatalities per 100,000 residents.

Portland, OR, another platinum bicycling city, saw a nearly 50% decrease in road fatalities as it increased its bicycle mode share from 1.2% in 1990 to 5.8% in 2000. Bike friendly communities are safer for all road users, no matter what type of transportation is being used.

## **Social Benefits**

Finally, bicycle riding as an alternative to car travel is associated with a number of social benefits, including increased social interaction, social networks, and social capital.<sup>27</sup> A bicycle rider has a completely different relationship with their environment than those who are cocooned in their cars.

When communities invest in bicycle infrastructure, everyone benefits. Overall, bicycle commuters are healthier and bicycle-friendly streets are safer for everyone on the road. Bicycle friendly communities reap economic benefits including more retail activity and increased home values. The evidence is clear: bicycling brings big benefits to communities who embrace it.

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<sup>24</sup> <https://www.sharetheroad.ca/what-are-the-environmental-traffic-congestion-benefits-of-cycling--s16223>

<sup>25</sup> <https://railyards.com/blog/7-benefits-of-bike-friendly-communities>

<sup>26</sup> [https://www.cnu.org/sites/default/files/marshallw\\_cnu18.pdf](https://www.cnu.org/sites/default/files/marshallw_cnu18.pdf)

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.peoplepoweredmovement.org/benefits-of-biking-walking/>



## Status Today

Twenty years after the first San Mateo Grand Jury report, significant gaps remain in jurisdictions' approach to bicycle safety:

- San Mateo County and its municipalities' characteristics make it difficult to create a consistent approach to bicycle safety.
- The use of bicycle safety education as a tool to increase safety for bicyclists and motorists is underutilized Countywide.
- Communication and coordinated planning across city lines is the exception, rather than the norm. Reporting of bicycle-related incidents is inconsistent throughout the county.
- Enforcement of bicycle laws, for motorists and bicyclists, is inconsistent and not prioritized.

## Bicycle Safety in San Mateo County Cities

Each city and town in San Mateo County is unique and has a different relationship with bicycle use and safety. These variations include:

- Topography
- Objectives and priorities re bicycles and ridership
- Safety Perception
- Infrastructure
- Impact of eBikes
- Role of enforcement in bicycle safety.

For example:

**Woodside and Portola Valley:** Woodside and Portola Valley are hill communities with narrow roads. Woodside has a very active Circulation Committee which keeps a close eye on large bicycling events in the community and Portola Valley is focused on managing bicyclists on the weekend. But in both cases, the communities concentrate on ensuring quality of life for residents. They both see mostly recreational bicyclists. Woodside has invested as much as \$1 million to ensure a "safe route to school" for the children. However, the communities don't make a strong effort to track riders or accidents. In both communities the Sheriff's Office, which is their policing arm, enforces rules at some problem locations, but not regularly.

**Hillsborough:** Hillsborough is a relatively insular community by nature of its location and topography. It has no commercial districts and is, to a large degree, rather hilly. The view on bicyclists is very much a neighborhood view: meaning the expectation is that if there are problems with bicyclists they are brought up by members of the neighborhoods. The primary focus on any kind of organized bicycling safety activity is efforts to teach children bicycle safety and safe routes to school at the beginning of the school year.

**Belmont:** Until quite recently, the City has been completely focused on ensuring that the community is comfortable for single family dwellings. However, areas close to El Camino Real are more commercial and have denser housing. The community now has both recreational and commuting bicyclists using the roads. While Belmont does have a bicycle master plan and holds an annual bike safety program for children and teenagers, more needs to be done. The City needs to obtain funding from external Federal, State and County sources to do more.

**Half Moon Bay:** Possibly more than any other community in San Mateo County, Half Moon Bay has a sophisticated, complex relationship with bicyclists. On the one hand, Half Moon Bay attracts many visitors -- both vacationers and visitors from other Bay Area communities; and on the other hand, it has a robust population of residents who use their bicycles to get to work, school, and stores. Moreover, while Half Moon Bay has many surface streets, it is dominated by Highways 1 and 92 which have many challenging safety issues. As a result, the community has a bicycle master plan that focuses on bicycle safety and traffic planning. Despite this very proactive approach, the City deals with sometimes devastating safety issues. However, it appears that concern for bicycle safety is shared by many of the participants in the community.

**San Mateo:** The City of San Mateo updated its bicycle master plan in 2020. As a result, the City has focused on a variety of contemporaneous issues. These include working to develop a roadway network which could accommodate both bicycles and other types of active transportation. The City believes that it still skews toward recreational bicycling but is finding that more people want to use bicycles as a way of getting around. The master plan covers some education issues such as safe routes to school and safe bicycling for seniors. The plan does not talk about safety per se but addresses it from the vantage point of education. Though the City is focused on these matters it still recognizes that there's more education to be done about the rules of the road for bicyclists.

**Unincorporated San Mateo County:** Large areas of San Mateo County are small towns, private land, and open space, bisected, primarily, by two lane roads and highways. To address bicycle safety in these areas, the county created the Unincorporated San Mateo County Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee. Though there is no explicit Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, they do contribute to the SMC Active Transportation plan. The Committee makes recommendations regarding bicycle and pedestrian related grants, but expressed frustration with money not being shared equitably. Additionally, the Committee inputs bicyclist's feedback. They are concerned with the number of incidents between motorists and bicyclists that are not addressed by law enforcement. The Committee has been working with the County Sheriff to address the problem.

These are just a few examples of San Mateo County and its municipalities' approach to bicycle safety. But because the communities are so diverse, thinking about bicycle safety needs to be broad-minded.

## **Bicycle Safety Education in SMC: Not just for cyclists**

Since bicycle safety is crucial to encouraging bicycle usage, it follows that bicycle safety education is an essential component of the bicycle safety equation.

According to the US Department of Transportation: “Educating people about safe bicycling and walking, enforcing laws that make it easier and safer for people to bicycle and walk, and encouraging people to bicycle and walk, may help increase walking and bicycling activity, especially when combined with infrastructure improvements.”<sup>28</sup>

Moreover, as noted on the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration’s Bicycle Safety web page, “A large percentage of crashes can be avoided if motorists and cyclists follow the rules of the road and watch out for each other.”<sup>29</sup>

In San Mateo County, much of the focus on bicycle safety and bicycle safety education is focused on ensuring safe routes to schools for children. Several communities, as detailed below, have much more comprehensive approaches to bicycle safety education in their Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans. Here are some examples:

- **Burlingame (Excerpt from the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan)**

Policy 11: Educate people walking, bicycling, and driving, and the general public about roadway safety and the benefits of bicycling and walking.

11.1: Support the continuation and expansion of bicycle safety education programs such as those taught by Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition and the San Mateo County Office of Education.

Policy 12: Encourage Burlingame public schools to participate in the Safe Routes to School program organized by the San Mateo County Office of Education.

- **Brisbane’s Master Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan examples:**

“Policy 4.A.5: Provide support for programs that educate drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians about their rights and responsibilities, as well as traffic education and safety programs for adults and youth.”

“Programs support bicycling and walking by providing encouragement to those considering bicycling and walking, education for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians about safe and appropriate sharing of streets and roads, and enforcement of traffic laws that help ensure the safety of vulnerable road users.”

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<sup>28</sup> [https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped\\_bike/ped\\_focus/docs/fhwasa17050.pdf](https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped_bike/ped_focus/docs/fhwasa17050.pdf)

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.nhtsa.gov/road-safety/bicycle-safety>

- **County Sheriff:**

The San Mateo County Sheriff’s office publishes a pamphlet, *Bicycle Safety*<sup>30</sup>, on the California Vehicle Code sections related to bicycle safety. One City, Woodside, references this document, which could be used by all cities, schools and police departments to improve bicycle safety education. However, the document is not available on the SMC Sheriff website.

- **City of San Mateo:**

San Mateo has some support for bicycle use and safety on its City website. The pages are listed in the table below.

EXISTING		
Support Program	Description	Webpage
Bicycle Webpage	There is brief text about bike routes and using a bike with public transport on the City’s webpage	<a href="http://www.cityofsanmateo.org/2125/Parking-and-Transportation">http://www.cityofsanmateo.org/2125/Parking-and-Transportation</a>
Bicycle Education Events	The city’s Public Works Department hosts an annual bike rodeo	<a href="http://www.cityofsanmateo.org/3736/Bike-Rodeo">http://www.cityofsanmateo.org/3736/Bike-Rodeo</a>

### **Moving to Excellent Bike Safety Education in all SMC Cities**

Overall, the approach to bicycle safety education in SMC communities is inconsistent. Several of the master plans recognize that bicycle safety education is about teaching motorists and cyclists of all ages about the guidelines for bicycle safety. Other communities either don’t focus much on education or are focused exclusively on “Safe Routes to School”.

Nonetheless, there are a handful of programs identified in the table below that creatively address bicycle safety, which San Mateo County and its municipalities should consider adopting.

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<sup>30</sup> [https://www.woodsidetown.org/sites/default/files/fileattachments/community/page/33495/bicycle\\_safety.pdf](https://www.woodsidetown.org/sites/default/files/fileattachments/community/page/33495/bicycle_safety.pdf)

<b>RECOMMENDED FOR ALL SMC CITIES</b>		
<b>Support Program</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Webpage</b>
Establish child and adult education programs	Identify and implement education programs for children and adults that build bicyclists' confidence, done in coordination with the Parks and Recreation Department, Police or Local Schools.	<a href="https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/565224">https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/565224</a>  <a href="http://www.cityofsanmateo.org/2125/Parking-and-Transportation">http://www.cityofsanmateo.org/2125/Parking-and-Transportation</a>
Establish Safe Routes to School Funding	Establish a stable funding source for Safe Routes to School programming	<a href="https://www.metro.net/projects/srts/fund-your-program">https://www.metro.net/projects/srts/fund-your-program</a>
Implement and promote demonstration projects	Implement short-term, high-visibility bicycle demonstration or 'pop-up' projects to serve as models that can be applied throughout the city. Market bicycle safety.	<a href="https://transportation.bellevuewa.gov/UserFiles/Servers/Server_4779004/File/Transportation/Publications/PBII_Demo%20Bikeway%20Brochure_20180205.pdf">https://transportation.bellevuewa.gov/UserFiles/Servers/Server_4779004/File/Transportation/Publications/PBII_Demo%20Bikeway%20Brochure_20180205.pdf</a>
Provide safety education program for users of all modes	Provide safety education programs or communications campaigns for people driving, bicycling, walking, and using micro mobility devices that encourage safe travel behaviors.	<a href="http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/">http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/</a>
Create a robust bicycling webpage	Develop and maintain a content rich mobility webpage(s) on the County/City website and communicate how to reach city destinations by bike, on foot or on micro-mobility devices. Include information on these transportation options.	<a href="https://www.metro.net/riding/go-bike">https://www.metro.net/riding/go-bike</a>  <a href="http://www.cityofsanmateo.org/2125/Parking-and-Transportation">http://www.cityofsanmateo.org/2125/Parking-and-Transportation</a>

## **Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plans and Advisory Committees: Planning Across the County**

The 2002 SMC Grand Jury Report recommended that all municipalities create Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans. As a best practice, the municipalities were encouraged to form Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committees.

To date, almost all San Mateo County jurisdictions or cities have Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans, or Active Transportation Plans. Most, if not all of these plans, align with recommendations from the 2011 C/CAG's San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. The 2021 update of C/CAG's plan enhances and adds to the 2011 C/CAG San Mateo County plan, but most of the cities and towns have not updated their plans to be consistent with the 2021 plan. (See Appendix D for a complete list of San Mateo County's Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plans.)

The cities' bicycle and pedestrian master plans help each city by identifying strategies to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety. The plans recommend improvements for roadway connectivity for bicyclists and pedestrians, within each city as well as with neighboring cities. Numerous plans reference the Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition and the League of American Bicyclists (LAB) as organizations that have certified instructors for bicycle safety education. At least several of the plans also discuss the LAB Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card to which five SMC cities and San Mateo County belong. The plans list potential State and Federal funding for projects that improve safety and roadway connectivity and make clear the importance of annually evaluating and tracking progress against objectives.

However, in SMC, County committees and municipalities do not always work together to generate consistent plans that meet C/CAG's goal for a Countywide bicycle backbone. Though C/CAG does have an advisory committee which includes representatives from municipalities, it does not have control over what individual municipalities decide to do regarding grant applications, infrastructure projects for better bicycle and pedestrian safety and education initiatives. If the municipalities endeavored to work together to prioritize projects and programs that are consistent with C/CAG's priorities, it would benefit all of San Mateo County, especially with respect to providing north-south connectivity between municipalities.

### **Metrics: If you don't measure it, you can't improve it.**

One important measure of bicycle safety is arriving safely at a destination. This is usually reflected in the negative; that is, the number of fatalities and injuries during a calendar year versus the number of successful bicycle trips.

In San Mateo County, the cities and county rely heavily on data supplied to the California Highway Patrol (CHP) to state the number of fatalities and injuries. The CHP then maintains a database, SWITRS (California Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System), which is accessible

to the public. And, UC Berkeley maintains a website, TIMS<sup>31</sup> (Transportation Injury Mapping System), which can further refine the raw data from SWITRS.

However, relying on this data to evaluate Bicycle Safety is problematic.

Law enforcement agencies in the County submit their bicycle accident data to SWITRS based on incidents that result in fatality or injury. However, there are bicycle accidents resulting in injury which don't make it into SWITRS because law enforcement is not called. Some examples are bicyclists being forced off the road by motor vehicles, collision near misses and, of course, bicyclist error. Consequently, the actual number of bicycle accidents is underreported and, more importantly, the list of accident locations is not complete. Cyclists that have an incident that does not involve either the police or the fire department do not have a consistent means to log their experience. That data goes unreported. And this goes both ways; there is no means for a motorist to complain about bicycle riders' unsafe behavior.

Countywide there is no uniform metric to measure Bicycle Safety. Without such a measure, it's impossible to assess progress while building infrastructure, enforcing laws, and educating everyone in safety principles.

An obvious metric is bicycle accidents as recorded by SWITRS and online reports, but there is another metric which evaluates the complex equation that results in safe bicycling: ***Bicycle Friendly America Certification***<sup>32</sup>.

The League of American Cyclists is a national organization dedicated to creating "safer roads, stronger communities and a Bicycle Friendly America for everyone." This is a grassroots organization dedicated since 1880 to protecting the right to safe and enjoyable bicycling. A valuable achievement of this organization is establishing the Bicycle Friendly America (BFA) certification for cities and counties. This consists of a very detailed application<sup>33</sup> that a city or county official fills out to get a comprehensive rating of bicycle safety. BFA defines bicycle safety using 5 E's:

- Equity and Accessibility: A bicycle-friendly America for everyone
- Engineering: Creating safe and creative places to ride and park
- Education: Giving people of all ages and abilities the skills and confidence to ride
- Encouragement: Creating a strong bike culture that welcomes and celebrates bicycling
- Evaluation and Planning: Planning for bicycling as a safe and viable transportation option [Note that Enforcement, a common element in the 5 E's of safety, is not included in the BFA definition.]

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<sup>31</sup><https://tims.berkeley.edu/summary.php?showArea=city&expandTables=false&injury=3&yearRange=3&showMap=crashes>

<sup>32</sup> <https://bikeleague.org/bfa/>

<sup>33</sup> <https://bicyclefriendly.secure-platform.com/a/organizations/main/home>

The application covers the BFA 5 E's and investigates what it calls the 10 building blocks of a Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC). Finally, the rating includes steps to reaching the next level of excellence. Oakland in 2022, for example, received a GOLD rating Report Card<sup>34</sup> having been BRONZE in 2010 and SILVER in 2014. The following cities and SMC have received the following ratings:

- Menlo Park<sup>35</sup>: GOLD: 2017
- Redwood City<sup>36</sup>: BRONZE: 2016
- San Carlos<sup>37</sup>: BRONZE: 2016
- San Mateo<sup>38</sup>: BRONZE: 2016
- South San Francisco<sup>39</sup>: BRONZE: 2018
- San Mateo County<sup>40</sup>: BRONZE: 2016

The BFC Report Card is a valuable metric that all cities and the County should make use of. If SMC cities develop the information necessary to answer objective and comprehensive questions about bicycle safety, each jurisdiction would have a consistent metric that can be used to measure bicycle safety progress across the County.

### **Law Enforcement and Bicycle Safety**

Laws regarding the operation of bicycles are in the California Vehicle Code (CVC), but in general, bicycles are governed by the same rules of the road as motor vehicles.

SMC law enforcement organizations are concerned that there is currently no way for them to track bicycle, pedestrian, and vehicle accidents, from near misses to actual contact, that did not require police involvement. And, even if an incident or infraction is reported, an officer may or may not go out to speak with the complainant.

Other than the initial report, there is no single repository in SMC to store and retrieve information regarding bicycle-related citations or enforcement of bicycle law so it can be used in the future.

And perhaps most importantly, the enforcement of laws, regarding motorists and bicyclists, is inconsistent due to competing priorities and the requirement that a citation requires an incident be witnessed by an officer.

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<sup>34</sup> [https://bikeleague.org/sites/default/files/bfareportcards/BFC\\_Fall\\_2022\\_ReportCard\\_Oakland\\_CA.pdf](https://bikeleague.org/sites/default/files/bfareportcards/BFC_Fall_2022_ReportCard_Oakland_CA.pdf)

<sup>35</sup> [https://bikeleague.org/sites/default/files/bfareportcards/BFC\\_Fall\\_2017\\_ReportCard\\_Menlo\\_Park\\_CA.pdf](https://bikeleague.org/sites/default/files/bfareportcards/BFC_Fall_2017_ReportCard_Menlo_Park_CA.pdf)

<sup>36</sup> [https://bikeleague.org/sites/default/files/bfareportcards/BFC\\_Spring\\_2016\\_ReportCard\\_Redwood\\_City\\_CA.pdf](https://bikeleague.org/sites/default/files/bfareportcards/BFC_Spring_2016_ReportCard_Redwood_City_CA.pdf)

<sup>37</sup> [https://bikeleague.org/sites/default/files/bfareportcards/BFC\\_Fall\\_2016\\_ReportCard\\_San\\_Carlos\\_CA.pdf](https://bikeleague.org/sites/default/files/bfareportcards/BFC_Fall_2016_ReportCard_San_Carlos_CA.pdf)

<sup>38</sup> [https://bikeleague.org/sites/default/files/bfareportcards/BFC\\_Fall\\_2016\\_ReportCard\\_San\\_Mateo\\_CA.pdf](https://bikeleague.org/sites/default/files/bfareportcards/BFC_Fall_2016_ReportCard_San_Mateo_CA.pdf)

<sup>39</sup> [https://bikeleague.org/sites/default/files/bfareportcards/BFC\\_Fall\\_2018\\_ReportCard\\_South\\_San\\_Francisco\\_CA.pdf](https://bikeleague.org/sites/default/files/bfareportcards/BFC_Fall_2018_ReportCard_South_San_Francisco_CA.pdf)

<sup>40</sup> [https://bikeleague.org/sites/default/files/bfareportcards/BFC\\_Spring\\_2016\\_ReportCard\\_San\\_Mateo\\_County\\_CA.pdf](https://bikeleague.org/sites/default/files/bfareportcards/BFC_Spring_2016_ReportCard_San_Mateo_County_CA.pdf)



## **Conflicting Priorities**

Law enforcement prioritizes assets based on the needs of the community, as well as their operating budget, when it comes to providing services. While public and political prioritization of bicycle safety issues may come up from time to time, calls for service are always prioritized. This results in minimal officer resources dedicated to bicycle safety.

Police forces will:

- Focus resources or staff on bicycle safety, if there is an uptick in accidents at a particular location, citizen requests/calls, or requests from a jurisdiction’s public works or traffic departments to focus on certain locations; or
- Provide teams to schools and special events for bicycle safety education
- Much less often, assign their police officers to bicycle safety duty exclusively (some police departments do have officers that patrol on bicycles).

In addition, law enforcement agencies do not always enforce eBike laws, but this is mostly due to the popularity of eBikes being ahead of law enforcement policies.

Because of these conflicting priorities, and limited staff, enforcement of bicycle laws pertaining to motorists as well as bicyclists appears to be underreported.

## **Policing Bicycles and eBikes**

Law enforcement departments in the county are very aware of the importance of bicycle safety. Common sense says people generally want the streets to be safe for motor vehicles which translates to most officer resources going to motor vehicle enforcement.

It’s possible that safer bicycle riding could lead to fewer cars and free up police resources for more pressing issues.

## **The New 3’ Law for Motorists and Bicycles**

In January 2023, California amended the California Vehicle Code (CVC). The new law (AB. 1909) requires all motorists to give a bicyclist three feet of clearance when passing on the left-hand side of the bicyclist or (depending on the width of the road) reduce speed appropriately, when passing. (See CVC: 21750 (b) (c) (d)). This is particularly crucial on narrow two-lane roads where there are many reports of bicyclists being forced off the road or hit by motor vehicles.

Hampering the situation is the requirement that a citation can only be written if the incident is witnessed by the officer. With the advent of helmet-worn cameras, cyclists have attempted to record these incidents with the hope that the recording can be used as “visual evidence”. But this evidence, post incident, cannot be used to issue a citation.

The San Mateo County Sheriff’s Department recently announced it will allow the public to submit these incidents on the Sheriff’s website.<sup>41</sup> These reports have since resulted in the

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<sup>41</sup><https://www.almanacnews.com/news/2023/05/12/bicyclists-can-now-report-3-foot-rule-violations-online-in-san-mateo-county>

department sending a violation letter to the offending motorist; this is not a citation. However, only incidents that occur in unincorporated San Mateo County, Woodside, Portola Valley, San Carlos, Half Moon Bay, and Millbrae can use this online resource.

### **Citations vs. Reprimands for Education Purposes:**

It is at the officer's discretion, when addressing a law infraction, to issue a citation or give a reprimand. One advantage of a reprimand is that it creates an opportunity to educate. With officers focusing on education, these brief encounters, cumulatively, can do a lot to improve bicycle safety, for bicyclists and motorists. But only if these reprimand stops are recorded officially can an accurate picture of bicycle safety be established.

### **FINDINGS**

F1. Bicycle policy and the approach to ensuring/improving bicycle safety is not consistent across San Mateo County due, at least in part, to:

- a. Topography
- b. Urban vs. suburban environments
- c. Types of bicyclists (commuter, recreational)
- d. Varying levels of enforcement of bicycle laws
- e. Differing knowledge of bicycle laws and safe practices.

F2. Bicycle ridership as an alternative means of transportation (e.g., commuting to work, school, or transit hubs, running errands) is not increasing due, at least in part, to perceived safety issues.

F3. Bicycle accidents and incidents (such as near misses) are underreported, if reported at all.

F4. Only bicycle accidents or incidents that trigger a 911 call are consistently logged in the State (SWITRS) database and law enforcement agencies do not log bicycle accident data consistently.

F5. The amount of enforcement of laws, as they pertain to bicyclists and how motorists and bicyclists interact, is inconsistent due to other priorities (e.g., criminal enforcement and general automobile traffic) and the requirement that a citation can generally only be written if the violation is witnessed by an officer.

F6. There is no official metric in San Mateo County and its cities to evaluate how safe it is to ride a bicycle.

F7. Bicycle safety education, for the bicyclist, pedestrians and motorists, is not consistently offered across San Mateo County.

F8. Communication between various entities with responsibility for bicycle safety, including Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committees (BPACs), Law Enforcement, City Transportation Planning, and Public Works departments, is not formalized, resulting in inefficiencies, and missed opportunities (e.g., funding for improvements, shared bike safety education, or improving signage).

F9. City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans or Active Transportation Plans, have not been adopted/created by all SMC cities.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

R1. By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies and the County Sheriff should submit bicycle related data to SWITRS monthly, and regularly post and update their websites with all reported bicycle accident data.

R2. By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies should begin sending warning letters to motorists for violations of the 3 ft. law.

R3. By June 3, 2024, all law enforcement agencies should provide a means for citizens to report bicycle-related incidents that are not currently reported to law enforcement, similar to the SMC Sheriff's Department Online Crime Reporting portal.

R4. By June 3, 2024 each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should offer a bike safety education program for riders and motorists about the laws and safety facts related to bicycles on the road.

R5. By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should update or generate a new Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (or Active Transportation Plan) if their current plan is older than five years; consistent with the 2021 C/CAG San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

R6. By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and the county should apply (or reapply) online to generate the Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card.

R7. By February 1, 2024, the County should meet with cities within the County that are willing to participate, to consider establishing a regional effort that integrates the cities' bicycle plans and to discuss how the cities and County could work together to apply for grant opportunities as a region.

## **REQUESTS FOR RESPONSES**

Pursuant to Penal Code Section 933.05, the Civil Grand Jury requests responses from the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, County Sheriff and all 20 cities and towns' governing bodies for each Finding and Recommendation.

The governing bodies should be aware that their comments or responses must be conducted subject to the Brown Act's notice, agenda, and open meeting requirements.

## **RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS**

California Penal Code Section 933.05, provides (emphasis added):

(a) For purposes of subdivision (b) of Section 933, as to each grand jury finding, the responding person or entity shall report one of the following:

- (1) The respondent **agrees** with the finding.
  - (2) The respondent **disagrees** wholly or partially with the finding; in which case the response **shall specify the portion of the finding that is disputed and shall include an explanation of the reasons, therefore.**
- (b) For purposes of subdivision (b) of Section 933, as to each grand jury recommendation, the responding person or entity shall report one of the following actions:
- (1) The recommendation has been implemented, **with a summary regarding the implemented action.**
  - (2) The recommendation has not been implemented, but will be implemented in the future, **with a timeframe for implementation.**
  - (3) The recommendation requires further analysis, **with an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a timeframe for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or head of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. This timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the grand jury report.**
  - (4) The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable, **with an explanation, therefore.**

## METHODOLOGY

The Grand Jury used a variety of tools to obtain information regarding bicycle riding and safety in San Mateo County:

- **Documents:** The Bike and Pedestrian Master Plans that cities use to explain approaches to planning, prioritizing projects, and re-engineering their communities to make riding and walking easier and safer. These documents came with a variety of titles:
  - Bike and Pedestrian Master Plans
  - Active Transportation Plans
  - Micro-Mobility Plans
  - Transportation Plans
- **Internet:** Almost all the historical and current information (including the availability of documents) regarding bicycle safety came from internet searches. Information from those searches was verified.
- **Survey:** The Grand Jury sent a survey in December 2022 using Google Forms to understand whether the cities believe eBikes were an issue in their communities. The results helped in defining the broader issue of bicycle safety.
  - The survey questions and results are in Appendix A.
  - Participants: The survey was sent to all the cities in SMC and, specifically, the City Managers. Many chose to have the chief of police of their city fill out the survey. Two cities did not respond to the survey.
- **Interviews:** The survey helped the Grand Jury develop a list of individuals for interviews. The questions for the interview came as a result of the investigation's pivot to the state of bicycle safety in San Mateo County as a general topic.
  - Participants:
    - Cities: Belmont, Daly City, Half Moon Bay, Hillsborough, Pacifica, Portola Valley, San Mateo, Woodside
    - Unincorporated San Mateo County
    - Police Departments: Burlingame, Foster City, Hillsborough, Redwood City, South San Francisco
    - Sheriff of SMC
    - BPACs: CCAG, Unincorporated SMC
    - CyclistVideoEvidence.com: Craig Davis

## GLOSSARY

3 ft. Rule – Motorists must yield at least 3 feet between their vehicle and a bicyclist on all roadways. This rule was amended by State legislation through Assembly Bill 1909, approved by the Governor in 2022, and commencing January 2024. Additionally, this bill requires a vehicle that is passing or overtaking a vehicle to move over to an adjacent lane of traffic, as specified, if one is available, before passing or overtaking the bicycle.

Active Transportation - A means of getting around that is powered by human energy, primarily walking and bicycling.

BFA – Bike Friendly America. A program sponsored by the League of American Bicyclists to evaluate communities with respect to their support for bicycling. As of December 2022, 501 communities are certified.

BFC – Bike Friendly Community. A Bike Friendly Awards Report Card that is given to a community that applies for a ranking (i.e., Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum).

BPAC – Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee

CATSIP – California Active Transportation Safety Information Pages. An online resource for improving pedestrian and bicycle safety in California. This site is administered by UC Berkeley Safe Transportation Research and Education Center (SafeTREC)<sup>42</sup>. Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety<sup>43</sup>, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

C/CAG – City County Association of Governments of San Mateo County

Bicycle Roadways

- Bike paths (Class I): also termed shared-use or multi-use paths, are paved rights-of-way for exclusive use by bicyclists, pedestrians and those using non-motorized modes of travel. They are physically separated from vehicular traffic and can be constructed in roadway rights-of-way or exclusive rights-of-way. Bike paths provide critical connections in the city where roadways are absent or are not conducive to bicycle travel.
- Bike lanes (Class II): are defined by pavement striping and signage used to allocate a portion of a roadway for exclusive or preferential bicycle travel. Bike lanes are one-way facilities on either side of a roadway. Whenever possible, bike lanes should be enhanced with treatments that improve safety and connectivity by addressing site-specific issues, such as additional warning or wayfinding signage.
- Bike routes (Class III): provide shared use with motor vehicle traffic within the same travel lane. Designated by signs, bike routes provide continuity to other bike facilities or designate preferred routes through corridors with high demand. Whenever possible, bike

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<sup>42</sup> <http://safetrec.berkeley.edu/>

<sup>43</sup> <http://www.ots.ca.gov/>

routes should be enhanced with treatments that improve safety and connectivity, such as the use of "Sharrows" or shared lane markings to delineate the road as a shared-use facility.

- Cycle tracks (Class IV): Also referred to as protected bikeways, are exclusive bike facilities that combine the user experience of a separated path with the on-street infrastructure of a conventional bike lane. A cycle track is physically separated from motor traffic and distinct from the sidewalk. The separation may be in the form of posts, parked cars or a combination of both.

eBike – motorized bicycle that comes in three different classes:

- Class I: Bicycle equipped with a motor that aids only when pedaling and ceases when 20 mph is reached.
- Class II: Same capability as a Class 1 eBike with a throttle-actuated motor. No pedaling required when operated with the throttle.
- Class III: Bicycle equipped with a motor that aids only when pedaling and ceases when 28 mph is reached.

GJ – Grand Jury

MTC – Metropolitan Transportation Commission is the transportation planning, financing, and coordinating agency for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area.

SHARROW – Sharrows are pavement markings that have been installed on city streets to provide guidance for both bicyclists and vehicles on roadways when sharing the road.

SMC ATP: San Mateo County Active Transportation Plan is a comprehensive framework to guide the development of active transportation projects and programs for walking, bicycling, and other forms of human powered movement for people of all ages and abilities throughout unincorporated County communities.

SWITRS – California Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System.

TIMS – Transportation Injury Mapping System developed by the Safe Transportation Research & Education Center at the University of California, Berkeley.

TR-INST Form – Notice to Appear form used by law enforcement for law infractions.

## **APPENDIX A: Bicycle Safety Best Practices**

### **Bicycle Education Best Practices**

There are two excellent examples of California communities that are investing in Bike Safety education: Davis and San Diego.

#### **San Diego Bike Coalition:**

This is an excellent reference tool to see all the kinds of bicycle safety education that can be offered and the resources that can be used to teach those courses. Again, the classes range from those for a variety of ages of bicyclists, basic bicycling, bicycle friendly motorist safety, and others.

<https://sdbikecoalition.org/our-work/education/>

#### **Davis, California:**

The City of Davis, CA, which is one of the leading bicycle communities in the US, has several pages of information about bike safety education on its website.

<https://www.cityofdavis.org/city-hall/public-works-engineering-and-transportation/bike-pedestrian-program>

#### **Two Cities Committed to Bicycling: Portland, Oregon and Davis, California**

Portland and Davis have become famous for their commitment to supporting bicycling, not only as recreational, but also as a true commuter alternative to motor vehicles and public transportation. Both have received the Platinum rating for a Bicycle Friendly Community from The League of American Bicyclists, while being quite different communities.

Portland is a large city of 622,000 residents with similar topography to the linked San Mateo County cities along El Camino Real: hilly and flat lands, urban centers, urban neighborhoods, suburbia, and major freeways. Portland advertises itself as “Bicycle Friendly” and claimed the highest percentage of bike commuters in US large cities in 2019 at 6% (Portland does annual bike ride census counts). Portland started investing in bicycle infrastructure with the acceptance of the 1973 Portland Bike Plan and the formation of a Bicycle Advisory Committee within the City Transportation Department. Since then, it has created:

- 385 miles of bikeways
- 36 miles of protected bike lanes
- A pedestrian and bicycle only bridge over the Willamette River and protected bike lanes on other bridges
- Intersections with bicycle specific traffic signals



- Bicycle boxes<sup>44</sup> at intersections to raise the visibility for motorists turning right
- A Safe Routes for Schools serving 100 schools
- 6500 bike racks to meet increased demand for safe stow of bicycles
- 3 bicycle plans over 40 years that establish policy, goals and a bikeway network
- \$60 M spent to 2008 on bicycle infrastructure (one mile of installed freeway costs \$60M)

Portland's safety record is very good for a large city: 4.3% of all traffic injury accidents from 2015-2019 are bicycle related. In comparison, San Francisco's number is 14% for the same period. Portland also does better than San Mateo County (8%) and a representative city, Redwood City (10%).

Davis in California is a small city between San Francisco and Sacramento with a population of 66,800. It has earned a nationwide reputation for supporting bicycles in its community (there is a bicycle on the city logo). The topography of Davis could not be flatter and more conducive to bicycle riding. The current statistics indicate that 20% of Davis's population commutes on bicycles. In 1967, Davis was the first community in the US to develop dedicated bicycle lanes (a total of 4!). The origins of this project were a couple that had visited the Netherlands, often cited as the most bicycle friendly nation in the world. They were so impressed with the bicycle infrastructure that they started a grassroots movement in Davis to promote safe bicycle riding. The group had to overcome CA law that did not support bike lanes on city streets, but once the law was revised, Davis proceeded to create bicycle infrastructure throughout the City:

- 63 miles of pathways
- 102 miles of bike lanes
- 75% of roads have a posted speed limit of 25 mph
- Of the 169 miles in the road network, 140 miles of roads are posted at 25 mph or less., 21 miles of roads are posted at between 25 mph and 35 mph, and 8 miles of roads posted over 35 mph
- 1 mile of bicycle boulevards
- 1 mile of cycle track
- 4 miles of buffered bike lanes
- 4,300 bike racks within the City and over 2,000 bike racks downtown
- 25 grade separated crossings. Four overpasses and 21 underpass crossings. Grade-separated crossings are used to move people on bikes and pedestrians over and under barriers like railroad tracks, busy roads, and the freeway.

Davis's bicycle accidents with injury (and fatalities) are high for a city of its size. However, the number of total accidents with injury is also very low compared to cities of comparable size. For

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<sup>44</sup> <https://nacto.org/publication/urban-bikeway-design-guide/intersection-treatments/bike-boxes/>

example: in 2019 there were 60 bicycle accidents with injury and 221 total vehicle injury accidents resulting in 27% of all vehicular accidents involving a bicycle. Redwood City's number is 4.8%, but their number of bicycle commuters is less than 1%. If you look at the percentage of accidents with respect to the biking population for 2019, Davis's percentage is .4% and Redwood City's percentage is 2.4%. Davis's safety statistics are very good, given the number of bicycle riders.

Both Portland and Davis are renowned environments for bicycle riders because they committed early to bicycle infrastructure and consistently improved it over the years. The city government and the school systems actively support bicycle education. Both cities conduct counts to determine bicycle use. They are both advocates of the Vision Zero policy to reduce accidents and fatalities. They use the Bicycle Friendly Community evaluation process to assess their progress towards their bicycle plans and goals.

Disclosure: Portland, beginning in 2020, noted a decline in bicycle commuter percentages. Thinking it was an aberration of the pandemic shutdown, it continued to do annual bike counts. As of 2022, its percentage had gone down to 3.1%. The current theory of why there has been a decline is assumed to be the increase of work from home. Regardless, Portland continues to make improvements to its bicycle infrastructure and safety.

**APPENDIX B: San Mateo County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan List**

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Name of Report</b>	<b>Link to Report</b>
Atherton	Jul 2014	Town of Atherton Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan	<a href="https://www.ci.atherton.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/1381/Atherton-BPMP_Proposed-Final-July-2014?bidId=">https://www.ci.atherton.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/1381/Atherton-BPMP_Proposed-Final-July-2014?bidId=</a>
Belmont	Nov 2016	City of Belmont Comprehensive Pedestrian & Bicycle Plan	<a href="https://www.belmont.gov/home/show/publisheddocument/14951/636179086799900000">https://www.belmont.gov/home/show/publisheddocument/14951/636179086799900000</a>
Brisbane	Feb 2017	Brisbane Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan	<a href="https://www.brisbaneca.org/sites/default/files/fileattachments/public_works/page/149/bikepedmasterplanappendices.pdf">https://www.brisbaneca.org/sites/default/files/fileattachments/public_works/page/149/bikepedmasterplanappendices.pdf</a>
Burlingame	Dec 2020	City of Burlingame Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan	<a href="https://www.burlingame.org/business_detail_T54_R154.php">https://www.burlingame.org/business_detail_T54_R154.php</a>
Colma	Feb 2021	Colma El Camino Real Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvement Plan	<a href="https://www.colma.ca.gov/documents/ecr-improvement-plan/">https://www.colma.ca.gov/documents/ecr-improvement-plan/</a>

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Name of Report</b>	<b>Link to Report</b>
Daly City	Feb 2020	Walk Bike Daly City; City of Daly City Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan 2020	<a href="https://dalycity.org/1106/Daly-City-Pedestrian-and-Bicycle-Master-">https://dalycity.org/1106/Daly-City-Pedestrian-and-Bicycle-Master-</a>
East Palo Alto	Oct 2017	2017 East Palo Alto Bicycle Transportation Plan	<a href="https://www.cityofepa.org/sites/default/files/fileattachments/planning/page/2801/reso_4905_adopting_2017_bicycle_transportation_plan.pdf">https://www.cityofepa.org/sites/default/files/fileattachments/planning/page/2801/reso_4905_adopting_2017_bicycle_transportation_plan.pdf</a>
Half Moon Bay	Sep 2019	City of Half Moon Bay Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan	<a href="https://www.half-moon-bay.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/2243/Bicycle-and-Pedestrian-Master-Plan-Final?bidId=">https://www.half-moon-bay.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/2243/Bicycle-and-Pedestrian-Master-Plan-Final?bidId=</a>
Menlo Park	Nov 2020	City of Menlo Park Transportation Master Plan	<a href="https://beta.menlopark.org/Government/Departments/Public-Works/Transportation-Division/Bicycling">https://beta.menlopark.org/Government/Departments/Public-Works/Transportation-Division/Bicycling</a>
Millbrae	2021/2022	City of Millbrae Active Transportation Plan	<a href="https://www.ci.millbrae.ca.us/home/showpublisheddocument/25807/637787902014030000">https://www.ci.millbrae.ca.us/home/showpublisheddocument/25807/637787902014030000</a>

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Name of Report</b>	<b>Link to Report</b>
Pacifica	Feb 2020	City of Pacifica Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan	<a href="https://www.cityofpacifica.org/departments/public-works/engineering/bicycle-pedestrian-master-plan">https://www.cityofpacifica.org/departments/public-works/engineering/bicycle-pedestrian-master-plan</a>
Redwood City	July 2018	Redwood City Moves, A Comprehensive Assessment of Transportation with Redwood City	
San Bruno	Jul 2016	City of San Bruno Walk 'n Bike Plan	<a href="https://sanbruno.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1733/Adopted-San-Bruno-Walk-n-Bike-Plan-PDF">https://sanbruno.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1733/Adopted-San-Bruno-Walk-n-Bike-Plan-PDF</a>
San Carlos	Jun 2020	City of San Carlos Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan Final	<a href="https://www.cityofsancarlos.org/home/showpublisheddocument/8139/638155282314370000">https://www.cityofsancarlos.org/home/showpublisheddocument/8139/638155282314370000</a>
San Mateo	Apr 2020	San Mateo Bicycle Master Plan April 2020 Final	<a href="https://www.cityofsanmateo.org/DocumentCenter/View/85445/2020-Bike-Master-Plan_Final_Updated-62021?bidId=">https://www.cityofsanmateo.org/DocumentCenter/View/85445/2020-Bike-Master-Plan_Final_Updated-62021?bidId=</a>

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Name of Report</b>	<b>Link to Report</b>
South San Francisco	Mar 2022	Active South City: South San Francisco's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan Draft	<a href="https://activesouthcity.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/SSF-ActiveSouthCity_PublicDraft_31March2022_plan_only.pdf">https://activesouthcity.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/SSF-ActiveSouthCity_PublicDraft_31March2022_plan_only.pdf</a>
San Mateo County	2021	2021 C/CAG San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan	<a href="https://ccag.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/San-Mateo-County-Comprehensive-Bicycle-and-Pedestrian-Plan-Update-Final-Plan.pdf">https://ccag.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/San-Mateo-County-Comprehensive-Bicycle-and-Pedestrian-Plan-Update-Final-Plan.pdf</a>

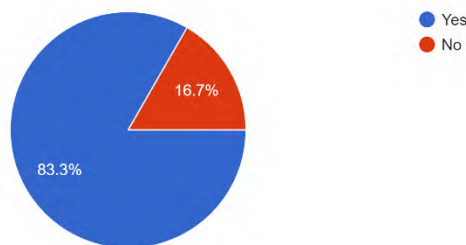
## APPENDIX C: Survey Questions and Results

This is a summary of the responses:

1. Cities and law enforcement do not track bicycle and eBike accident statistics separately; in fact, most respondents did not track eBike specific data at all (94%).
2. Complaints on Class I Bicycle Roadways include speeding and not yielding to pedestrians.
3. Complaints on Class II and III Bicycle Roadways include speeding, improper signaling, mixed use of bikes/eBikes and violation of the 3 ft. Rule.
4. Of 361 citations issued, only 11 were specifically for eBikes. It is impossible to know if there were more eBikes in violation as there is no requirement to ID the type of bicycle when filling out the form.
5. Class 3 eBikes are more powerful machines and have specific laws regarding usage. Only 50% of the respondents were enforcing the Class 3 eBike laws.
6. Complaints and incidents regarding bicycles (from riders or others) come mostly through police reports, but also from input to City Halls, Redwood City’s “app”, city planning, parks and recreation.
7. 1/3 respondents said there has been an increase in complaints regarding bicycles in the last three years (speeding, underage use, reckless behavior, vehicular code).
8. 2/3 of respondents said there had not been an increase in complaints regarding eBikes and 25% said they didn’t know.
9. Civilian bicycle complaints are generally not available to the public (over 50% of respondents).
10. 44% of respondents said they don’t provide bicycle safety education.
11. Enforcement of bicycle-related law is done where appropriate, with discretionary authority. Effort is made to educate at the time of the infraction. Additional enforcement is budget driven.
12. Future planning for the regulation of bicycles and eBikes varies greatly in the responses (see Question II-16 in Appendix A).

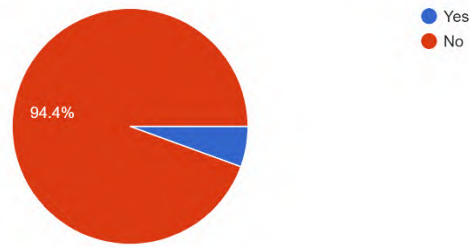
List of responses to questions (on the next page):

I-1: Do you track Bicycle accident statistics?  
18 responses



I-2: Do you maintain eBike specific statistics with regard to accidents?

18 responses

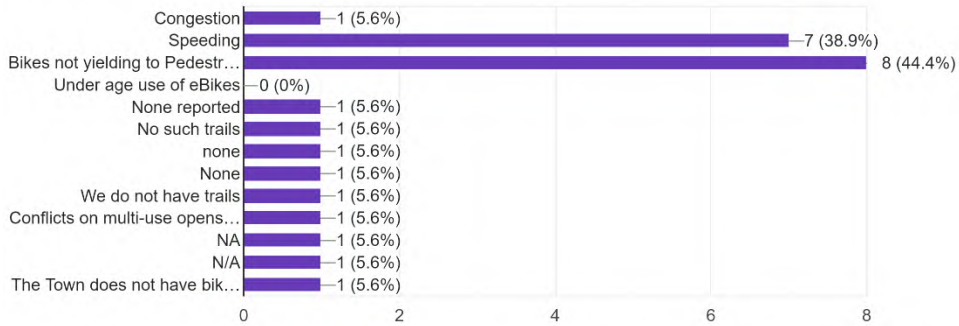


**Number of bicycle accidents in 2022? 212**

**Number of bicycle accidents in 2020 to the end of 2021? 307**

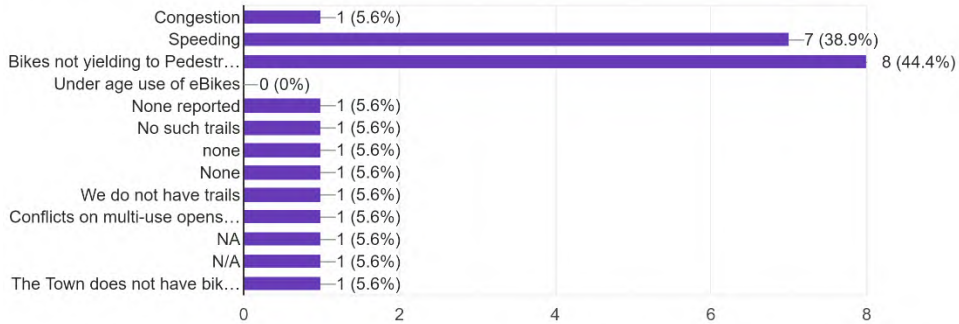
I-5: What are the safety issues on Bike/Ped Only Trails? Pick all that apply.

18 responses



I-5: What are the safety issues on Bike/Ped Only Trails? Pick all that apply.

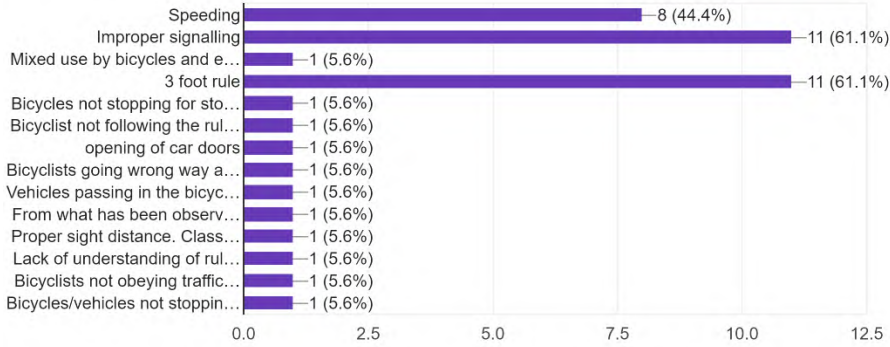
18 responses





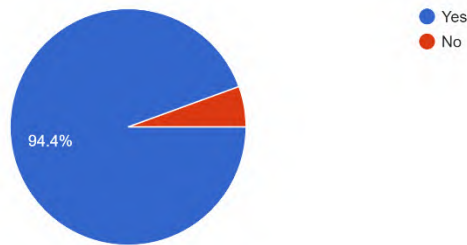
I-6: What are the safety issues for Bicycle Lanes shared with Vehicular Traffic? Pick all that apply.

18 responses



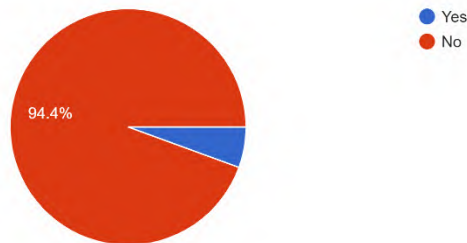
II-1: Are you aware of the laws governing Bicycles and eBikes?

18 responses



II-2: Do you have city codes governing eBikes only?

18 responses

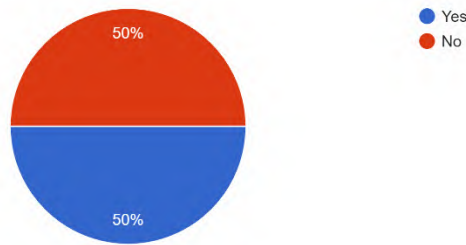


**How many Bicycle citations were issued in the last year? 361**

**How many eBike Citations were issued in the last year? 0 [Comments: this information is not tracked]**

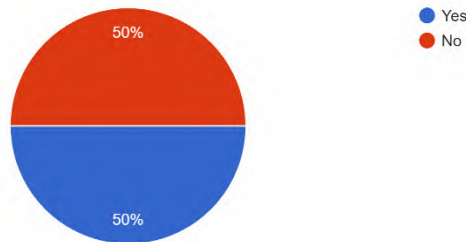
II-5: Currently, Class 3 eBikes are not allowed on Ped/Bike trails. Are you enforcing this law?

18 responses



II-6: Are you enforcing the age limit on Class 3 eBike usage (age 16 or older)?

18 responses



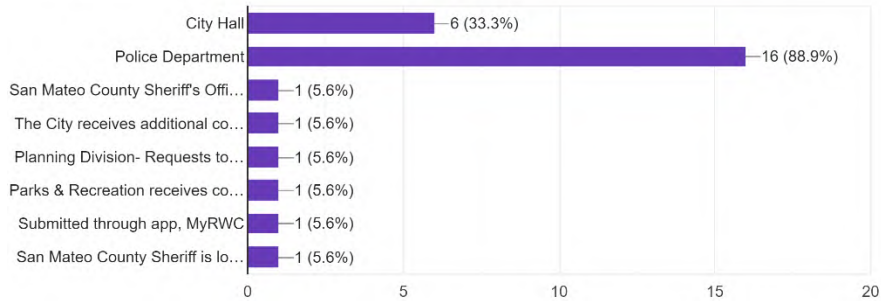
### **If you are enforcing bicycle/eBike law, how is it accomplished?**

- Nothing too specific. Enforcement during routine patrol if violations are witnessed. The PD has done a few details and targeted patrols in our downtown area specifically looking for bicycle violations (riding on sidewalks, helmet violations, reckless behavior, etc.).
- The Police Department enforces all laws as appropriate and with necessary and legal discretionary authority.
- Education and Enforcement
- All officers are trained to enforce Vehicle Code and Municipal Code law on bicycles and eBikes.
- On view and by complaint.
- On view and calls for service which result in Education or Enforcement.
- Traffic enforcement resulting in citations and/or verbal warnings/ education to the public.
- Through proactive patrols, directed enforcement and calls for service.
- Most bicycle stops are made for violations occurring on roadways, not on trails or sidewalks. Most bike stops result in education and not citations as evidenced by our low citation numbers.
- Primarily through education and warnings.
- We have not enforced the Bicycle/eBike law because we have not received any comments to date that have triggered the Police Department to enforce.

- By Sheriff patrol.
- We can't enforce much because of limitations in light of funding and staffing needs

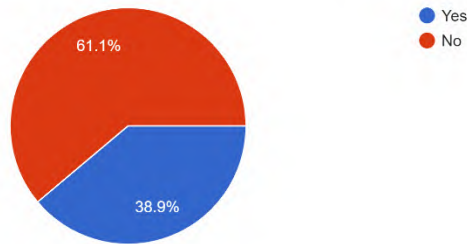
II-8: How are complaints regarding Bicycles/eBikes/eScooters logged in your city/town? Check all that apply.

18 responses



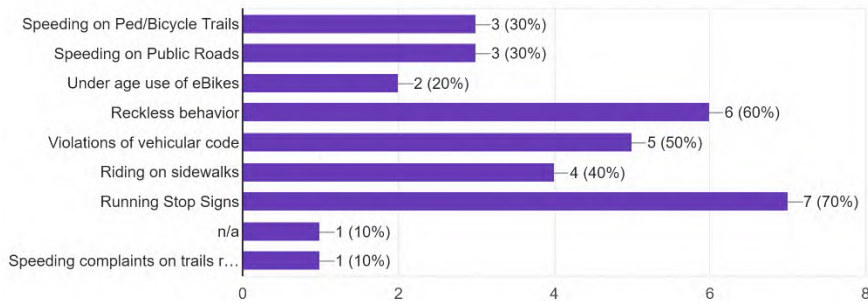
II-9: Has there been an increase in complaints regarding Bicycles in the last three years?

18 responses



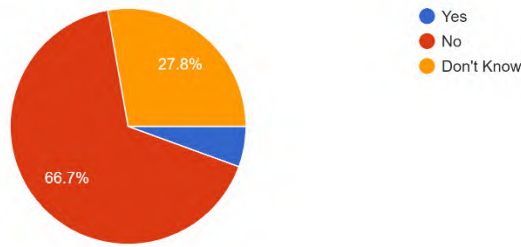
II-10: If yes, what kind of complaints about Bicycles? Check all that apply.

10 responses



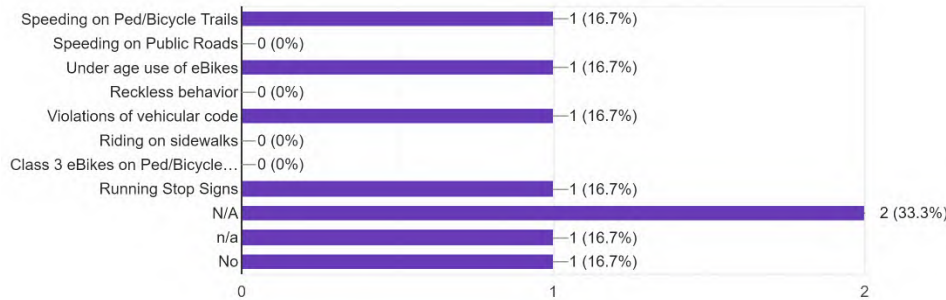
II-11: Has there been an increase in complaints regarding eBikes in the last three years?

18 responses



II-12: If yes, what kind of complaints about eBikes? Check all that apply.

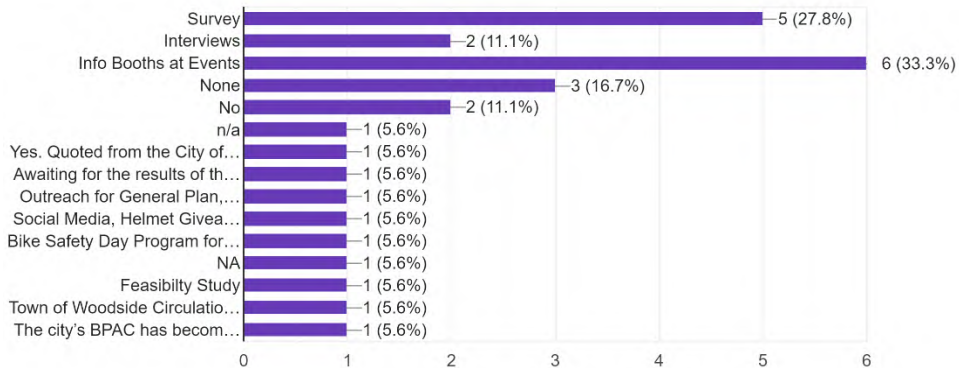
6 responses



II-13: Have you done anything to solicit information from citizens regarding bicycle/eBike safety?

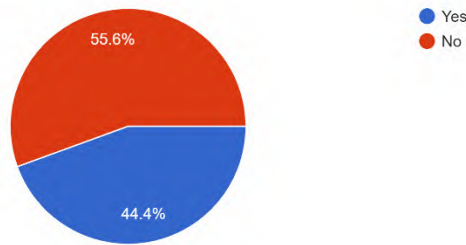
Check all that apply.

18 responses



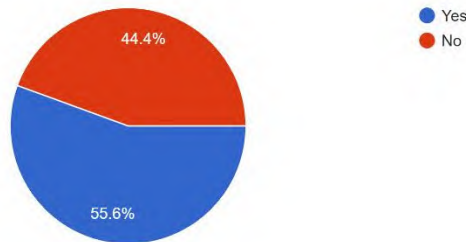
II-14: Is documentation relative to citizen complaints available?

18 responses



II-15: Do you provide Bicycle and eBike Safety Education?

18 responses



### Does your city/town have any future plans regarding the regulation of bicycles and eBikes?

- Not at this time.
- Yes. Additional and improved bike lanes.
- Policies in the newly adopted General Plan supporting alternative modes of transportation, including bikes.
- Awaiting the results of the County-wide eBike pilot to determine best practices to implement.
- Not at this time.
- Not at this time. There have not been complaints/concerns regarding eBikes.
- Not at this time.
- Not that I am aware of.
- No, unless we start receiving complaints.
- Yes, The City of South San Francisco's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.
- No
- As the Town begins to understand various micro-mobility issues going forward, eBikes being part of that growth pattern, we will plan to prepare plans and outreach material to help educate the bike populations on eBike protocols and safety.
- With the growing development, more bike facilities are being provided for the general public. Public outreach and programs to help educate both current/new users are currently

being implemented citywide. Buildout of Bike & Pedestrian master plan is underway. Alameda de Las Pulgas and Ralston 4 designs are underway. Creation of a transportation master plan is also underway. Parks & Recreation Department is developing a Master Plan that also includes implementation of eBikes policies on open space trails.

- Yes
- Nothing specific regulatory changes planned at this time.
- City is currently drafting ordinance language to address the increasing number of electric mobility devices that are present on trails and paths. Many conversations have occurred at BPAC and council (among other committees and commissions) and will continue in 2024.



One Twin Pines Lane  
Belmont, CA 94002

Wednesday, September 20, 2023

Honorable Nancy L. Fineman  
Judge of the Superior Court  
c/o Bianca Fasuescu  
Hall of Justice  
400 County Center; 2nd Floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Subject: Response of the City of Belmont to the San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury Report Findings and Recommendations of Bike Safety in San Mateo County dated July 10, 2023.

Honorable Judge Fineman:

The City of Belmont appreciates the opportunity to review and provide comments on the above referenced Grand Jury Report filed on July 10, 2023. The City of Belmont's response to both the findings and recommendations are outlined below.

### **Response to Grand Jury Findings**

**Finding 1: Bicycle policy and the approach to ensuring/improving bicycle safety is not consistent across San Mateo County due, at least in part, to:**

- a. Topography**
- b. Urban vs. suburban environments**
- c. Types of bicyclists (commuter, recreational)**
- d. Varying levels of enforcement of bicycle laws**
- e. Differing knowledge of bicycle laws and safe practices.**

**Response:** The City agrees with the Grand Jury Finding F1 that bicycle policy and the approach to ensuring/improving bicycle safety is not consistent across San Mateo County due, at least in part, to: (a) Topography, (b) Urban vs. Suburban environments, (c) Types of bicyclists (commuter, recreational), (d) Varying levels of enforcement of bicycle laws, and (e) differing knowledge of bicycle laws and safe practices.

**Finding 2: Bicycle ridership as an alternative means of transportation (commuting to work, school, or transit hubs, running errands) is not increasing due, at least in part, to perceived safety issues.**

**Response:** The City partially agrees with the Grand Jury Finding F2 that bicycle ridership is not increasing due to, at least in part, perceived safety issues. Although perceptions of safety may affect bicycle ridership, there are other variables that contribute to low increases in bicycle ridership. Bicycle riding is difficult physical work, distances and topography may be too great for many to choose a bicycle over transit or driving, the need to make multiple trips at a time, the need to carry goods, groceries, children, etc. are all examples of non-safety related impediments to

bicycling. More data and survey are necessary to identify all the variables affecting ridership rather than solely the perception of safety.

**Finding 3: Bicycle accidents and incidents (such as near misses) are underreported, if reported at all.**

**Response:** The City agrees with the Grand Jury Finding F3 that there are potential for underreporting of bicycle accidents and incidents (such as near misses) as with all other modes of mobility such as pedestrian or vehicular incidents.

**Finding 4: Only bicycle accidents or incidents that trigger a 911 call are consistently logged in the State (SWITRS) database and law enforcement agencies do not log bicycle accident data consistently.**

**Response:** The City partially agrees with the Grand Jury Finding F4 that only bicycle accidents or incidents that trigger a 911 call are consistently logged in the State (SWITRS) database. Belmont cannot reasonably speak to the level to which other law enforcement agencies log bicycle accidents or whether they do so consistently.

**Finding 5: The amount of enforcement of laws, as they pertain to bicyclists and how motorists and bicyclists interact, is inconsistent due to other priorities (e.g., criminal enforcement and general automobile traffic) and the requirement that a citation can generally only be written if the violation is witnessed by an officer.**

**Response:** The City partially agrees with the Grand Jury Finding F5 that the amount of enforcement of laws, as they pertain to bicyclists and how motorists and bicyclists interact, is inconsistent due to other priorities (e.g., criminal enforcement and general automobile traffic) and the requirement that a citation can generally only be written if the violation is witnessed by an officer, as those factors also play in how cities may need to prioritize all calls for service.

**Finding 6: There is no official metric in San Mateo County and its cities to evaluate how safe it is to ride a bicycle.**

**Response:** The City agrees with the Grand Jury Finding F6 that there is no official metric in San Mateo County and its cities to evaluate how safe it is to ride a bicycle.

**Finding 7: Bicycle safety education, for the bicyclist, pedestrians and motorists, is not consistently offered across San Mateo County.**

**Response:** The City cannot speak on behalf of all agencies across San Mateo County. However, the City does not agree, as it pertains to the City of Belmont, with the Grand Jury Finding F7 that bicycle safety education, for the bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists, is not consistently offered across San Mateo County. Belmont bicycle safety programs are well-attended, continue to be provided annually to help educate the general public and the surrounding communities citywide. The 2022 Bicycle Safety event held at the Barrett Community Center was put on by 3 city departments and had participation from Belmont residents, residents of surrounding cities and the Silicon Valley Bike Coalition.



**Finding 8: Communication between various entities with responsibility for bicycle safety, including Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committees (BPACs), Law Enforcement, City Transportation Planning, and Public Works departments, is not formalized, resulting in inefficiencies, and missed opportunities (e.g., funding for improvements, shared bike safety education, or improving signage).**

**Response:** The City partially agrees with the Grand Jury Finding F8 that communication between various entities with responsibility for bicycle safety, including Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committees (BPACs), Law Enforcement, City Transportation Planning, and Public Works departments, is not formalized, resulting in inefficiencies, and missed opportunities (e.g., funding for improvements, shared bike safety education, or improving signage). Communication between entities and departments are continual and consistent within Belmont. Additionally, through existing committees such as the San Mateo City and County Engineers Association, the C/CAG Technical Advisory Committee, etc., funding opportunities, grant availability, grant workshops, and opportunities for partnerships and collaboration are regularly explored and implemented.

**Finding 9: City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans or Active Transportation Plans, have not been adopted/created by all SMC cities.**

**Response:** The City cannot speak on behalf of all agencies across San Mateo County. However, the City does not agree with the Grand Jury Finding F9 that City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans or Active Transportation Plans, have not been adopted/created by all SMC Cities. The City has an established and adopted a Comprehensive Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan for city specific needs. C/CAG has led a pedestrian and bicycle safety study which assessed corridor safety and makes recommendations for improvements on the corridors most in need.

#### **Response to Grand Jury Recommendations**

**Recommendation 1: By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies and the County Sheriff should submit bicycle related data to SWITRS monthly, and regularly post and update their websites with all reported bicycle accident data.**

**Response:** The City partially disagrees with the Grand Jury Recommendation R1. The Belmont Police Department already reports all accident data to SWITRS more frequently than monthly as reports are submitted to SWITRS when complete. The Belmont Police Department will, however, update its statistics to include bicycle accident data quarterly on the Belmont PD website by no later than December 2023.

**Recommendation 2: By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies should begin sending warning letters to motorists for violations of the 3 ft. law.**

**Response:** The City disagrees with the Grand Jury Recommendation R2 that by December 2023, all law enforcement agencies should begin sending warning letters to motorists for violations of the

3 ft. law. The Belmont Police Department cannot send warning letters for any traffic violation not witnessed by an officer.

**Recommendation 3: By June 3, 2024, all law enforcement agencies should provide a means for citizens to report bicycle-related incidents that are not currently reported to law enforcement, similar to the SMC sheriff's Department Online Crime Reporting portal.**

**Response:** The City neither agrees nor disagrees with the Grand Jury Recommendation R3. The Belmont Police Department already has an online reporting system, traditional reporting, and other means such as 311.

**Recommendation 4: By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should offer a bike safety education program for riders and motorists about the laws and safety facts related to bicycles on the road.**

**Response:** The City partially agrees with the Grand Jury Recommendation R4 that by June 3, 2024, each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should offer a bike safety education program for riders and motorists about the laws and safety facts related to bicycles on the road. The City currently meets the requirements of this recommendation by providing an annual bike safety program to educate the general public and surrounding communities citywide, however, not all cities will have the resources or expertise required to do so.

**Recommendation 5: By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should update or generate a new Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (or Active Transportation Plan) if their current plan is older than five years; consistent with the 2021 C/CAG San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.**

**Response:** The City disagrees with the Grand Jury Recommendation R5 that by June 3, 2024, each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should update or generate a new Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (or Active Transportation Plan) if their current plan is older than five years. The City will work towards updating the City of Belmont Comprehensive Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan to be consistent with current plans and regulations, most likely within its upcoming Transportation Master Plan effort. However, the deadline to complete the updates is not realistic, would be an unfunded mandate. A comprehensive process would require adequate time for securing of funding, grants, consultant procurement, data collection and analysis, and community engagement and public outreach.

**Recommendation 6: By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and the county should apply (or reapply) online to generate the Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card.**

**Response:** The City partially agrees with the Grand Jury Recommendation R6 that by June 3, 2024, each city, town, and the county should apply (or reapply) online to generate the Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card, staff resources permitting. Not all cities will be eligible for the designation, nor will all cities have staff resources available to invest in the report card effort.

**Recommendation 7: By February 1, 2024, the County should meet with cities within the County that are willing to participate, to consider establishing a regional effort that integrates the cities' bicycle plans and to discuss how the cities and County could work together to apply for grant opportunities as a region.**

**Response:** The City partially agrees with the Grand Jury Recommendation R7 that by February 1, 2024, the County should meet with cities within the County that are willing to participate, to consider establishing a regional effort that integrates the cities' bicycle plans and to discuss how the cities and County could work together to apply for grant opportunities as a region. The San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan 2021 was led by C/CAG, as the regional transportation planning agency. So, in effect, part of this recommendation has already been met since the 2021 C/CAG plan rolls up city bicycle plans into an integrated document. Having the C/CAG TAC dedicate a meeting to bike planning, coordination and grant opportunities for multimodal improvements by February 2024, is an attainable goal.

This response was approved by the Belmont City Council at a public meeting on September 26, 2023.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Afshin Oskoui', written in a cursive style.

Afshin Oskoui  
City Manager



CITY OF BRISBANE  
Department of Public Works - 50 Park Place  
Brisbane Police Department – 147 Valley Drive  
Brisbane, CA 94005-1310

September 11, 2023

Hon. Nancy L. Fineman  
Judge of the Superior Court  
c/o Bianca Fasuescu  
Hall of Justice  
400 County Center; 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Subject: Response to 2022-2023 Grand Jury 7/10/23 report, “Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Cycling Safer in the County”

Dear Judge Fineman,

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the findings of the Grand Jury. This letter serves as the City of Brisbane’s response to the findings and recommendations found therein. Please note this report was approved by the Brisbane City Council at its September 21, 2023 meeting.

## FINDINGS

F1. Bicycle policy and the approach to ensuring/improving bicycle safety is not consistent across San Mateo County due, at least in part, to:

- a. Topography
- b. Urban vs. suburban environments
- c. Types of bicyclists (commuter, recreational)
- d. Varying levels of enforcement of bicycle laws
- e. Differing knowledge of bicycle laws and safe practices.

### City Response to F1:

The city has not independently conducted the same level of research as the Grand Jury. Based on the Grand Jury’s report we agree with the finding.

F2. Bicycle ridership as an alternative means of transportation (e.g., commuting to work, school, or transit hubs, running errands) is not increasing due, at least in part, to perceived safety issues.

City Response to F2:

The city has not independently conducted the same level of research as the Grand Jury. Based on the Grand Jury's report we agree with the finding.

F3. Bicycle accidents and incidents (such as near misses) are underreported, if reported at all.

City Response to F3:

The city has not independently conducted the same level of research as the Grand Jury. Based on the Grand Jury's report we agree with the finding.

F4. Only bicycle accidents or incidents that trigger a 911 call are consistently logged in the State (SWITRS) database and law enforcement agencies do not log bicycle accident data consistently.

City Response to F4:

The City of Brisbane, partially disagrees with the finding, at the Brisbane Police Department, all vehicle collisions occurring in our jurisdiction that qualify for entry into SWITRS following investigation are entered accordingly regardless of how they are reported to the department (911, Non-emergency lines, in person, website submission, anonymous tip line and text, etc.).

F5. The amount of enforcement of laws, as they pertain to bicyclists and how motorists and bicyclists interact, is inconsistent due to other priorities (e.g., criminal enforcement and general automobile traffic) and the requirement that a citation can generally only be written if the violation is witnessed by an officer.

City Response to F5:

The city has not independently conducted the same level of research as the Grand Jury. Based on the Grand Jury's report we agree with the finding.

F6. There is no official metric in San Mateo County and its cities to evaluate how safe it is to ride a bicycle.

City Response to F6:

The city has not independently conducted the same level of research as the Grand Jury. Based on the Grand Jury's report we agree with the finding.

September 11, 2023  
Hon. Nancy L. Fineman  
Grand Jury Bicycle Safety Response

F7. Bicycle safety education, for the bicyclist, pedestrians, and motorists, is not consistently offered across San Mateo County.

City Response to F7:

The city has not independently conducted the same level of research as the Grand Jury. Based on the Grand Jury's report we agree with the finding.

F8. Communication between various entities with responsibility for bicycle safety, including Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committees (BPACs), Law Enforcement, City Transportation Planning, and Public Works departments, is not formalized, resulting in inefficiencies, and missed opportunities (e.g., funding for improvements, shared bike safety education, or improving signage).

City Response to F8:

The city agrees with this finding.

F9. City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans or Active Transportation Plans, have not been adopted/created by all SMC cities.

City Response to F9:

The city has not independently conducted the same level of research as the Grand Jury. Based on the Grand Jury's report we agree with the finding.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

R1. By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies and the County Sheriff should submit bicycle related data to SWITRS monthly, and regularly post and update their websites with all reported bicycle accident data.

City Response to R1:

The City of Brisbane agrees with the recommendation. The Brisbane Police Department currently submits bicycle related data to SWITRS Monthly. By December 2023, the city will create a bicycle safety resource tab on the Brisbane Police Department website where we will regularly post all reported bicycle accident data.

R2. By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies should begin sending warning letters to motorists for violations of the 3 ft. law.

City Response to R2:

The City of Brisbane disagrees with the recommendation. While it is not expressly stated in the recommendation, it seems clear that the intention here is to have the Brisbane Police Department send violation warning letters to motorists based solely on reports by civilians. The practice of allowing civilians to report traffic infractions not witnessed by sworn peace officers, thus prompting some action by the Brisbane Police Department is unprecedented and would require substantial evaluation prior to any implementation. There are potential concerns involving legality, liability, rules of evidence, resource limitations, and potential abuses that need to be considered prior to implementing a change like this. It is also important to note that if this practice is appropriate for infractions related to bicycle safety, why would it not also be applicable for countless other violations? If civilians were able to submit complaints about all sorts of traffic infractions (speeding, cellphone use, stop signs, red lights, etc.), thus creating the expectation that the police department author and mail out warnings in all cases, this would be completely untenable from a resource perspective and could result in substantial abuses. In cases where sufficient evidence is provided, and the investigating officer believes that sending a warning notice is appropriate, the Brisbane Police Department will do so.

R3. By June 3, 2024, all law enforcement agencies should provide a means for citizens to report bicycle-related incidents that are not currently reported to law enforcement, similar to the SMC Sheriff's Department Online Crime Reporting portal.

City Response to R3:

The City of Brisbane agrees with the recommendation. The city currently has several methods of incident reporting to the Brisbane Police Department which includes a website submission site, an anonymous tip line and a non-emergency telephone number to our communications center. By June 3, 2024 we will look to include these

reporting methods on a bicycle safety resource and reporting page on the Brisbane Police Department website.

R4. By June 3, 2024 each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should offer a bike safety education program for riders and motorists about the laws and safety facts related to bicycles on the road.

City Response to R4:

The City of Brisbane agrees with the recommendation. The Brisbane Police department routinely attends a school bicycle rodeo day where the officers educate the students relating to bicycle safety as part of the event. By June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024 the Brisbane Police Department will offer motorist and rider education at all community outreach events attended and make these materials available on the department website.

R5. By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should update or generate a new Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (or Active Transportation Plan) if their current plan is older than five years; consistent with the 2021 C/CAG San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

City Response to R5:

The recommendation requires further analysis. Prior to July 1, 2024, city staff will review the latest Master Plan, its alignment with the C/CAG Master Plan, and if there have been changes to the city's transportation infrastructure and/or new developments that indicate the city's plan requires an update. Staff will then provide a report to the City Council, which will include the estimated cost for updating the Master Plan if that update is deemed necessary.

R6. By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and the county should apply (or reapply) online to generate the Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card.

City Response to R6:

The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted. While the League of American Bicyclists does provide valuable resources, cycling education and bicycle friendly actions, this organization is not yet recognized as having



September 11, 2023  
Hon. Nancy L. Fineman  
Grand Jury Bicycle Safety Response

established a nationally applicable metric for determining how well individual municipalities respond to the bicycling needs of their community. Of the 482 cities and 58 counties in California, only 65 chose to participate in the 2022 “Report Card” application.

R7. By February 1, 2024, the County should meet with cities within the County that are willing to participate, to consider establishing a regional effort that integrates the cities’ bicycle plans and to discuss how the cities and County could work together to apply for grant opportunities as a region.

City Response to R7:

The city is willing to participate in such a meeting, but we note that we are unable to require the County to schedule such a meeting. The recommendation will be implemented if the County invites the city to such a discussion; the time frame for implementation of this recommendation is under the control of the County.

Please call Director Breault at (415) 508-2131 or Chief Macias at (415) 508-2177 if there are any questions regarding this matter.

Very truly yours,

*Randy Breault*

Randy L. Breault, P.E.  
Director of Public Works/City Engineer

*Lisa Macias*

Lisa Macias  
Chief of Police

Cc: Grand Jury website (sent via email to [grandjury@sanmateocourt.org](mailto:grandjury@sanmateocourt.org) )  
Brisbane City Clerk



MICHAEL BROWNRIGG, MAYOR  
DONNA COLSON, VICE MAYOR  
RICARDO ORTIZ  
EMILY BEACH  
PETER STEVENSON

## The City of Burlingame

CITY HALL -- 501 PRIMROSE ROAD  
BURLINGAME, CALIFORNIA 94010-3997

TEL: (650) 558-7201  
[www.burlingame.org](http://www.burlingame.org)

September 18, 2023

Honorable Nancy L. Fineman  
Judge of the Superior Court  
c/o Bianca Fasuescu  
Hall of Justice  
400 County Center, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Subject: City of Burlingame's response to Civil Grand Jury Report entitled "Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Bicycling Safer in the County"

Dear Judge Fineman:

After reviewing the Grand Jury report entitled "Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Bicycling Safer in the County," the following are the City of Burlingame's responses to the Grand Jury's findings:

**Findings F1-F9:** The City of Burlingame agrees with these findings.

The following are the City of Burlingame's responses to the Grand Jury's recommendations:

**Recommendation R1 has been implemented.** The Burlingame Police Department sends all accident data, including bicycle accident data, to the Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS) on a monthly basis and recently began posting bicycle accident data on our website.

**Recommendations R2-R4 will be implemented by the recommended dates.**

**Recommendation R5 has been implemented.** The City of Burlingame's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan was completed within the past five years (2020).

**Recommendation R6 requires further analysis.** The City will conduct an analysis of the reasons required to apply online to generate the Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card. That analysis will be completed by December 31, 2023.

The Honorable Nancy L. Fineman  
September 18, 2023  
Page 2

**Recommendation R7 has not been implemented.** The City of Burlingame is willing to meet and participate with the County to consider establishing regional efforts in the area of bike safety.

The Burlingame City Council approved this response letter at its public meeting on September 18, 2023.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Brownrigg". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "M".

Michael Brownrigg  
Mayor



# OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER CITY OF DALY CITY

333 – 90<sup>TH</sup> STREET  
DALY CITY, CA 94015-1895  
(650) 991-8125

September 26, 2023

Honorable Nancy L. Fineman  
Judge of the Superior Court  
c/o Bianca Fasuescu  
Hall of Justice  
400 County Center, 2nd Floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Re: “Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Bicycling Safer in the County”

Dear Judge Fineman,

We are in the receipt of the Grand Jury’s final report entitled; “Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Bicycling Safer in the County.”

Pursuant to your July 10, 2023, request for response, the Daly City, City Council held a public meeting on September 25, 2023, and approved this response. The City of Daly City responds to the Grand Jury’s findings, conclusion and recommendations as follows:

## Findings:

F1. Bicycle policy and the approach to ensuring/improving bicycle safety is not consistent across San Mateo County due, at least in part to:

- a. Topography
- b. Urban vs. suburban environments
- c. Types of bicyclists (commuter, recreational)
- d. Varying levels of enforcement of bicycle laws
- e. Differing knowledge of bicycle laws and safe practices.

**Response:** They City **agrees** with this finding, relying on the Grand Jury’s representations in their report.

F2. Bicycle ridership as an alternative means of transportation (e.g., commuting to work, school, or transit hubs, running errands) is not increasing due, at least in part, to perceived safety issues.

**Response:** They City **agrees** with this finding, relying on the Grand Jury’s representations in their report.

F3. Bicycle accidents and incidents (such as near misses) are underreported, if reported at all.

**Response:** They City **agrees** with this finding, relying on the Grand Jury's representations in their report.

F4. Only bicycle accidents or incidents that trigger a 911 call are consistently logged in the State (SWITRS) database and law enforcement agencies do not log bicycle accidents data consistently.

**Response:** They City **agrees** with this finding, relying on the Grand Jury's representations in their report.

F5. The amount of enforcement of laws, as they pertain to bicyclists and how motorists and bicyclists interact, is inconsistent due to other priorities (e.g., criminal enforcement and general automobile traffic) and the requirement that a citation can generally only be written if the violation is witnessed by an officer.

**Response:** They City **agrees** with this finding, relying on the Grand Jury's representations in their report.

F6. There is no official metric in San Mateo County and its cities to evaluate how safe it is to ride a bicycle.

**Response:** They City **agrees** with this finding, relying on the Grand Jury's representations in their report.

F7. Bicycle safety education, for the bicyclist, pedestrians, and motorists, is not consistently offered across San Mateo County.

**Response:** They City **agrees** with this finding, relying on the Grand Jury's representations in their report.

F8. Communication between various entities with responsibility for bicycle safety, including Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committees (BPACs), Law enforcement, City Transportation Planning, and Public Works departments, is not formalized, resulting in inefficiencies, and missed opportunities (e.g., funding for improvements, shared bike safety education, or improving signage).

**Response:** They City only **partially agrees** with this finding. The City of Daly City Public Works Department serves as liaison with the Daly City Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee and the Daly City Traffic Safety Committee. The Traffic Safety Committee is comprised of representatives from the City's Department of Public Works Engineering and Maintenance Divisions, Economic Development Department Planning Division, Police Department, Fire Department, and Water and Wastewater Department. During the last year, Daly City was awarded approximately \$3.9 million in grant funds to implement bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

F9. City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans or Active Transportation Plans, have not been adopted/created by all San Mateo County cities.

**Response:** They City **agrees** with this finding, relying on the Grand Jury's representations in their report.

## **Recommendations:**

R1. By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies and the County Sheriff should submit bicycle related data to SWITRS monthly, and regularly post and update their websites with all reported bicycle accident data.

**Response:** The City currently reports all applicable data to SWITRS and will evaluate options to post collision data on the website in the recommended timeframe, as that feature does not currently exist.

R2. By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies should begin sending warning letters to motorists for violations of the 3 ft. law.

**Response:** The recommendation has not yet been implemented but it will be implemented in the timeframe recommended.

R3. By June 3, 2024, all law enforcement agencies should provide a means for citizens to report bicycle-related incidents that are not currently reported to law enforcement, similar to SMC Sheriff's Department Online Crime Reporting portal.

**Response:** The recommendation has not yet been implemented but it will be implemented in the timeframe recommended through our existing online crime reporting feature.

R4. By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should offer a bike safety education program for riders and motorists about the laws and safety facts related to bicycles on the road.

**Response:** The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the timeframe recommended.

R5. By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should update or generate a new Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (or Active Transportation Plan) if their current plan is older than five years; consistent with the 2021 C/CAG San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

**Response:** The recommendation has been implemented. In February 2020, The City of Daly City contracted with Eisen & Letunic, who also partnered with Parisi Transportation Consulting to publish Walk Bike Daly City – City of Daly City Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan 2020.

R6. By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and county should apply (or reapply) online to generate the Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card.

**Response:** The recommendation has not yet been implemented but it will be implemented in the timeframe recommended.

R7. By February 1, 2024, the County should meet with cities within the County that are willing to participate, to consider establishing a regional effort that integrates the cities' bicycle plans and to discuss how the cities and County could work together to apply for grant opportunities as a region.

**Response:** The City of Daly City is willing to work with the County to coordinate efforts to integrate bicycle plans and apply for grant opportunities as a region. The respondent agrees with the findings and agrees to participate in any committees created by the County to support a regional effort to discuss grant opportunities.

The City of Daly City appreciates the opportunity to provide written responses to the San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury Report, "Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Bicycling Safer in the County."

Should the Grand Jury require any additional information, please contact me directly at 650-991-8127.



Thomas J. Piccolotti  
City Manager

Cc: City Council  
Annette Hipona, City Clerk  
Rose Zimmerman, City Attorney



# CITY OF EAST PALO ALTO

## Office of the City Manager

2415 University Avenue  
East Palo Alto, CA 94303

Phone: (650) 853-3118  
Fax: (650) 853-3136

[www.cityofepa.org](http://www.cityofepa.org)  
[cmoffice@cityofepa.org](mailto:cmoffice@cityofepa.org)

The Honorable Judge Nancy L. Fineman  
Judge of the Superior Court  
San Mateo County Superior Court  
400 County Center, 2nd Floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063

Dear Honorable Judge Fineman:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury Report titled Grand Jury Report: "*Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Bicycling Safer in the County*" released on July 10, 2023 ("Report"). The City Council of the City of East Palo Alto approved the following response to the Report at its October 3, 2023, meeting.

### **The City of East Palo Alto's Response to Each Finding:**

**F1.** Bicycle policy and the approach to ensuring/improving bicycle safety is not consistent across San Mateo County due, at least in part, to:

- a. Topography
- b. Urban vs. suburban environments
- c. Types of bicyclists (commuter, recreational)
- d. Varying levels of enforcement of bicycle laws
- e. Differing knowledge of bicycle laws and safe practices.

**City of East Palo Alto:** City of East Palo Alto *agrees* with this finding.

**F2.** Bicycle ridership as an alternative means of transportation (e.g., commuting to work, school, or transit hubs, running errands) is not increasing due, at least in part, to perceived safety issues.

**City of East Palo Alto:** City of East Palo Alto *disagrees* with this finding. The City does not have data to back up this finding, and on that basis, cannot agree (or disagrees) with this finding.

**F3.** Bicycle accidents and incidents (such as near misses) are underreported, if reported at all.

**City of East Palo Alto:** City of East Palo Alto *disagrees* with this finding. The City does not have the data to back up this finding, and on that basis, cannot agree (or disagrees) with this finding.



**F4.** Only bicycle accidents or incidents that trigger a 911 call are consistently logged in the State (SWITRS) database and law enforcement agencies do not log bicycle accident data consistently.

**City of East Palo Alto:** City of East Palo Alto *disagrees* with this finding. The City's Police Department responds to and documents all bicycle related accidents (above and beyond 911 calls). The reports are routinely submitted to SWITRS.

**F5.** The amount of enforcement of laws, as they pertain to bicyclists and how motorists and bicyclists interact, is inconsistent due to other priorities (e.g., criminal enforcement and general automobile traffic) and the requirement that a citation can generally only be written if the violation is witnessed by an officer.

**City of East Palo Alto:** City of East Palo Alto *agrees* with this finding.

**F6.** There is no official metric in San Mateo County and its cities to evaluate how safe it is to ride a bicycle.

**City of East Palo Alto:** City of East Palo Alto *agrees* with this finding.

**F7.** Bicycle safety education, for the bicyclist, pedestrians and motorists, is not consistently offered across San Mateo County.

**City of East Palo Alto:** City of East Palo Alto *agrees* with this finding.

**F8.** Communication between various entities with responsibility for bicycle safety, including Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committees (BPACs), Law Enforcement, City Transportation Planning, and Public Works departments, is not formalized, resulting in inefficiencies, and missed opportunities (e.g., funding for improvements, shared bike safety education, or improving signage).

**City of East Palo Alto:** City of East Palo Alto *partially disagrees* with this finding. Although county-wide communication between departments is not formalized, communication between departments is consistent within the agency.

**F9.** City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans or Active Transportation Plans, have not been adopted/created by all SMC cities.

**City of East Palo Alto:** The City of East Palo Alto *partially disagrees*. The City does not have all the data for other agencies; however, the City has adopted the Southeast San Mateo County Community Based Transportation Plan. There is also the San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan which includes active transportation components throughout the City of East Palo Alto.

**City of East Palo Alto Response to Recommendations:**

**R1.** By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies and the County Sheriff should submit bicycle related data to SWITRS monthly, and regularly post and update their websites with all reported bicycle accident data.

**City of East Palo Alto:** This recommendation has been partially implemented. SWITRS has been consistently reported by the Police Department. Updating the webpage requires further analysis as there are staffing barriers.

**R2.** By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies should begin sending warning letters to motorists for violations of the 3 ft. Law.

**City of East Palo Alto:** The recommendation requires further analysis and discussion. This would require the creation of an information-gathering system and personnel to monitor the submissions, evaluate the information, send letters, and track activity.

**R3.** By June 3, 2024, all law enforcement agencies should provide a means for citizens to report bicycle-related incidents that are not currently reported to law enforcement, similar to the SMC Sheriff's Department Online Crime Reporting portal.

**City of East Palo Alto:** The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.

**R4.** By June 3, 2024 each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should offer a bike safety education program for riders and motorists about the laws and safety facts related to bicycles on the road.

**City of East Palo Alto:** The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future. Staff will also investigate establishing funding to set up a program. Staff plans to partner with local organizations, such as Live in Peace, to help coordinate this item.

**R5.** By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should update or generate a new Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (or Active Transportation Plan) if their current plan is older than five years; consistent with the 2021 C/CAG San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

**City of East Palo Alto:** The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future. The City will likely adopt the 2021 C/CAG San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

**R6.** By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and the county should apply (or reapply) online to generate the Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card.

**City of East Palo Alto:** The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future. This recommendation is to be implemented as part of the Bicycle Program to be established.

**R7.** By February 1, 2024, the County should meet with cities within the County that are willing to participate, to consider establishing a regional effort that integrates the cities' bicycle plans and to discuss how the cities and County could work together to apply for grant opportunities as a region.

**City of East Palo Alto:** The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future. This recommendation requires regional coordination and will be implemented when the County establishes a regional meeting.

If you have further questions, please contact Humza Javed, Public Works Director at [hjaved@cityofepa.org](mailto:hjaved@cityofepa.org) or Police Chief, Jeff Liu at [jliu@cityofepa.org](mailto:jliu@cityofepa.org).

Sincerely,



**Melvin E. Gaines**  
City Manager  
City of East Palo Alto



610 FOSTER CITY BOULEVARD  
FOSTER CITY, CA 94404-2222

*City of Foster City*

**ESTERO MUNICIPAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**

August 15, 2023

Honorable Nancy L. Fineman  
Judge of the Superior Court  
c/o Bianca Fasuescu  
Hall of Justice  
400 County Center; 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

**RE: Response of the Foster City Police Department to the Grand Jury Report  
“Bike Safety in San Mateo County – Making Bicycling Safer in the County.”**

Honorable Nancy L. Fineman;

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the above referenced Grand Jury Report filed on July 10, 2023. The City of Foster City’s response to the findings and recommendations are detailed below.

**Responses to Grand Jury Findings:**

**F1. Bicycle policy and the approach to ensuring/improving bicycle safety is not consistent across San Mateo County due, at least in part, to:**

- a. Topography
- b. Urban vs. suburban environments
- c. Types of bicyclists (commuter, recreational)
- d. Varying levels of enforcement of bicycle laws
- e. Differing knowledge of bicycle laws and safe practices.

- Response to F1:

The City of Foster City and the Foster City Police Department agree with this finding, relying on the Grand Jury’s representations in their report.

**F2. Bicycle ridership as an alternative means of transportation (e.g., commuting to work, school, or transit hubs, running errands) is not increasing due, at least in part, to perceived safety issues.**

- Response to F2:

The City of Foster City and the Foster City Police Department agree with this finding, relying on the Grand Jury’s representations in their report.



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FOSTER CITY, CA 94404-2222

*City of Foster City*

**ESTERO MUNICIPAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**

**F3. Bicycle accidents and incidents (such as near misses) are underreported, if reported at all.**

- Response to F3:

The City of Foster City and the Foster City Police Department agree with this finding, relying on the Grand Jury's representations in their report.

**F4. Only bicycle accidents or incidents that trigger a 911 call are consistently logged in the State (SWITRS) database and law enforcement agencies do not log bicycle accident data consistently.**

- Response to F4:

The City of Foster City and the Foster City Police Department partially disagree with this finding, relying on the Grand Jury's representations in their report. It should be noted that each law enforcement agency may handle reporting differently and consistent reporting of bicycle accident data may be accomplished by agencies handling reported accidents and incidents. Also, reported bicycle accidents and incidents may be reported through an agency's business line, although the majority are likely to be reported using 911.

**F5. The amount of enforcement of laws, as they pertain to bicyclists and how motorists and bicyclists interact, is inconsistent due to other priorities (e.g., criminal enforcement and general automobile traffic) and the requirement that a citation can generally only be written if the violation is witnessed by an officer.**

- Response to F5:

The City of Foster City and the Foster City Police Department agree with this finding, relying on the Grand Jury's representations in their report.

**F6. There is no official metric in San Mateo County and its cities to evaluate how safe it is to ride a bicycle.**

- Response to F6:

The City of Foster City and the Foster City Police Department agree with this finding, relying on the Grand Jury's representations in their report.



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FOSTER CITY, CA 94404-2222

*City of Foster City*

**ESTERO MUNICIPAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**

**F7. Bicycle safety education, for the bicyclist, pedestrians and motorists, is not consistently offered across San Mateo County.**

- Response to F7:

The City of Foster City and the Foster City Police Department agree with this finding, relying on the Grand Jury's representations in their report.

**F8. Communication between various entities with responsibility for bicycle safety, including Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committees (BPACs), Law Enforcement, City Transportation Planning, and Public Works departments, is not formalized, resulting in inefficiencies, and missed opportunities (e.g., funding for improvements, shared bike safety education, or improving signage).**

- Response to F8:

The City of Foster City and the Foster City Police Department agree with this finding, relying on the Grand Jury's representations in their report.

**F9. City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans or Active Transportation Plans, have not been adopted/created by all SMC cities.**

- Response to F9:

The City of Foster City and the Foster City Police Department agree with this finding, relying on the Grand Jury's representations in their report.

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**Responses to Grand Jury Recommendations:**

**R1. By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies and the County Sheriff should submit bicycle related data to SWITRS monthly, and regularly post and update their websites with all reported bicycle accident data.**

- Response to R1:

The Foster City Police Department (FCPD) currently reports all collisions involving a bicyclist on a public roadway to SWITRS monthly.



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FOSTER CITY, CA 94404-2222

*City of Foster City*

**ESTERO MUNICIPAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**

A public facing mapping program is in the final stages of development, which will display many reported incidents and approximate locations (block reference) of all collisions, including collisions on public and private property. The FCPD will attempt to have collisions involving bicyclists clearly identified in this mapping program. Information provided to the public through this program will be refreshed daily and will display information for the past 30 days. This program will be prominently displayed on the FCPD website and is expected to be available to the public by September 15, 2023.

**R2. By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies should begin sending warning letters to motorists for violations of the 3 ft. law.**

- Response to R2:

By the end of December 2023, the FCPD will review the San Mateo County Sheriff's Department's program and consider options that may work for the City of Foster City, the FCPD, and the Foster City community. The City of Foster City and the FCPD recognize the possible value of educating through the issuance of warning letters; all aspects of a possible program will be considered to ensure the appropriateness of a program. Considerations may include the method of verifying the distance between a bicyclist and motor vehicle, any legal concerns that may surround a program, and the feasibility of such a program.

**R3. By June 3, 2024, all law enforcement agencies should provide a means for citizens to report bicycle-related incidents that are not currently reported to law enforcement, similar to the SMC Sheriff's Department Online Crime Reporting portal.**

- Response to R3:

By June 3, 2024, the FCPD will add information to the agency website informing community members of their reporting options specific to bicycle-related incidents. This will likely be part of a larger bicycle information portion of the FCPD website, which would be prominently displayed on the agency home page. Reporting options may include telephone, email, and in-person reporting. The FCPD is a full-service agency and will accept any reporting request.



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FOSTER CITY, CA 94404-2222

*City of Foster City*

**ESTERO MUNICIPAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**

**R4. By June 3, 2024 each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should offer a bike safety education program for riders and motorists about the laws and safety facts related to bicycles on the road.**

- Response to R4:

The City of Foster City and the FCPD understand the value of offering bike safety information to community members. The FCPD will include bike safety education information as a significant consideration while looking into an addition to the agency website, directed at riders and motorists.

**R5. By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should update or generate a new Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (or Active Transportation Plan) if their current plan is older than five years; consistent with the 2021 C/CAG San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.**

- Response to R5:

In January 2018, the City Council adopted the Bicycle Network Assessment Study prepared by the City's consultant Fehr and Peers. The City has now implemented or incorporated many of the short-term and long-term recommendations from that assessment into future project plans. The City agrees that updating the City's active transportation plans, through the development of a comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, is an appropriate next step. However, the process of developing such a plan is longer than the timeframe identified in the recommendation, therefore, the recommendation will be implemented by June 30, 2025.

**R6. By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and the county should apply (or reapply) online to generate the Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card.**

- Response to R6:

The City of Foster City and the FCPD will not be implementing the Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card program as it's believed the benefits of the program may not warrant any involved cost and Staff time necessary to be included in the program. Considering the City of Foster City's significant and continuous efforts to promote bicycling within the city, to create safe riding and driving conditions for bicyclists and motorists, and to be inclusive of bicyclists as





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FOSTER CITY, CA 94404-2222

*City of Foster City*

**ESTERO MUNICIPAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**

they utilize the City's public roadways and pathways, it's believed the Report Card program is unnecessary; the City of Foster City and the FCPD will remain committed to safe bicycling through established priorities.

**R7. By February 1, 2024, the County should meet with cities within the County that are willing to participate, to consider establishing a regional effort that integrates the cities' bicycle plans and to discuss how the cities and County could work together to apply for grant opportunities as a region.**

- Response to R7:

Foster City is willing to meet with the County to discuss the potential to work together to apply for grant opportunities.

This response was approved by the City Council of Foster City at its regular meeting on September 18, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

DocuSigned by:

*Jon Froomin*

2D25155531B1454...

Jon Froomin

Mayor, City of Foster City

Cc: [grandjury@sanmateocourt.org](mailto:grandjury@sanmateocourt.org)



October 3, 2023

Honorable Nancy L. Fineman  
Judge of the Superior Court  
c/o Bianca Fasuescu  
Hall of Justice  
400 County Center; 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Subject: Response of the City of Half Moon Bay to the San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury Report "Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Bicycling Safer in the County"

Dear Judge Fineman,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Grand Jury report entitled "Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Bicycling Safer in the County". The City of Half Moon Bay's response to the findings and recommendations of the report are listed below.

**Response to Findings:**

**F1. Bicycle policy and the approach to ensuring/improving bicycle safety is not consistent across San Mateo County due, at least in part, to:**

- a. Topography
- b. Urban vs. suburban environments
- c. Types of bicyclists (commuter, recreational)
- d. Varying levels of enforcement of bicycle laws
- e. Differing knowledge of bicycle laws and safe practices.

*Response:* Agree. Half Moon Bay has both commuters and recreational users, with a large number of tourists during peak seasons. The consistency of the types of users (especially e-bikes) as well as enforcement bandwidth continues to be an issue. The City of Half Moon Bay contracts for law enforcement services with the County Sheriff. With limited resources, the Sheriff's Office has had difficulties enforcing in remote locations such as the California Coastal Trail.

**F2. Bicycle ridership as an alternative means of transportation (e.g., commuting to work, school, or transit hubs, running errands) is not increasing due, at least in part, to perceived safety issues.**

*Response:* Agree. For clarity, the City of Half Moon Bay's residents also have concerns about the lack of contiguous bicycle infrastructure. As mentioned in the report, the City of Half Moon Bay is dominated by Highways 1 and 92, which have many challenging safety concerns as well as a lack of contiguous infrastructure. The City is working on a number of multi-modal projects, along with Caltrans, including the buildout of facilities along Highway 1 to provide a network that meets the needs of the community. The City continues to work with the San Mateo County Transit Authority (SMCTA) and the City/County Association of Governments (C/CAG) to identify funding sources in order to complete the network needed to ensure safe multi-modal use.

**F3. Bicycle accidents and incidents (such as near misses) are underreported, if reported at all.**

*Response:* Agree. The incidents that are reported are generally when an accident has occurred with a significant injury. Outside of those incidents, a few inquiries have been submitted to the City's Public Works Department. Those inquiries are generally regarding new improvements and are reviewed during development of the City's Capital Improvement Program. Enforcement-related concerns are reported to the Sheriff's Office.

**F4. Only bicycle accidents or incidents that trigger a 911 call are consistently logged in the State (SWITRS) database and law enforcement agencies do not log bicycle accident data consistently.**

*Response:* Agree. Incidents that are logged in the SWITRS database are generally more serious accidents that come with medical assistance needs and therefore are triggered by a 911 call. The City of Half Moon Bay has a separate form for the public to report traffic related issues of all kinds and can be found here:

<https://www.half-moon-bay.ca.us/formcenter/public-works-10/tell-us-about-traffic-issues-in-your-nei-48>

**F5. The amount of enforcement of laws, as they pertain to bicyclists and how motorists and bicyclists interact, is inconsistent due to other priorities (e.g., criminal enforcement and general automobile traffic) and the requirement that a citation can generally only be written if the violation is witnessed by an officer.**

*Response:* Partially disagree. Generally, citations are written when the violation is witnessed by an officer, however it is more an issue of resources. Safety is a major priority, including traffic safety, but when resources are stretched thin it is challenging for law enforcement to follow-up on every complaint, which is why you see enforcement in cases that are more serious. That would be consistent with any law violation, when resources are thin, the higher the severity of the situation will be the higher priority.

**F6. There is no official metric in San Mateo County and its cities to evaluate how safe it is to ride a bicycle.**

*Response:* Partially disagree. Although there is no official metric, as identified in the first finding of this report, there are inconsistencies across San Mateo County that are specific to each jurisdiction. For example, Half Moon Bay, as referenced in the report, is split by major highways 1 and 92. As such, one of the major factors for bike use and safety is the lack of connections along long stretches of these high-speed transportation networks. The City of Half Moon Bay has been working to address these gaps through the adopted Capital Improvement Program (CIP), with multi-modal facilities planned to connect users from the southern city limits



and up to the unincorporated San Mateo County line to the north. These projects take a considerable amount of funding and resources and as such it has taken years to complete major segments and connections.

**F7. Bicycle safety education, for the bicyclist, pedestrians and motorists, is not consistently offered across San Mateo County.**

*Response:* Agree. It would be appropriate for a consistent safety education program across the County. An organization with reach to the different jurisdictions, such as the City/County Association of Governments, County Health, and others could be a great resource when it comes to development of a comprehensive and consistent safety education plan for San Mateo County jurisdictions.

**F8. Communication between various entities with responsibility for bicycle safety, including Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committees (BPACs), Law Enforcement, City Transportation Planning, and Public Works departments, is not formalized, resulting in inefficiencies, and missed opportunities (e.g., funding for improvements, shared bike safety education, or improving signage).**

*Response:* Partially disagree. There are often opportunities to work with other agencies to complete improvements and connections. The City of Half Moon Bay and San Mateo County worked closely on a segment of trail on the east side of Highway 1. The County just completed construction of a multi-modal path that ends at the northern city limit. The City is close behind with a project that will connect the new county multi-model trail to an existing trail about a mile south along Highway 1. The two agencies worked closely to plan the improvements and secure funding through government grant programs.

**F9. City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans or Active Transportation Plans, have not been adopted/created by all SMC cities.**

*Response:* Partially Disagree. The City of Half Moon Bay completed a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan in 2019 which included the formation of an Advisory Committee to help develop the master plan and continues to meet regularly (every other month). The recommendation, master plan, guidelines and environmental documents created through this effort are available here: <https://www.half-moon-bay.ca.us/640/Bicycle-Pedestrian-Master-Plan>

**Response to Recommendations:**

**R1. By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies and the County Sheriff should submit bicycle related data to SWITRS monthly, and regularly post and update their websites with all reported bicycle accident data.**

*Response:* The recommendation requires further analysis. The City of Half Moon Bay contracts law enforcement services with the County Sheriff's Office. Most recently, costs for Sheriff's services have increased significantly. Additional analysis is required to determine if it is feasible to meet this goal by December 2023. If the information becomes available, it certainly will help City staff to review safety concerns and incorporate that information into future capital projects and programs.



**R2. By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies should begin sending warning letters to motorists for violations of the 3 ft. law.**

*Response:* The recommendation requires further analysis. Since the City contracts with the County Sheriff's Office, the ability to send warning letters and how soon that process can be established will require an agency shift on response. The City welcomes this effort to educate motorists through warning letters and other educational opportunities.

**R3. By June 3, 2024, all law enforcement agencies should provide a means for citizens to report bicycle-related incidents that are not currently reported to law enforcement, similar to the SMC Sheriff's Department Online Crime Reporting portal.**

*Response:* The recommendation has not been implemented but will be implemented by the target deadline. The City will work with the County Sheriff's Office to try to integrate a similar online portal. The City has a law enforcement webpage that identifies the Sheriff's law enforcement roll and can either create a City specific reporting or utilize a regional tool depending on the Sheriff's rollout on this effort.

**R4. By June 3, 2024 each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should offer a bike safety education program for riders and motorists about the laws and safety facts related to bicycles on the road.**

*Response:* This recommendation has been implemented. The City has held safety fairs and has offered bicycle safety education throughout those and other various events. If a regionally-consistent safety education program becomes available, that could be utilized in future educational opportunities.

**R5. By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should update or generate a new Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (or Active Transportation Plan) if their current plan is older than five years; consistent with the 2021 C/CAG San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.**

*Response:* The recommendation has been implemented as the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan will be 5 years old as of June 3, 2024. The City will plan on an update to the plan afterwards and will utilize information from the 2021 C/CAG County-wide comprehensive program as well as other updated information and best practices.

**R6. By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and the county should apply (or reapply) online to generate the Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card.**

*Response:* The recommendation has not been implemented but will be implemented by the target deadline. The City will apply to generate the Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card.

**R7. By February 1, 2024, the County should meet with cities within the County that are willing to participate, to consider establishing a regional effort that integrates the cities' bicycle plans and to discuss how the cities and County could work together to apply for grant opportunities as a region.**



*Response:* This recommendation has been implemented as the City participates in the City/County Association of Governments Congestion Management Program Technical Advisory Committee. The regional focus has been shifting to multi-modal improvements as a means to address air quality and congestion issues. This forum is a great opportunity to further improve consistency across the county without creating additional working groups or committees.

This response was approved by the Half Moon Bay City Council at a public meeting on October 3, 2023.

Sincerely,

*Deborah Penrose*

Deborah Penrose, Mayor  
City of Half Moon Bay





September 26, 2023

The Honorable Nancy L. Fineman  
Judge of the Superior Court  
c/o Bianca Fasuescu  
Hall of Justice  
400 County Center, 2nd Floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

**RE: Civil Grand Jury Report: “Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Bicycling Safer in the County”**

Dear Honorable Judge Fineman,

Thank you for the opportunity to review and respond on the above-referenced Grand Jury Report filed on July 10, 2023. The City Council of the City of Menlo Park (City) voted at its public meeting on September 26, 2023 to authorize this response to the findings and recommendations of the report.

**Response to Grand Jury Findings**

- F1.** Bicycle policy and the approach to ensuring/improving bicycle safety is not consistent across San Mateo County due, at least in part, to:
- Topography
  - Urban vs. suburban environments
  - Types of bicyclists (commuter, recreational)
  - Varying levels of enforcement of bicycle laws
  - Differing knowledge of bicycle laws and safe practices.

***City Response:*** *The City agrees with finding F1.*

- F2.** Bicycle ridership as an alternative means of transportation (e.g., commuting to work, school, or transit hubs, running errands) is not increasing due, at least in part, to perceived safety issues.

***City Response:*** *The City of Menlo Park partially disagrees with finding F2. The City is seeing increased rates of bicycling in recent years due to several causes – the pandemic, new bicycle infrastructure, and others. The City agrees that perceived safety issues remain a barrier for bicycling.*

- F3.** Bicycle accidents and incidents (such as near misses) are underreported, if reported at all.

**City Response:** The City agrees with finding F3. The City recommends replacing the word 'accidents' with 'collisions' to be consistent with a public health approach to transportation safety that does not accept collisions as a mistake that may be inevitable.

- F4.** Only bicycle accidents or incidents that trigger a 911 call are consistently logged in the State (SWITRS) database and law enforcement agencies do not log bicycle accident data consistently.

**City Response:** The City of Menlo Park agrees with finding F4.

- F5.** The amount of enforcement of laws, as they pertain to bicyclists and how motorists and bicyclists interact, is inconsistent due to other priorities (e.g., criminal enforcement and general automobile traffic) and the requirement that a citation can generally only be written if the violation is witnessed by an officer.

**City Response:** The City of Menlo Park agrees with finding F5.

- F6.** There is no official metric in San Mateo County and its cities to evaluate how safe it is to ride a bicycle.

**City Response:** The City of Menlo Park partially disagrees with finding F6. The City tracks a number of metrics for safety, including collisions and collision severity. These inform projects and programs. While not all collisions for bicyclists are captured, more severe collisions are more likely to be captured.

- F7.** Bicycle safety education, for the bicyclist, pedestrians and motorists, is not consistently offered across San Mateo County.

**City Response:** The City of Menlo Park partially disagrees with finding F7. The City of Menlo Park, in partnership with local schools, provides bicycle safety education, including in classroom and on bicycle training. The City's Safe Routes to School Task Force has also been developing pedestrian safety educational materials. The City agrees that not all children receive this training and that adults do not consistently receive appropriate training, which is a statewide issue.



- F8.** Communication between various entities with responsibility for bicycle safety, including Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committees (BPACs), Law Enforcement, City Transportation Planning, and Public Works departments, is not formalized, resulting in inefficiencies, and missed opportunities (e.g., funding for improvements, shared bike safety education, or improving signage).

**City Response:** *The City of Menlo Park partially disagrees with finding F8. The City of Menlo Park maintains regular communication channels between our Police Department and Public Works, including transportation planning, at both the management and staff level. Staff also coordinate with the City's Complete Streets Commission (which serves as our local BPAC) on safety issues. The City agrees that more could be done on funding for improvements, bike safety education, signage, and other areas.*

- F9.** City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans or Active Transportation Plans, have not been adopted/created by all SMC cities

**City Response:** *The City of Menlo Park partially disagrees with finding F9. The City of Menlo Park has an adopted Transportation Master Plan that incorporates bicycle and pedestrian master plan. The City is also aware of Countywide Active Transportation Plans and Plans from some nearby jurisdictions, but the City does not assess the status of plans in other jurisdictions.*

### **Response to Grand Jury Recommendations**

- R1.** By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies and the County Sheriff should submit bicycle related data to SWITRS monthly, and regularly post and update their websites with all reported bicycle accident data.

**City Response:** *The recommendation has been implemented. The City reports crashes of all types to SWITRS, including bicycle collisions. The City has a public portal for crash records and dashboards that are used to present relevant trends and performance.*

- R2.** By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies should begin sending warning letters to motorists for violations of the 3 ft. law.

**City Response:** *The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable. Law enforcement agencies are only able to provide warnings or citations for violations that an officer witnesses. When a violation is witnessed, an officer can provide a direct warning (or citation). It would not be reasonable to also send a follow up letter given the greater value of the in person interaction and the lack of staffing to send letters.*

- R3.** By June 3, 2024, all law enforcement agencies should provide a means for citizens to report bicycle-related incidents that are not currently reported to law enforcement, similar to the SMC Sheriff's Department Online Crime Reporting portal.

**City Response:** The recommendation has been implemented. The City uses ACT Menlo Park to report a wide variety of resident requests, including traffic safety concerns. Both residents and the Menlo Park Police Department Dispatch Unit use ACT to provide information that the Traffic Unit uses to inform decisions about specific enforcement actions. It would not be reasonable to set up a separate reporting tool given the significant additional resources that would be required.

- R4.** By June 3, 2024 each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should offer a bike safety education program for riders and motorists about the laws and safety facts related to bicycles on the road.

**City Response:** The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable. While adult bike safety education is needed, it is not reasonable for this to be the responsibility of municipalities. "Toward an Active California," the Statewide Active Transportation Plan, identifies the need for improved bicycle and pedestrian education for all road users and includes a number of statewide actions. These types of education programs should not be the sole responsibility of individual municipalities. The City does sponsor youth bike safety education as part of the Safe Routes to School Program as described in our response to F7.

- R5.** By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should update or generate a new Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (or Active Transportation Plan) if their current plan is older than five years; consistent with the 2021 C/CAG San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

**City Response:** The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable. The City of Menlo Park adopted a Transportation Master Plan in November 2020. June 3, 2024 is less than 5 years from the completion of that plan. While this plan will need updates, these should not be required on a fixed schedule. For Menlo Park, a five-year update requirement could negatively impact the City's ability to implement bicycle, pedestrian, and other safety improvement projects that are identified in the Transportation Master Plan. In addition, the City is currently developing a Vision Zero Action Plan that will provide a focused examination of safety issues for all road users. This will not be a comprehensive update of the City's Transportation Master Plan, but will provide refined and new strategies and projects to enhance bicycle safety in Menlo Park.

- R6.** By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and the county should apply (or reapply) online to generate the Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card.

***City Response:*** *The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable.* *The City of Menlo Park applied for renewal of our Bicycle Friendly Community status in 2023 and therefore already complies with this recommendation. However, the deadline for applications for 2023 has passed and the next deadline for applications will close on June 25, 2024, making it impossible for communities that have not applied or that need to apply for a renewal to meet the deadline.*

- R7.** By February 1, 2024, the County should meet with cities within the County that are willing to participate, to consider establishing a regional effort that integrates the cities' bicycle plans and to discuss how the cities and County could work together to apply for grant opportunities as a region.

***City Response:*** *The recommendation has been implemented.* *The City of Menlo Park routinely works with San Mateo County, neighboring jurisdictions, and regional partners (SamTrans, City/County Association of Governments, Metropolitan Transportation Commission) on transportation planning and project implementation.*

If you have further questions, please contact Hugh Louch, Assistant Public Works Director, at [hlouch@menlopark.gov](mailto:hlouch@menlopark.gov) or 650-330-6741.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:  
  
22B0A0F5827744F...  
Jen Wolosin  
Mayor



# City of Millbrae

621 Magnolia Avenue, Millbrae, CA 94030

ANN SCHNEIDER  
Mayor

MAURICE GOODMAN  
Vice Mayor

ANDERS FUNG  
Councilmember

ANGELINA CAHALAN  
Councilmember

GINA PAPAN  
Councilmember

September 27, 2023

Honorable Nancy L. Fineman  
Judge of the Superior Court  
c/o Bianca Fasuescu  
Hall of Justice  
400 County Center, 2nd Floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

RE: City of Millbrae's Response to Grand Jury Report: "Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Bicycling Safe in the County"

Dear Honorable Judge Fineman,

Please accept this as the City of Millbrae's formal response to the Grand Jury Report: "Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Bicycling Safe in the County" (Grand Jury Report), pursuant to the instructions in your July 10, 2023 letter.

The Millbrae City Council reviewed the Grand Jury Report on Tuesday, September 26, 2023 and offered the following responses to the findings and recommendations by 5-0 roll call vote:

## **Responses to Findings**

**F1.** Bicycle policy and the approach to ensuring/improving bicycle safety is not consistent across San Mateo County due, at least in part, to:

- a. Topography
- b. Urban vs. suburban environments
- c. Types of bicyclists (commuter, recreational)
- d. Varying levels of enforcement of bicycle laws
- e. Differing knowledge of bicycle laws and safe practices

**Response to F1.** The City agrees with this Finding.

**F2.** Bicycle ridership as an alternative means of transportation (e.g., commuting to work, school, or transit hubs, running errands) is not increasing due, at least in part, to perceived safety issues.

**Response to F2.** The City agrees with this Finding.

**F3.** Bicycle accidents and incidents (such as near misses) are underreported, if reported at all.

Honorable Nancy L. Fineman

Re: Grand Jury Report: "Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Bicycling Safe in the County"

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**Response to F3.** The City agrees with this Finding.

**F4.** Only bicycle accidents or incidents that trigger a 911 call are consistently logged in the State (SWITRS) database and law enforcement agencies do not log bicycle accident data consistently.

**Response to F4.** The City agrees with this Finding.

**F5.** The amount of enforcement of laws, as they pertain to bicyclists and how motorists and bicyclists interact, is inconsistent due to other priorities (e.g., criminal enforcement and general automobile traffic) and the requirement that a citation can generally only be written if the violation is witnessed by an officer.

**Response to F5.** The City agrees with this Finding.

**F6.** There is no official metric in San Mateo County and its cities to evaluate how safe it is to ride a bicycle.

**Response to F6.** The City agrees with this Finding.

**F7.** Bicycle safety education, for the bicyclist, pedestrians, and motorists, is not consistently offered across San Mateo County.

**Response to F7.** The City partially agrees with this Finding. The City is not familiar with the status of other cities' bicycle safety education programs.

**F8.** Communication between various entities with responsibility for bicycle safety, including Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committees (BPACs), Law Enforcement, City Transportation Planning, and Public Works departments, is not formalized, resulting in inefficiencies, and missed opportunities (e.g., funding for improvements, shared bike safety education, or improving signage).

**Response to F8.** The City agrees with this Finding.

**F9.** City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans or Active Transportation Plans, have not been adopted/created by all SMC cities.

**Response to F9.** The City partially agrees with this Finding. The City is not familiar with the status of other cities' master plans or active transportation plans.

The Grand Jury Report recommended the following seven action items, of which four (4) will be for the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office Millbrae Police Bureau, and three (3) for the City:

**R1.** By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies and the County Sheriff should submit bicycle related data to SWITRS monthly, and regularly post and update their websites with all reported bicycle accident data.

**Response to R1:** The Sheriff's Office is already submitting bicycle collision data to SWITRS in compliance with their reporting requirements and will post and update bicycle collision data in our transparency portal by the end of December 2023 that will be updated cyclically.

**R2.** By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies should begin sending warning letters to motorists for violations of the 3 ft. law.

**Response to R2:** The Sheriff's Office has implemented an online process for reporting 3 ft. violation complaints and has been sending warning notices since May of 2023.

**R3.** By June 3, 2024, all law enforcement agencies should provide a means for citizens to report bicycle-related incidents that are not currently reported to law enforcement, similar to the SMC Sheriff's Department Online Crime Reporting portal.

**Response to R3.** As indicated above, the Sheriff Office has successfully implemented this using an existing reporting portal and will collaborate with other San Mateo County law enforcement agencies to assist them in creating their own reporting mechanisms upon request.

**R4.** By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should offer a bike safety education program for riders and motorists about the laws and safety facts related to bicycles on the road.

**Response to R4.** The Sheriff's Office has created an educational bike safety brochure that has already been published and shared publicly and will be updated as needed to reflect changes in the law or new safety information. The Sheriff's Office will collaborate with members of the bicycling community to produce a series of short bicycle safety educational videos that will be shared publicly, with at least the first video in the series to be shared by June 3, 2024.

**R5.** By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should update or generate a new Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (or Active Transportation Plan) if their current plan is older than five years; consistent with the 2021 C/CAG San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

**Response to R5.** The recommendation has been implemented. The City updated its Active Transportation Plan and adopted it on October 12, 2021. It is less than five years old. In addition, the City adopted the Millbrae Downtown and El Camino Real Specific Plan in December 2022, which further addresses bicycle and pedestrian issues.

**R6.** By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and the county should apply (or reapply) online to generate the Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card.

**Response to R6:** The City agrees with this recommendation and will implement it by the end of 2024.

**R7.** By February 1, 2024, the County should meet with cities within the County that are willing to participate, to consider establishing a regional effort that integrates the cities' bicycle plans and to discuss how the cities and County could work together to apply for grant opportunities as a region.

Honorable Nancy L. Fineman

Re: Grand Jury Report: "Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Bicycling Safe in the County"

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**Response to R7:** The recommendation is being implemented. The City will participate and meet with cities within the County that are willing to participate to consider establishing a regional effort that integrates the cities' various bicycle plans.

The City appreciates the opportunity to share its comments on the Grand Jury Report.

Sincerely,



Ann Schneider  
Mayor

Cc: City Council  
City Manager  
City Attorney



Scenic Pacifica

Incorporated Nov. 22, 1957

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## CITY OF PACIFICA

540 Crespi Drive • Pacifica, California 94044-3422

[www.cityofpacifica.org](http://www.cityofpacifica.org)

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### MAYOR

Tygarjas Bigstyck

### MAYOR PRO TEM

Sue Vaterlaus

### COUNCIL

Sue Beckmeyer

Mary Bier

Christine Boles

September 25, 2023

Hon. Nancy L. Fineman  
Judge of the Superior Court  
c/o Bianca Fasuescu  
Hall of Justice  
400 County Center; 2nd Floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

**Subject: City of Pacifica response to the Grand Jury Report: "Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Bicycling Safer in the County"**

Honorable Judge Fineman,

We appreciate the opportunity to respond to the Grand Jury report entitled "Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Bicycling Safer in the County". The City of Pacifica's response to both the findings and recommendations are listed below. The Pacifica City Council approved the responses at a public meeting held on September 25, 2023.

### **RESPONSES TO CIVIL GRAND JURY FINDINGS:**

**F1.** Bicycle policy and the approach to ensuring/improving bicycle safety is not consistent across San Mateo County due, at least in part, to:

- a. Topography
- b. Urban vs. suburban environments
- c. Types of bicyclists (commuter, recreational)
- d. Varying levels of enforcement of bicycle laws
- e. Differing knowledge of bicycle laws and safe practices.

**Response to F1:** The City of Pacifica agrees with the finding.

**F2.** Bicycle ridership as an alternative means of transportation (e.g., commuting to work, school, or transit hubs, running errands) is not increasing due, at least in part, to perceived safety issues.

**Response to F2:** The City of Pacifica agrees with the finding.

**F3.** Bicycle accidents and incidents (such as near misses) are underreported, if reported at all.

**Response to F3:** The City of Pacifica agrees with the finding.



**F4.** Only bicycle accidents or incidents that trigger a 911 call are consistently logged in the State (SWITRS) database and law enforcement agencies do not log bicycle accident data consistently.

**Response to F4:** The City of Pacifica disagrees partially with the finding.

The City of Pacifica disagrees with the portion stating “law enforcement agencies do not log bicycle accident data consistently”. In this case, we can only speak for the City of Pacifica and not other law enforcement agencies. All vehicle collisions occurring in our jurisdiction that qualify for entry into SWITRS following investigation are entered accordingly regardless of how they are reported to the department (911, non-emergency lines, in-person, etc.).

**F5.** The amount of enforcement of laws, as they pertain to bicyclists and how motorists and bicyclists interact, is inconsistent due to other priorities (e.g., criminal enforcement and general automobile traffic) and the requirement that a citation can generally only be written if the violation is witnessed by an officer.

**Response to F5:** The City of Pacifica agrees with the finding.

**F6.** There is no official metric in San Mateo County and its cities to evaluate how safe it is to ride a bicycle.

**Response to F6:** The City of Pacifica agrees with the finding.

**F7.** Bicycle safety education, for the bicyclist, pedestrians and motorists, is not consistently offered across San Mateo County.

**Response to F7:** The City of Pacifica agrees with the finding.

**F8.** Communication between various entities with responsibility for bicycle safety, including Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committees (BPACs), Law Enforcement, City Transportation Planning, and Public Works departments, is not formalized, resulting in inefficiencies, and missed opportunities (e.g., funding for improvements, shared bike safety education, or improving signage).

**Response to F8:** The City of Pacifica agrees with the finding.

**F9.** City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans or Active Transportation Plans, have not been adopted/created by all SMC cities.

**Response to F9:** The City of Pacifica agrees with the finding.

#### **RESPONSES TO RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**R1.** By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies and the County Sheriff should submit bicycle related data to SWITRS monthly, and regularly post and update their websites with all reported bicycle accident data.

**Response to R1:** The recommendation has been implemented.

The Pacifica Police Department (PPD) already reports appropriate bicycle-related collision data via SWITRS (California Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System) as each report is completed and ready for transmission. The SWITRS database is maintained by the California Highway Patrol (CHP). The California Public Records Act (CPRA) (Gov. Code, § 6250 et seq.) allows public access to SWITRS data. Additionally, UC Berkeley provides a Transportation Injury Mapping System tool for accessing and mapping bicycle collision data from SWITRS. This tool can be accessed at [https://tims.berkeley.edu/help/Query\\_and\\_Map.php](https://tims.berkeley.edu/help/Query_and_Map.php). The Pacifica Police Department will provide this link to the community on their website.

**R2.** By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies should begin sending warning letters to motorists for violations of the 3 ft. law.

**Response to R2:** The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or reasonable.

Allowing civilians to routinely report traffic infractions not witnessed by sworn peace officers, resulting in action by the Pacifica Police Department is not a current practice. To implement such a practice only for *violations of the 3 ft. law* would raise the question; “Why doesn’t the police department have this same approach for any and all infraction violations?” Such a change in practice would require substantial evaluation prior to implementation. There are potentially concerns involving legality, liability, rules of evidence, resource limitations, and potential abuses that need to be considered prior to implementing this change. If civilians were able to submit complaints about traffic infractions (ie. speeding, cellphone use, stops signs, red lights, etc.) thus creating the expectation that the police department author and mail out warnings in all cases, would create a demand on limited resources and could result in substantial abuses. In cases where sufficient evidence is provided that a safety violation occurred, and the investigating officer believes that sending a warning notice is appropriate, the Pacifica Police Department will do so.

**R3.** By June 3, 2024, all law enforcement agencies should provide a means for citizens to report bicycle-related incidents that are not currently reported to law enforcement, similar to the SMC Sheriff’s Department Online Crime Reporting portal.

**Response R3:** The recommendation has been implemented.

The Pacifica Police Department provides several means for community members to report any type of activity to the police department, including bicycle-related incidents (in-person, by telephone, via department general email, and via the Internet online crime and collision reporting). Whether or not members of the public report incidents that “are not currently reported to law enforcement” is outside of our control.

**R4.** By June 3, 2024 each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should offer a bike safety education program for riders and motorists about the laws and safety facts related to bicycles on the road.

**Response to R4:** The recommendation will be implemented by June 3, 2024

The Pacifica Police Department will implement additional opportunities to educate both riders and motorists about bicycle laws and safety by June 3, 2024. This may include the following;

- a. Youth education programs in collaboration with the Pacifica School District, Jefferson Union High School District, PB&R, Pacifica Bike Coalition, etc.
- b. Rider education programs in collaboration with local businesses (ie. bike shops)
- c. Motorist and rider education through targeted social media messaging
- d. Motorist and rider education through literature and print messaging
- e. Directed enforcement with a focus on applicable bicycle safety laws

**R5.** By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should update or generate a new Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (or Active Transportation Plan) if their current plan is older than five years; consistent with the 2021 C/CAG San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

**Response to R5:** This has been implemented.

The City of Pacifica of Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan has been in place since February of 2020.

**R6.** By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and the county should apply (or reapply) online to generate the Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card.

**Response to R6:** The recommendation will be implemented by June 3, 2024

The City of Pacifica is contacting neighboring cities, and the county, to research and begin the process of applying for a Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card.

**R7.** By February 1, 2024, the County should meet with cities within the County that are willing to participate, to consider establishing a regional effort that integrates the cities' bicycle plans and to discuss how the cities and County could work together to apply for grant opportunities as a region.

**Response to F7:** The recommendation has been implemented.

The City of Pacifica works with San Mateo County on grant application opportunities for many programs and initiatives, including bicycle and pedestrian safety.

Respectfully,



Kevin Woodhouse

City Manager City of Pacifica

Cc: Pacifica City Council

Jeff Gee, Mayor  
Lissette Espinoza-Garnica, Vice Mayor

1017 Middlefield Road  
Redwood City, CA 94063  
(650) 780-7220  
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**Council Members**  
Alicia C. Aguirre  
Kaia Eakin  
Diane Howard  
Elmer Martinez Saballos  
Chris Sturken



October 9, 2023

The Honorable Nancy L. Fineman  
Judge of the Superior Court  
c/o Bianca Fasuescu  
400 County Center; 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

**Re: San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury Report titled, “Bike Safety in San Mateo County; Making Bicycling Safer in the County” – Issued on July 10, 2023**

Dear Judge Fineman,

The City of Redwood City (City) received the San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury Report titled, “Bike Safety in San Mateo County; Making Bicycling Safer in the County” on July 10, 2023. The report instructed the City of Redwood City to respond to all nine Findings and eight Recommendations. Pursuant to Penal Code §933.05, the following response to the Grand Jury was reviewed and approved by the City Council at its meeting on October 9, 2023:

**Findings**

F1. Bicycle policy and the approach to ensuring/improving bicycle safety is not consistent across San Mateo County due, at least in part, to:

- a. Topography
- b. Urban vs. suburban environments
- c. Types of bicyclists (commuter, recreational)
- d. Varying levels of enforcement of bicycle laws
- e. Differing knowledge of bicycle laws and safe practices.

**Response: The City agrees with the finding.**

F2. Bicycle ridership as an alternative means of transportation (e.g., commuting to work, school, or transit hubs, running errands) is not increasing due, at least in part, to perceived safety issues.

**Response: The City agrees with the finding.**

F3. Bicycle accidents and incidents (such as near misses) are underreported, if reported at all.

**Response: The City disagrees wholly or partially with the finding. Bicycle accidents involving collisions with motor vehicle are generally reported. However, Redwood City rarely receives reports of collisions involving bicycle versus bicycle and/or bicycle versus pedestrian, supporting the belief those types of collisions are likely underreported.**

F4. Only bicycle accidents or incidents that trigger a 911 call are consistently logged in the State (SWITRS) database and law enforcement agencies do not log bicycle accident data consistently.

**Response: The City disagrees wholly or partially with the finding. Collisions involving bicycles that are reported in any manner, i.e. flag down of an officer, phone call to Police Dispatch on a non-emergency line, Counter Report, or via 911 call, are all consistently submitted to SWITRS. The Redwood City Police Department logs all bicycle data in a consistent format.**

F5. The amount of enforcement of laws, as they pertain to bicyclists and how motorists and bicyclists interact, is inconsistent due to other priorities (e.g., criminal enforcement and general automobile traffic) and the requirement that a citation can generally only be written if the violation is witnessed by an officer.

**Response: The City agrees with the finding.**

F6. There is no official metric in San Mateo County and its cities to evaluate how safe it is to ride a bicycle.

**Response: The City disagrees wholly or partially with the finding. Level of traffic stress (LTS) and bicycle-involved collision history are two metrics used by jurisdictions to analyze cyclists' level of comfort with using streets by cyclists of varying aptitude.**

F7. Bicycle safety education, for the bicyclist, pedestrians and motorists, is not consistently offered across San Mateo County.

**Response: The City agrees with the finding.**

F8. Communication between various entities with responsibility for bicycle safety, including Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committees (BPACs), Law Enforcement, City Transportation Planning, and Public Works departments, is not formalized, resulting in inefficiencies, and missed opportunities (e.g., funding for improvements, shared bike safety education, or improving signage).

**Response: The City disagrees wholly or partially with the finding. Redwood City's Vision Zero Task Force has representatives from its Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), Police Department, Community Development & Transportation Department (includes Planning and Engineering Divisions), school districts, and the San Mateo County Health Department among others to minimize inefficiencies and missed opportunities to increase bike safety.**

F9. City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans or Active Transportation Plans, have not been adopted/created by all SMC cities.

**Response: The City disagrees wholly or partially with the finding. Redwood City has adopted RWC Walk Bike Thrive, which serves as our pedestrian and bicycle master plans and our vision zero action plan.**

## **Recommendations**

R1. By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies and the County Sheriff should submit bicycle related data to SWITRS monthly, and regularly post and update their websites with all reported bicycle accident data.

**Response:** The recommendation requires further analysis. Redwood City already submits all collision related data to SWITRS on a weekly basis. Regularly posting the same data to a local website will require further analysis to ensure it is not duplicative of the work already being performed by SWITRS staff; the results of which are available to the public. Redwood City is currently in the process of modernizing many of its web-based data platforms and we anticipate that all collision data will be regularly updated and readily available to the public by the end of FY 2025-26.

R2. By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies should begin sending warning letters to motorists for violations of the 3 ft. law.

**Response:** The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable. Enforcement of any officer observed violations of the 3 ft. law are handled immediately with a warning or citation. Implementing a process wherein Police Department staff members must intake, evaluate, identify, and send letters to alleged violators would require staff resources that do not currently exist. Additionally, it is a recommendation fraught with tremendous downsides. History has shown that no matter how well intended, such a system would be used by some members of society to illegitimately harass other members of the community. Since, absent corroborating video, there would be no way to confirm whether or not the violation occurred, an accusatory notice from an official government agency seems highly inappropriate. Since the presumed goal of this recommendation is education, perhaps an organization such as the Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition is the appropriate organization for such an endeavor.

R3. By June 3, 2024, all law enforcement agencies should provide a means for citizens to report bicycle-related incidents that are not currently reported to law enforcement, similar to the SMC Sheriff's Department Online Crime Reporting portal.

**Response:** The recommendation requires further analysis. There are already a number of ways within Redwood City for the reporting of crimes and/or general public concerns. Community members are able to call, text, or email the Police Department. In addition, Redwood City utilizes the MyRWC mobile app for the reporting of areas of concern ranging from a curb that needs to be repainted to observed violations of the law. The MyRWC app is being updated to highlight and ease reporting bicycle related issues; this update will be completed by December 2023. The City will then be able to analyze data captured through all means of reporting from January-December 2024, which may reveal opportunities for future programming in support of the City Council's Vision Zero strategies. Simultaneously, the Redwood City Police Department will seek trends and insights observed through County Sheriff's Office online reporting portal through May 2024 (full year of data) to determine effectiveness of this alternative reporting mechanism.

R4. By June 3, 2024 each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should offer a bike safety education program for riders and motorists about the laws and safety facts related to bicycles on the road.

**Response:** The recommendation has been implemented. For several years, Redwood City has hosted multiple bicycle safety education programs for riders and motorists. Most recently, there was one hosted on May 10, 2023 by the Friends of the Redwood City Public Library, Safe Routes to Schools, and Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition, and on May 22nd by the Police Department.

R5. By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should update or generate a new Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (or Active Transportation Plan) if their current plan is older than five years; consistent with the 2021 C/CAG San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

**Response: The recommendation has been implemented. Redwood City adopted RWC Walk Bike Thrive was adopted in June 2022. RWC Walk Bike Thrive is Redwood City's pedestrian and bicycle master plans and our vision zero action plan.**

R6. By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and the county should apply (or reapply) online to generate the Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card.

**Response: The recommendation has not been implemented but will be implemented in the future. Redwood City will reapply for Bicycle Friendly Community status for the 2024 deadline of June 25, 2024.**

R7. By February 1, 2024, the County should meet with cities within the County that are willing to participate, to consider establishing a regional effort that integrates the cities' bicycle plans and to discuss how the cities and County could work together to apply for grant opportunities as a region.

**Response: The recommendation has not been implemented but will be implemented in the future. Redwood City would welcome the opportunity to collaborate with other jurisdictions to discuss how to advance bicycle facilities as a region.**

On behalf of the City Council of the City of Redwood City, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the above referenced Civil Grand Jury Report.

Respectfully,



Jeff Gee, Mayor  
City of Redwood City

cc: City Council, City of Redwood City  
Melissa Stevenson Diaz, City Manager  
Yessica Castro, Interim City Clerk



Rico E. Medina  
Mayor

August 23, 2023

Honorable Nancy L. Fineman  
Judge of the Superior Court  
c/o Bianca Fasuescu  
Hall of Justice  
400 County Center; 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Subject: Response of the City of San Bruno to the San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury Report "Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Bicycling Safer in the County"

Dear Judge Fineman,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Grand Jury report entitled "Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Bicycling Safer in the County." The City of San Bruno's response to the findings and recommendations of the report are listed below.

**Response to Findings:**

F1. Bicycle policy and the approach to ensuring/improving bicycle safety is not consistent across San Mateo County due, at least in part, to:

- a. Topography
- b. Urban vs. suburban environments
- c. Types of bicyclists (commuter, recreational)
- d. Varying levels of enforcement of bicycle laws
- e. Differing knowledge of bicycle laws and safe practices.

Response: Agree, but we question why the finding does not include funding, since funding was specifically mentioned in the background section of the report.

F2. Bicycle ridership as an alternative means of transportation (e.g., commuting to work, school, or transit hubs, running errands) is not increasing due, at least in part, to perceived safety issues.

Response: Partially Disagree. The Grand Jury Report does not necessarily prove that bicycle ridership is not increasing. References are made to dated surveys, and a statement is made that because municipalities' bike plans show ridership levels about the same as the dated surveys. Factoring in rounding, the



statistical significance of the surveys involved, and margins of error, it is difficult to make any conclusion based on the referenced data. This is not meant to discount the importance of bicycle safety, only to call into question the particular finding as written by the Grand Jury.

F3. Bicycle accidents and incidents (such as near misses) are underreported, if reported at all.

Response: Agree, anecdotally we believe this is true.

F4. Only bicycle accidents or incidents that trigger a 911 call are consistently logged in the State (SWITRS) database and law enforcement agencies do not log bicycle accident data consistently.

Response: Wholly Disagree. At the San Bruno Police Department, all vehicle collisions occurring in our jurisdiction that qualify for entry into SWITRS following investigation are entered accordingly regardless of how they are reported to the department (911, non-emergency lines, in-person, etc.). We are not clear on what is meant by the finding that "law enforcement agencies do not log bicycle accident data consistently."

F5. The amount of enforcement of laws, as they pertain to bicyclists and how motorists and bicyclists interact, is inconsistent due to other priorities (e.g., criminal enforcement and general automobile traffic) and the requirement that a citation can generally only be written if the violation is witnessed by an officer.

Response: Agree.

F6. There is no official metric in San Mateo County and its cities to evaluate how safe it is to ride a bicycle.

Response: Agree.

F7. Bicycle safety education, for the bicyclist, pedestrians and motorists, is not consistently offered across San Mateo County.

Response: Agree.

F8. Communication between various entities with responsibility for bicycle safety, including Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committees (BPACs), Law Enforcement, City Transportation Planning, and Public Works departments, is not formalized, resulting in inefficiencies, and missed opportunities (e.g., funding for improvements, shared bike safety education, or improving signage).

Response: Agree.

F9. City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans or Active Transportation Plans, have not been adopted/created by all SMC cities.

Response: Agree.

**Response to Recommendations:**

R1. By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies and the County Sheriff should submit bicycle related data to SWITRS monthly, and regularly post and update their websites with all reported bicycle accident data.

Response: The first part of this recommendation has been implemented and the second part will not be implemented because it is not warranted or reasonable. The San Bruno Police Department (SBPD) already reports appropriate bicycle-related collision data via SWITRS as each report is completed and ready for transmission. SBPD does not regularly post collision data to its website and does not possess the resources to begin doing so.

R2. By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies should begin sending warning letters to motorists for violations of the 3 ft. law.

Response: This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or reasonable. While it is not expressly stated in the recommendation, it seems clear that the intention here is to have the police department send violation warning letters to motorists based solely on reports by civilians. The practice of allowing civilians to report traffic infractions not witnessed by sworn peace officers, thus prompting some action by the police department is unprecedented and would require substantial evaluation prior to any implementation. There are potential concerns involving legality, liability, rules of evidence, resource limitations, and potential abuses that need to be considered prior to implementing a change like this. It is also important to note that if this practice is appropriate for infractions related to bicycle safety, why would it not also be applicable for countless other violations? If civilians were able to submit complaints about all sorts of traffic infractions (speeding, cellphone use, stops signs, red lights, etc.), thus creating the expectation that the police department author and mail out warnings in all cases, this would be completely untenable from a resource perspective and could result in substantial abuses. In cases where sufficient evidence is provided, and the investigating officer believes that sending a warning notice is appropriate, SBPD will do so.

R3. By June 3, 2024, all law enforcement agencies should provide a means for citizens to report bicycle-related incidents that are not currently reported to law enforcement, similar to the SMC Sheriff's Department Online Crime Reporting portal.

Response: This recommendation has already been implemented. SBPD provides several means by which civilians can report virtually anything to the police department, including bicycle-related incidents (in-person, phone, email, Internet, web application). Whether or not the public reports incidents that "are not currently reported to law enforcement" is beyond our control.

R4. By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should offer a bike safety education program for riders and motorists about the laws and safety facts related to bicycles on the road.

Response: The recommendation requires further analysis to determine the resources necessary to implement this recommendation. Improving education could be beneficial, but having each jurisdiction, which varies in size, staffing and funding, dedicate staff resources and funding is arguably unrealistic. Without identification of the staff resources and funding necessary for this, the City will likely not undertake this. To best implement the Grand Jury's finding for consistent education, the recommendation should call for a County agency, perhaps County Public Health, Sheriff's Department or County Office of Education, to establish and fund such a program for all jurisdictions in the County.

R5. By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should update or generate a new Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (or Active Transportation Plan) if their current plan is older than five years; consistent with the 2021 C/CAG San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

Response: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not reasonable. The City of San Bruno's plan is from 2016 and was the result of significant public engagement, therefore an update is expected to be a significant effort that will take at least 18 months. The City Council has not budgeted for an update to the plan, nor has identified as a future initiative. Therefore, a revised bike plan could not occur by the recommended completion date. However, many identified bicycle improvements from the 2016 plan and the 2021 C/CAG plan are underway as part of the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Other projects will be added to the CIP as funding becomes available.

R6. By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and the county should apply (or reapply) online to generate the Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card.

Response: The recommendation requires further analysis to determine the resources necessary to implement this recommendation. Without identification of the staff resources and funding necessary for this, the City will likely not undertake this.

R7. By February 1, 2024, the County should meet with cities within the County that are willing to participate, to consider establishing a regional effort that integrates the cities' bicycle plans and to discuss how the cities and County could work together to apply for grant opportunities as a region.

Response: The recommendation has been implemented. The City regularly meets with other jurisdictions in the region to improve bicycle safety through direct communications and collectively via the C/CAG Technical Advisory Committee. This committee can lead the further analysis necessary for R4 and R6.

This response was approved by the San Bruno City Council at a public meeting on August 22, 2023.

Sincerely,



Rico E. Medina  
Mayor



October 10, 2023

Honorable Nancy L. Fineman  
Judge of the Superior Court  
c/o Bianca Fasuescu  
Hall of Justice  
400 County Center; 2nd Floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Subject: Response of the City of San Carlos to the San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury Report "Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Bicycling Safer in the County."

Dear Judge Fineman,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the report titled, "Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Bicycling Safer in the County." Please find our response to the findings and recommendations of the report below. This response was approved by the San Carlos City Council on October 9, 2023.

### **I. Response to Findings**

**Finding 1.** *Bicycle policy and the approach to ensuring/improving bicycle safety is not consistent across San Mateo County due, at least in part, to:*

- a. Topography*
- b. Urban vs. suburban environments*
- c. Types of bicyclists (commuter, recreational)*
- d. Varying levels of enforcement of bicycle laws*
- e. Differing knowledge of bicycle laws and safe practices.*

**Response:** The City of San Carlos agrees with this finding and would participate in any countywide effort to increase regional consistency in bicycle policy and approach to improving bicycle safety.

**Finding 2.** *Bicycle ridership as an alternative means of transportation (e.g., commuting to work, school, or transit hubs, running errands) is not increasing due, at least in part, to perceived safety issues.*

**Response:** The City of San Carlos agrees with this finding. Safety issues, real and perceived, are an obstacle for potential bike riders, especially commuters.

**Finding 3.** *Bicycle accidents and incidents (such as near misses) are underreported, if reported at all.*

**Response:** The San Carlos Bureau of the San Mateo County Sheriff's Department gets dispatched to most bicycle incidents, both crashes and near misses.

**Finding 4.** *Only bicycle accidents or incidents that trigger a 911 call are consistently logged in the State (SWITRS) database and law enforcement agencies do not log bicycle accident data consistently.*

**Response:** The City of San Carlos agrees with this finding. We have heard from our resident bicyclists that minor crashes are not reported to law enforcement and we have no credible way of recording or tracking them. We still use SWITRS for any decision making or analysis as it is the only credible record-keeping system.

**Finding 5.** *The amount of enforcement of laws, as they pertain to bicyclists and how motorists and bicyclists interact, is inconsistent due to other priorities (e.g., criminal enforcement and general automobile traffic) and the requirement that a citation can generally only be written if the violation is witnessed by an officer.*

**Response:** It is the law that the violations must be witnessed by a law enforcement officer before citations can be issued. The Sheriff's Department enforces laws equally regardless of whether the violators are vehicles or bicycles, when present at the time of the violation to witness it.

**Finding 6.** *There is no official metric in San Mateo County and its cities to evaluate how safe it is to ride a bicycle.*

**Response:** The City of San Carlos agrees with this finding. The only tangible measure we have is the bicycle level of traffic stress, but it is not consistently used countywide.

**Finding 7.** *Bicycle safety education, for the bicyclist, pedestrians and motorists, is not consistently offered across San Mateo County.*

**Response:** The City of San Carlos agrees with this finding. We do not have any uniform educational materials across the county. It would be great if such material was available for us to use.

**Finding 8.** *Communication between various entities with responsibility for bicycle safety, including Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committees (BPACs), Law Enforcement, City Transportation Planning, and Public Works departments, is not formalized, resulting in inefficiencies, and missed opportunities (e.g., funding for improvements, shared bike safety education, or improving signage).*

**Response:** The City of San Carlos agrees with this finding. There is no formal communication set between various responsible parties.

**Finding 9.** *City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans or Active Transportation Plans, have not been adopted/created by all SMC cities.*

**Response:** The City of San Carlos agrees with this finding. Although San Carlos has recently adopted a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, not every city has one.

## **II. Response to Recommendations**

**Recommendation 1.** *By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies and the County Sheriff should submit bicycle related data to SWITRS monthly, and regularly post and update their websites with all reported bicycle accident data.*

**Response:** The Sheriff's Office is already submitting bicycle collision data to SWITRS in compliance with their reporting requirements and will post and update bicycle collision data in our transparency portal by the end of December 2023 that will be updated cyclically.

**Recommendation 2.** *By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies should begin sending warning letters to motorists for violations of the 3 ft. law.*

**Response:** The Sheriff's Office has implemented an online process for reporting 3 ft. violation complaints and has been sending warning notices since May of 2023.

**Recommendation 3.** *By June 3, 2024, all law enforcement agencies should provide a means for citizens to report bicycle-related incidents that are not currently reported to law enforcement, similar to the SMC Sheriff's Department Online Crime Reporting portal.*

**Response:** As indicated above, the Sheriff's Office has successfully implemented this using an existing reporting portal and will collaborate with other San Mateo County law enforcement agencies to assist them in creating their own reporting mechanisms upon request.

**Recommendation 4.** *By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should offer a bike safety education program for riders and motorists about the laws and safety facts related to bicycles on the road.*

**Response:** The Sheriff's Office has created an educational bike safety brochure that has already been published and shared publicly and will be updated as needed to reflect changes in the law or new safety information. The Sheriff's Office will collaborate with members of the bicycling community to produce a series of short bicycle safety educational videos that will be shared publicly, with at least the first video in the series to be shared by June 3, 2024.

**Recommendation 5.** *By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should update or generate a new Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (or Active Transportation Plan) if their current plan is older than five years; consistent with the 2021 C/CAG San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.*

**Response:** The City of San Carlos Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan is only 3 years old and was adopted in June of 2020.

**Recommendation 6.** *By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and the county should apply (or reapply) online to generate the Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card.*

**Response:** The City of San Carlos has a bronze certification from the Bicycle Friendly America in 2016. We plan to apply again for the year 2024 re-certification. The deadline for this application is June 25, 2024.

**Recommendation 7.** *By February 1, 2024, the County should meet with cities within the County that are willing to participate, to consider establishing a regional effort that integrates the cities' bicycle plans and to discuss how the cities and County could work together to apply for grant opportunities as a region.*

**Response:** The City of San Carlos is happy to attend the event as set by the County.

Respectfully submitted,



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Jeff Maltbie, City Manager





CITY OF SAN MATEO  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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October 3, 2023

Hon. Nancy L. Fineman  
Judge of the Superior Court  
c/o Bianca Fasuescu  
Hall of Justice  
400 County Center; 2nd Floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

**RESPONSE TO CIVIL GRAND JURY REPORT: “BIKE SAFETY IN SAN MATEO COUNTY – MAKING BICYCLING SAFER IN THE COUNTY”**

Honorable Judge Fineman,

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the above referenced Grand Jury Report filed on July 10, 2023. The City of San Mateo’s response to both the findings and recommendations are listed below.

**Response to Grand Jury Findings:**

**F1. Bicycle policy and the approach to ensuring/improving bicycle safety is not consistent across San Mateo County due, at least in part, to:**

- a) Topography
- b) Urban vs. suburban environments
- c) Types of bicyclists (commuter, recreational)
- d) Varying levels of enforcement of bicycle laws
- e) Differing knowledge of bicycle laws and safe practices

Response to F1: The City agrees with this finding, relying on the Grand Jury’s representations in their report.

**F2. Bicycle ridership as an alternative means of transportation (e.g., commuting to work, school, or transit hubs, running errands) is not increasing due, at least in part, to perceived safety issues.**

Response to F2: The City does not agree with the first part of this finding due to the lack of standardized annual data regarding bicycle ridership.

The City agrees with the second part of this finding that there are perceived safety issues, relying on the Grand Jury's representations in their report.

**F3. Bicycle accidents and incidents (such as near misses) are underreported, if reported at all.**

Response to F3: The City agrees with this finding, relying on the Grand Jury's representations in their report.

**F4. Only bicycle accidents or incidents that trigger a 911 call are consistently logged in the State (SWITRS) database and law enforcement agencies do not log bicycle accident data consistently.**

Response to F4: The City agrees with the first part of this finding, in that only bicycle-related incidents known to the San Mateo Police Department are reported to SWITRS, and the City relies on the Grand Jury's representations in their report in partially agreeing with the finding.

The City does not agree with the second part of this finding that law enforcement agencies do not log bicycle accident data consistently. The City, per San Mateo Police Department policy and practices, logs bicycle-related accidents in a consistent and standardized reporting manner through SWITRS.

**F5. The amount of enforcement of laws, as they pertain to bicyclists and how motorists and bicyclists interact, is inconsistent due to other priorities (e.g., criminal enforcement and general automobile traffic) and the requirement that a citation can generally only be written if the violation is witnessed by an officer.**

Response to F5: The City agrees with this finding, primarily relying on the Grand Jury's representations in their report, and it would add that a contributing factor to this issue is the lack of complete reporting of bicycle-related incidents or problem areas to generate the awareness needed to drive increased enforcement.

**F6. There is no official metric in San Mateo County and its cities to evaluate how safe it is to ride a bicycle.**

Response to F6: The City agrees with this finding, relying on the Grand Jury's representations in their report.

**F7. Bicycle safety education, for the bicyclist, pedestrians and motorists, is not consistently offered across San Mateo County.**

Response to F7: The City agrees with this finding, relying on the Grand Jury's representations in their report.

**F8. Communication between various entities with responsibility for bicycle safety, including Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committees (BPACs), Law Enforcement, City Transportation Planning, and Public Works departments, is not formalized, resulting in inefficiencies, and missed opportunities (e.g., funding for improvements, shared bike safety education, or improving signage).**

Response to F8: The City agrees with this finding, relying on the Grand Jury's representations in their report.

**F9. City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans or Active Transportation Plans, have not been adopted/created by all SMC cities.**

Response to F9: The City agrees with this finding, relying on the Grand Jury's representations in their report.

**Response to Grand Jury Recommendations:**

**R1. By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies and the County Sheriff should submit bicycle related data to SWITRS monthly, and regularly post and update their websites with all reported bicycle accident data.**

Response to R1: The recommendation has been implemented. The City reports data to SWITRS with regular updates to the City website.

**R2. By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies should begin sending warning letters to motorists for violations of the 3 ft. law.**

Response to R2: The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but it will be implemented by the end of 2023.

**R3. By June 3, 2024, all law enforcement agencies should provide a means for citizens to report bicycle-related incidents that are not currently reported to law enforcement, similar to the SMC Sheriff's Department Online Crime Reporting portal.**

Response to R3: The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but it will be implemented by the end of 2023.

**R4. By June 3, 2024 each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should offer a bike safety education program for riders and motorists about the laws and safety facts related to bicycles on the road.**

Response to R4: The recommendation requires further analysis. Staff will evaluate funding and staffing needed to implement such a program and make a recommendation to City Council regarding implementation within the time period specified.

**R5. By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should update or generate a new Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (or Active Transportation Plan) if their current plan is older than five years; consistent with the 2021 C/CAG San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.**

Response to R5: The recommendation has been implemented. The City of San Mateo adopted the current Bicycle Master Plan in April 2020; it will be less than five years old in June 2024. Further, the City is currently developing the Citywide Complete Streets Plan, a multimodal transportation plan focused on increasing safety for all modes on the City's roadways.

City staff participated in the development of the C/CAG San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan to ensure consistency with the City's current adopted transportation plans.

**R6. By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and the county should apply (or reapply) online to generate the Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card.**

Response to R6: The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but it will be implemented by the specified date.

**R7. By February 1, 2024, the County should meet with cities within the County that are willing to participate, to consider establishing a regional effort that integrates the cities' bicycle plans and to discuss how the cities and County could work together to apply for grant opportunities as a region.**

Response to R7: The recommendation requires further analysis. The City will be open to meeting with the County by this deadline to consider such an effort.

This response to the Grand Jury was approved at a public meeting of the San Mateo City Council on October 2, 2023.

Sincerely,



Amourence Lee  
Mayor



# City of South San Francisco

P.O. Box 711 (City Hall, 400  
Grand Avenue)  
South San Francisco, CA

## Legislation Text

File #: 23-734  
Version: 1

Agenda Date: 9/27/2023  
Item #: 8.

Report regarding a resolution approving the City Council's response to the San Mateo County Grand Jury Report, dated July 10, 2023, entitled, "Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Bicycling Safer in the County" and authorizing the City Manager to send the response letter on behalf of the City Council. (*Anthony Pinell, Police Lieutenant*).

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**It is recommended that the City Council approve the responses and adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to send the response letter to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court of San Mateo County on behalf of the City.**

### **BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION**

On July 10, 2023, the 2022-2023 San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury released a report titled "Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Bicycling Safer in the County" ("Report") with nine findings. The report noted there was a lack of consistency throughout the county in bicycle safety education, enforcement, incident reporting, policy, and master plans. The report also attributed a lack of an increase in bicycle ridership due to perceived safety issues and found that there is a lack of communication between various entities who are responsible for bicycle safety. The report made seven recommendations intended to encourage the reporting of bicycle related incidents, publishing of collision statistics, providing bicycle safety education, adopting a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, and collaborating between jurisdictions to address bicycle safety on a regional level. The City of South San Francisco is required to respond to the Report within 90 days of its filing, or by October 10, 2023.

The City's response must include a statement as to whether the city agrees or disagrees with each finding, as well as a response to each recommendation. Responses to recommendations must state whether the recommendation has been implemented, will be implemented, requires further study, or will not be implemented. These statements must be accompanied by a detailed explanation.

The Police Department and Economic and Community Development Department met to discuss a coordinated response to the report, and any subsequent, collaborative implementation of its recommendations.

### **Response to Grand Jury Findings:**

**F1. Bicycle policy and the approach to ensuring/improving bicycle safety is not consistent across San Mateo County due, at least in part, to:**

- a. Topography
- b. Urban vs. suburban environments
- c. Types of bicyclists (commuter, recreational)
- d. Varying levels of enforcement of bicycle laws
- e. Differing knowledge of bicycle laws and safe practices

**The City of South San Francisco agrees with this finding.** Bicycling in the City has been historically reserved for recreational uses, rather than a consistent mode of commute travel. Existing facilities including the Centennial Trail and the Bay Trail are frequently used for recreation only. South San Francisco's topography and built environment do not presently have adequate connections with nearby municipalities/townships of San Bruno and Colma to facilitate intra-city travel by bicycles.

**F2. *Bicycle ridership as an alternative means of transportation (e.g., commuting to work, school, or transit hubs, running errands) is not increasing due, at least in part, to perceived safety issues.***

**The City of South San Francisco agrees with this finding** due to the lack of facilities and lack of bicycle lanes. The City of South San Francisco is working to address these issues through its "Active South City" Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. During the development of the Active South City Plan, public outreach and collision/incident data confirmed that most existing bicycle facilities are located along high-speed corridors with multiple travel lanes that increase the perception of unsafe bicycling conditions.

**F3. *Bicycle accidents and incidents (such as near misses) are underreported, if reported at all.***

**The City of South San Francisco agrees with this finding.** The South San Francisco Police Department responds to all reported traffic collisions and incidents; however, it is not possible to respond to collisions and/or incidents that are unknown to the department due to a lack of reporting. California Vehicle Code 20008 requires motorists to report all collisions to the local police department or California Highway Patrol when an injury or death occurs. There is no requirement to report non-injury collisions or other non-collision related incidents to the police.

**F4. *Only bicycle accidents or incidents that trigger a 911 call are consistently logged in the State (SWITRS) database and law enforcement agencies do not log bicycle accident data consistently.***

**The City of South San Francisco partially agrees with this finding.** The South San Francisco Police Department documents all collisions which are reported through the 911 dispatch system, as well as collisions which are reported through our non-emergency line and made in person at the police department. Although the grand jury investigation revealed bicycle accident data is not logged consistently (countywide), the South San Francisco Police Department does in fact log all reported collisions (including bicycle related collisions), and all reportable data is transmitted to SWITRS immediately after each report is approved and reviewed by the Records Division.

**F5. *The amount of enforcement of laws, as they pertain to bicyclists and how motorists and bicyclists interact, is inconsistent due to other priorities (e.g., criminal enforcement and general automobile traffic) and the requirement that a citation can generally only be written if the violation is witnessed by an officer.***

**The City of South San Francisco agrees with this finding.** South San Francisco Police Officers are expected to enforce traffic violations when they are observed. These violations include infractions committed by bicyclists and violations which involve both motorists and bicyclists. If an officer is enroute to a call for service, they may be unable to enforce a traffic violation committed in their presence due to the need to arrive at the call in a timely manner. It is true that in order to issue a citation for a traffic infraction, the violation must have occurred in the presence of an officer.

Dedicated enforcement efforts include the Community Assisted Reactive Enforcement Program (C.A.R.E.), the San Mateo County Saturated Enforcement Program (S.T.E.P) and grant funded operations through the California Office of Traffic Safety (O.T.S.). All the mentioned programs focus on collision reduction through

the enforcement of violations including speeding, distracted driving, DUI, stop sign violations, red light violations, and bicycle and pedestrian related violations. Furthermore, the department participates in two dedicated O.T.S. bicycle and pedestrian safety operations per year.

**F6. *There is no official metric in San Mateo County and its cities to evaluate how safe it is to ride a bicycle.***

**The City of South San Francisco agrees with this finding.** Although there is no “official” metric, the City of South San Francisco uses the industry standard, “Level of Traffic Stress” metric when evaluating survey data regarding bicycle safety. The Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress (Bicycle LTS) metric was developed as an objective, data-driven evaluation model to help identify streets with high levels of traffic stress. The metric is derived using analysis of roadway network data (i.e., posted speed limit, street width, number of travel lanes, intersection conditions, presence and character of bikeway facilities, and land use context) to determine bicyclist comfort levels. The combination of these criteria creates four levels of traffic stress for the existing roadway network. Lower numbers indicate less stress and higher levels of comfort for people on bicycles. LTS 1 and 2 roads are typically the roadways that appeal to the “interested but concerned” bicyclists.

**F7. *Bicycle safety education, for the bicyclist, pedestrians, and motorists, is not consistently offered across San Mateo County.***

**The City of South San Francisco agrees with this finding.** Although the offerings of bicycle safety education are not consistent throughout the county, the City of South San Francisco offers multiple bicycle safety education programs including helmet giveaways, bicycle rodeos, the “Every Kid Deserves a Bike” program (presented in collaboration with the San Mateo County office of Education- Safe Routes to School), various social media campaigns, and various Office of Traffic Safety funded bicycle and pedestrian safety operations (which include press releases).

**F8. *Communication between various entities with responsibility for bicycle safety, including Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committees (BPACs), Law Enforcement, City Transportation Planning, and Public Works departments, is not formalized, resulting in inefficiencies, and missed opportunities (e.g., funding for improvements, shared bike safety education, or improving signage).***

**The City of South San Francisco disagrees with this finding.** Various entities within the City of South San Francisco are assigned to the Traffic Advisory Committee, which meets monthly. The committee is comprised of members of the Police Department, Fire Department, Planning Division, Engineering Division, and Public Works Department. The purpose of the Traffic Advisory Committee is to evaluate traffic improvement requests from residents and business owners. The safety of bicyclists, pedestrians, and motorists are considered during the decision-making process. In addition, the Police Department recently began attending the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee meetings on a quarterly basis to discuss bicycle and pedestrian related collision statistics, and to work with the committee to make bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements throughout the city.

**F9. *City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans or Active Transportation Plans, have not been adopted/created by all SMC cities.***

**The City of South San Francisco agrees with this finding** per the Grand Jury’s report; however, the City of South San Francisco adopted the “Active South City” Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan in November of 2022. The Active South City Plan includes a citywide effort create new bicycle and pedestrian networks which connect major transit access points and City resources such as parks, recreational facilities, libraries, schools, and neighborhoods. Furthermore, Active South City implements all major transportation, climate, public health,

and mobility goals identified in the City's latest General Plan Update "Shape SSF."

**Response to Grand Jury Recommendations:**

**R1.** *By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies and the County Sheriff should submit bicycle related data to SWITRS monthly, and regularly post and update their websites with all reported bicycle accident data.*

**Part of the recommendation has been implemented, and part is yet to be implemented but will be implemented in the future.** The Police Department currently submits all reportable traffic collision data to SWITRS immediately after the reports have been approved and reviewed by the Records Division. This includes all bicycle related collision data. The department will regularly post and update its website with all reported bicycle collision data by December of 2023.

**R2.** *By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies should begin sending warning letters to motorists for violations of the 3 ft. law.*

**This recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future,** by December of 2023. The Police Department will create a warning letter for motorists who violate the 3 ft. law and will distribute them when a verifiable complaint is received. The warning letters may also be distributed by officers to motorists on traffic stops. The warning letters will contain bicycle safety information and related vehicle codes.

**R3.** *By June 3, 2024, all law enforcement agencies should provide a means for citizens to report bicycle-related incidents that are not currently reported to law enforcement, similar to the SMC Sheriff's Department Online Crime Reporting portal.*

**This recommendation has been implemented.** The Police Department recently updated its online crime reporting portal to include the ability for the community to report bicycle related incidents. In addition, the City currently receives all traffic-related complaints and issues through its Traffic Advisory Committee, which is staffed by members of the City's Public Works, Planning, Engineering, Fire, and Police Departments. Citizens have previously reported bicycle conflicts and City Staff has reviewed issues identified by the public for implementation of additional monitoring or safety treatments.

**R4.** *By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should offer a bike safety education program for riders and motorists about the laws and safety facts related to bicycles on the road.*

**This recommendation has been implemented.** The City of South San Francisco currently offers several bicycle education programs which include helmet giveaways, bicycle rodeos, the "Every Kid Deserves a Bike" program (presented in collaboration with the San Mateo County office of Education- Safe Routes to School), various social media campaigns, and various Office of Traffic Safety funded bicycle and pedestrian safety operations (which include press releases). The Police Department will also include a bicycle safety education component in its future Citizen's Academies.

**R5.** *By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should update or generate a new Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (or Active Transportation Plan) if their current plan is older than five years; consistent with the 2021 C/CAG San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.*

**This recommendation has been implemented.** The City of South San Francisco adopted its "Active South City" Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan in November of 2022. The vision and goals of the "Active South



City” Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan are:

- Promote citywide and regional sustainability goals through investments in active transportation that create a culture of walking and bicycling that enables them to become an increasing part of everyday life.
- Improve access and connectivity to major transit stops including Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) stations, Caltrain stations, and the ferry terminal.
- Improve connectivity within and across neighborhoods with low-stress facilities.
- Improve safety, eliminate traffic deaths and serious injury collisions, and lower the traffic stress of people walking and biking in South City.
- Advance equity with a focus on vulnerable and disadvantaged communities in project recommendations, funding, and implementation.
- Link community destinations (parks, schools, libraries, and community centers) together through low-stress networks.
- Improve connections across I-280, El Camino Real (SR-82), and US-101.

In addition, the City’s Active South City Plan is consistent with the 2021 C/CAG San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. City Staff engaged with C/CAG Staff during the development of both plans and reflects all anticipated bicycle and pedestrian improvements, especially at City borders and regional corridors.

**R6.** *By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and the county should apply (or reapply) online to generate the Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card.*

**This recommendation is not yet implemented but will be implemented in the future**, by June 3, 2024. The City of South San Francisco already has a Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card that was issued in 2018 and rated our community with a bronze rating. The Economic and Community Development Department have identified the need to reapply for a new Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card, as new plans and policies and important bicycle and pedestrian safety improvement projects have been completed since 2018.

**R7.** *By February 1, 2024, the County should meet with cities within the County that are willing to participate, to consider establishing a regional effort that integrates the cities’ bicycle plans and to discuss how the cities and County could work together to apply for grant opportunities as a region.*

**This recommendation is currently being implemented.** Since the adoption of several key policies to address bicycle and pedestrian safety, including Vision Zero, preparation of a Local Road Safety Plan, and the Active South City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, the City has established partnerships with the San Mateo County Transportation Authority and have been awarded grants and also collectively pursue projects that aim to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety. The City is currently working with County Transportation Authority Staff on several regional and state grant applications that would address climate change and safety on key intra-city corridors such as El Camino Real (SR-82). Further, the City, Caltrans, and County Transportation Authority Staff recently engaged in a collaborative partnership for a 10-week project that demonstrates protected bicycle lanes and pedestrian crossing treatments on the State Highway (SR-82)-the first of its kind on El Camino Real. The City shall continue to partner with local, regional, and state agencies to pursue projects such as this in the

future.

Staff has reviewed the findings and recommendations and prepared a draft response letter for City Council approval, attached to the associated resolution as Exhibit A.

FISCAL IMPACT

This report has no fiscal impact. All programs described in this report are already funded through existing sources.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Acceptance of this resolution meets Strategic Goals #2, #3, and #5 by providing a high quality of life, public safety, and economic vitality.

CONCLUSION

It is recommended that the City Council approve the response letter and authorize the City Manager to send the letter to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court of San Mateo County on behalf of the City Council.

Attachments:

1. Grand Jury Report - "Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Bicycling Safer in the County."



# City of South San Francisco

## City Council

### Resolution: RES 142-2023

P.O. Box 711 (City Hall, 400  
Grand Avenue)  
South San Francisco, CA

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**File Number: 23-735**

**Enactment Number: RES 142-2023**

RESOLUTION APPROVING THE CITY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE SAN MATEO COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY REPORT, DATED JULY 10, 2023, ENTITLED "BIKE SAFETY IN SAN MATEO COUNTY: MAKING BICYCLING SAFER IN THE COUNTY" AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO SEND THE RESPONSE LETTER ON BEHALF OF THE CITY COUNCIL.

WHEREAS, pursuant to California Penal Code section 933, a public agency which receives a Grand Jury Report ("Report") addressing aspects of the public agency's operations, must respond to the Report's findings and recommendations contained in the Report in writing within 90 days to the Presiding Judge of the San Mateo County Superior Court; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has received and reviewed the San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury Report, dated July 10, 2023, entitled "Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Bicycling Safer in the County"; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has reviewed the findings of the Civil Grand Jury Report; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has reviewed the recommendations of the Civil Grand Jury Report; and

WHEREAS, the City of South San Francisco and the South San Francisco Police Department will implement or implement in part R1, R3, R4, R5 and R7; and

WHEREAS, the City of South San Francisco and the South San Francisco Police Department have not yet implemented R1, R2, R6, and R7, but will be implemented in the near future. The date of completion will be on or before December 31, 2023, for R1 and R2. The date of completion will be on or before June 3, 2024, for R6 and for R7, the completion will be on or before February 1, 2024.

WHEREAS, the City Council has reviewed and considered the response to the Civil Grand Jury, which is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of South San Francisco, hereby approves the City Council's response to the San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury Report, dated July 10, 2023, entitled, "Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Bicycling Safer in the County" as set forth in Exhibit A attached to this Resolution.

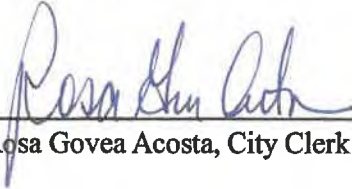
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of South San Francisco hereby authorizes the City Manager to send the response letter to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court of San Mateo County on behalf of the City Council.

\* \* \* \* \*

At a meeting of the City Council on 9/27/2023, a motion was made by Councilmember Addiego, seconded by Vice Mayor Nagales, that this Resolution be approved. The motion passed.

**Yes:** 4 Mayor Nicolas, Vice Mayor Nagales, Councilmember Addiego, and Councilmember Flores

**Absent:** 1 Councilmember Coleman

Attest by   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Rosa Govea Acosta, City Clerk



# TOWN OF ATHERTON

CITY COUNCIL  
80 FAIR OAKS LANE  
ATHERTON, CALIFORNIA 94027  
(650) 752-0500

October 6, 2023,

SENT VIA EMAIL & MAIL

Honorable Nancy L. Fineman  
Judge of the Superior Court  
c/o Bianca Fasuescu  
Hall of Justice  
400 County Center, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

**Subject: Response of the Town of Atherton to the Civil Grand Jury Report “Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Cycling Safer in the County”**

Dear Judge Fineman,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Civil Grand Jury report entitled “Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Cycling Safer in the County.” The Town of Atherton’s response to both the findings and recommendations are listed below.

**Responses to Civil Grand Jury Findings:**

**F1. Bicycle policy and the approach to ensuring/improving bicycle safety is not consistent across San Mateo County due, at least in part, to:**

- a. Topography**
- b. Urban vs. suburban environments**
- c. Types of bicyclists (commuter, recreational)**
- d. Varying levels of enforcement of bicycle laws**
- e. Differing knowledge of bicycle laws and safe practices.**

Response:

The Town of Atherton agrees with this finding.

**F2. Bicycle ridership as an alternative means of transportation (e.g., commuting to work, school, or transit hubs, running errands) is not increasing due, at least in part, to perceived safety issues.**

Response:

The Town of Atherton agrees with this finding.

**F3. Bicycle accidents and incidents (such as near misses) are underreported, if reported at all.**

Response:

The Town of Atherton agrees with this finding.

**F4. Only bicycle accidents or incidents that trigger a 911 call are consistently logged in the State (SWITRS) database and law enforcement agencies do not log bicycle accident data consistently.**

Response:

The Town of Atherton agrees with this finding.

**F5. The amount of enforcement of laws, as they pertain to bicyclists and how motorists and bicyclists interact, is inconsistent due to other priorities (e.g., criminal enforcement and general automobile traffic) and the requirement that a citation can generally only be written if the violation is witnessed by an officer.**

Response:

The Town of Atherton agrees with this finding.

**F6. There is no official metric in San Mateo County and its cities to evaluate how safe it is to ride a bicycle.**

Response:

The Town of Atherton agrees with this finding.

**F7. Bicycle safety education, for the bicyclist, pedestrians, and motorists, is not consistently offered across San Mateo County.**

Response:

The Town of Atherton agrees with this finding.

**F8. Communication between various entities with responsibility for bicycle safety, including Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committees (BPACs), Law Enforcement, City Transportation Planning, and Public Works departments, is not formalized, resulting in inefficiencies, and missed opportunities (e.g., funding for improvements, shared bike safety education, or improving signage).**

Response:

The Town of Atherton agrees with this finding.

**F9. City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans or Active Transportation Plans, have not been adopted/created by all SMC cities.**

Response:

The Town of Atherton agrees with this finding.

**Responses to the Civil Grand Jury Recommendations:**

**R1. By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies and the County Sheriff should submit bicycle related data to SWITRS monthly, and regularly post and update their websites with all reported bicycle accident data.**

The Atherton Police Department currently does submit bicycle-related data to SWITRS monthly and does regularly post and update our website with all bicycle collision data.

**R2. By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies should begin sending warning letters to motorists for violations of the 3 ft. law.**

When a complaint is received, the Atherton Police Department will begin sending out warning letters to motorists for violations of the 3 ft. law.

**R3. By June 3, 2024, all law enforcement agencies should provide a means for citizens to report bicycle-related incidents that are not currently reported to law enforcement, similar to the SMC Sheriff's Department Online Crime Reporting portal.**

The Atherton Police Department does not have an online crime reporting portal. To ensure quality customer service and quick response, residents and citizens are encouraged to call 911 or our Dispatch Center business line to report a crime or incident.

**R4. By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should offer a bike safety education program for riders and motorists about the laws and safety facts related to bicycles on the road.**

On September 30, 2023, the Atherton Police Department will host a Bicycle Safety Rodeo for children and adults to provide bicycle safety education information to riders and motorists. This will become an annual Town event.

**R5. By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should update or generate a new Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (or Active Transportation Plan) if their current plan is older than five years; consistent with the 2021 C/CAG San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.**

The Town of Atherton will begin the process to update the current Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, which will include budgeting for this very detailed and involved process, in our 2024/2025 fiscal year budget. The anticipated completion date of the plan update is June 30, 2025.

**R6. By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and the county should apply (or reapply) online to generate the Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card.**

The Town of Atherton will apply online to generate a Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card prior to June 3, 2024.

**R7. By February 1, 2024, the County should meet with cities within the County that are willing to participate, to consider establishing a regional effort that integrates the cities' bicycle plans**

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[www.ci.atherton.ca.us](http://www.ci.atherton.ca.us)


**and to discuss how the cities and County could work together to apply for grant opportunities as a region.**

The Town of Atherton is very willing to meet with County officials in consideration of establishing a regional effort that integrates the cities' bicycle plans and to discuss how the cities and County could work together to apply for grant opportunities as a region.

This response to the Grand Jury was considered by the City Council at a public meeting on September 20, 2023. Should you have any questions concerning this response, please contact City Manager George Rodericks at (650) 752-0504.

Respectfully,

**TOWN OF ATHERTON**

  
Bill Widmer  
Mayor

cc: City Council  
George Rodericks, City Manager





## TOWN OF COLMA

1198 El Camino Real • Colma, California • 94014-3212  
Tel 650.997.8300 • Fax 650.997.8308

October 6, 2023

Honorable Nancy L. Fineman  
Judge of the Superior Court  
c/o Bianca Fasuescu  
Hall of Justice  
400 County Center; 2nd Floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Re: Grand Jury Report: "Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Bicycling Safer in the County"

Dear Judge Fineman:

The City Council received the July 10, 2023, San Mateo Civil Grand Jury report titled, "Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Bicycling Safer in the County".

The Town of Colma was requested to submit comments regarding the findings and recommendations no later than October 10, 2023.

The City Council of the Town of Colma has reviewed the recommendations in the Grand Jury Report that affect the Town and approved the responses at its public meeting on September 27, 2023.

The Town agrees with findings F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, and F9. The Town partially agrees with findings F7 and F8 as follows:

**Finding 7:** Bicycle safety education, for the bicyclist, pedestrians and motorists, is not consistently offered across San Mateo County.

**Response:** The Town of Colma partially agrees with finding. The Town of Colma believes the education received to obtain a California Drivers License covers many aspects for bicyclist, pedestrian, and motorist safety.-Colma staff will continue to coordinate with the Silicon Valley Bike Coalition and Colma Police Dept. to promote programs to educate drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians about their rights and responsibilities, as well as traffic education and safety programs for adults and youth."

**Finding 8:** Communication between various entities with responsibility for bicycle safety, including Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committees (BPACs), Law Enforcement, City Transportation Planning, and Public Works departments, is not formalized, resulting in inefficiencies, and missed opportunities (e.g., funding for improvements, shared bike safety education, or improving signage).

Joanne F. del Rosario, Mayor  
John Irish Goodwin, Vice Mayor  
Ken Gonzalez, Council Member • Carrie Slaughter, Council Member • Helen Fisicaro, Council Member  
•Daniel Barros, City Manager

**Response:** The Town of Colma partially agrees with the finding. The Town of Colma believes that many of these aspects and entities come together during the upgrading of roadways. Colma staff will continue to coordinate to promote bike safety, including seeking grant funding for future improvement projects with other Departments and agencies, and forming multidisciplinary project development teams.

**Recommendation 1:** By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies and the County Sheriff should submit bicycle related data to SWITRS monthly, and regularly post and update their websites with all reported bicycle accident data.

**Response:** The Town of Colma believes it should follow State Law in regard to entering accident data into SWITRS.

**Recommendation 2:** By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies should begin sending warning letters to motorists for violations of the 3 ft. law.

**Response:** The Town of Colma believes warning letters may be used as a safety tool, however it should be utilized at the discretion of law enforcement. The Town of Colma will continue to promote programs that educate drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians about their rights and responsibilities, as well as traffic education and safety programs for adults and youth."

**Recommendation 3:** By June 3, 2024, all law enforcement agencies should provide a means for citizens to report bicycle-related incidents that are not currently reported to law enforcement, similar to the SMC Sheriff's Department Online Crime Reporting portal.

**Response:** The Town of Colma believes there are numerous ways already in place to report bicycle-related incidents. Not all agencies want to lose personal connection with their residents by moving to online reporting.

**Recommendation 4:** By June 3, 2024 each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should offer a bike safety education program for riders and motorists about the laws and safety facts related to bicycles on the road.

**Response:** Colma staff will continue to coordinate with the Silicon Valley Bike Coalition and Colma Police Dep to promote programs to educate drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians about their rights and responsibilities, as well as traffic education and safety programs for adults and youth."

**Recommendation 5:** By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should update or generate a new Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (or Active Transportation Plan) if their current plan is older than five years; consistent with the 2021 C/CAG San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

**Response:** The Town of Colma recently adopted its first Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan on August 23, 2023. The Master Plan is consistent with the 2021 C/CAG San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and other recently adopted local plan and policies to increase bicycle safety in and around the Town.

**Recommendation 6.** By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and the county should apply (or reapply) online to generate the Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card.

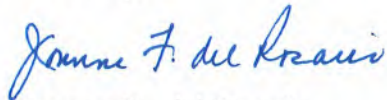
**Response:** The Town of Colma will apply for a Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card via the League of American Bicyclists (LAB) prior to June 3, 2024.

**Recommendation 7.** By February 1, 2024, the County should meet with cities within the County that are willing to participate, to consider establishing a regional effort that integrates the cities' bicycle plans and to discuss how the cities and County could work together to apply for grant opportunities as a region.

**Response:** The Town of Colma is looking forward to continuing to coordinate with C/CAG and all applicable regional and local partners to implement the Colma's recently adopted bicycle and pedestrian master plan and seek funding by applying for grant funding opportunities as a region (Countywide).

The Town appreciates the efforts of the Grand Jury. Please contact City Manager Daniel Barros should you require any additional information. He can be reached at (650) 997-8318 or by email: [dbarros@colma.ca.gov](mailto:dbarros@colma.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joanne F. del Rosario". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joanne F. del Rosario  
Mayor



**TOWN OF HILLSBOROUGH**  
*California*

October 9, 2023

Hon. Nancy L. Fineman  
Judge of the Superior Court  
c/o Bianca Fasuescu  
Hall of Justice  
400 County Center; 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Re: Grand Jury Report – “Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Cycling Safer in the County”

Honorable Judge Fineman:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the report titled, “Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Cycling Safer in the County.”

Please find our response to the findings and recommendations of the report below.

**RESPONSES TO FINDINGS**

*F1. Bicycle policy and the approach to ensuring/improving bicycle safety is not consistent across San Mateo County due, at least in part, to:*

- a. *Topography*
- b. *Urban vs. suburban environments*
- c. *Types of bicyclists (commuter, recreational)*
- d. *Varying levels of enforcement of bicycle laws*
- e. *Differing knowledge of bicycle laws and safe practices.*

**The Town agrees with each of the parts a through e.** Each of the cities within San Mateo are unique in composition and topography. The Town of Hillsborough is a residential community, without business and industrial uses, therefore, there are little to no commuter cyclists.

*F2. Bicycle ridership as an alternative means of transportation (e.g., commuting to work, school, or transit hubs, running errands) is not increasing due, at least in part, to perceived safety issues.*

**The Town partially disagrees with this statement.** Although cycling is not widely used for commuting to work in the Town, there has been an effort through the middle schools to encourage students to cycle and walk. They have hosted bike-to-school days and bicycle safety is shared with the students and their parents by local parent groups as well as Hillsborough Police Department.

*F3. Bicycle accidents and incidents (such as near misses) are underreported, if reported at all.*

**The Town partially disagrees with this statement.** The Hillsborough Police Department provides excellent response to its residents, and accidents and incidents of this nature would be received without delay.

*F4. Only bicycle accidents or incidents that trigger a 911 call are consistently logged in the State (SWITRS) database and law enforcement agencies do not log bicycle accident data consistently.*

**The Town disagrees with this statement.** All bicycle collisions that are reported to Hillsborough Police Department (HPD) and documented in a collision report are forwarded to the SWITRS database.

*F5. The amount of enforcement of laws, as they pertain to bicyclists and how motorists and bicyclists interact, is inconsistent due to other priorities (e.g., criminal enforcement and general automobile traffic) and the requirement that a citation can generally only be written if the violation is witnessed by an officer.*

**The Town agrees with this statement.** Every agency in San Mateo County has their own criteria and priorities with regards to traffic enforcement. Also, a citation can generally only be written if the violation is witnessed by an officer.

*F6. There is no official metric in San Mateo County and its cities to evaluate how safe it is to ride a bicycle.*

**The Town agrees with this statement.** There is no official metric in the county as it pertains to law enforcement to evaluate how safe it is to ride a bicycle.

*F7. Bicycle safety education, for the bicyclist, pedestrians and motorists, is not consistently offered across San Mateo County.*

**The Town partially disagrees with this statement.** Improvements in communicating with residents across San Mateo County can be done but an effort through the various agencies needs to be coordinated. A common educational campaign done as a group, instead of piecemeal by each agency, should be considered.

*F8. Communication between various entities with responsibility for bicycle safety, including Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committees (BPACs), Law Enforcement, City Transportation Planning, and Public Works departments, is not formalized, resulting in inefficiencies, and missed opportunities (e.g., funding for improvements, shared bike safety education, or improving signage).*

**The Town partially disagrees with this finding.** There have been communications and programs initiated, but there can be an improved message shared by all within the County of San Mateo.

## **RESPONSES TO RECOMMENDATIONS**

*R1. By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies and the County Sheriff should submit bicycle related data to SWITRS monthly, and regularly post and update their websites with all reported bicycle accident data.*

**This recommendation has been partially implemented.** The Town currently reports to SWITRS monthly. The second part requires further analysis as there is not a specific format for posting bicycle collision data.

*R2. By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies should begin sending warning letters to motorists for violations of the 3 ft. law.*

**The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not reasonable.** If an officer witnesses a violation of the 3 ft law, they have the ability to stop the violator and either issue a verbal warning, a written warning, or a citation at the time of occurrence. Generating letters due to citizen complaints could not be verified unless the alleged violation was witnessed by an officer. This could become a form of harassment. In some cases, it is dangerous for a motorist to follow the 3 ft law as it places them and other motorists in danger of a head-on collision, especially if the cyclist is not staying to the far right and riding towards the center of the lane.

R3. *By June 3, 2024, all law enforcement agencies should provide a means for citizens to report bicycle-related incidents that are not currently reported to law enforcement, similar to the SMC Sheriff's Department Online Crime Reporting portal.*

**This recommendation has been implemented.** Citizens already have the means to report incidents on-line to HPD or by phone. We encourage phone reports in that they get addressed faster and provide an opportunity for the call taker to ask follow-up questions. We do not have a specific on-line portal just for bicycle related incidents.

R4. *By June 3, 2024 each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should offer a bike safety education program for riders and motorists about the laws and safety facts related to bicycles on the road.*

**This recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future, by June 3, 2024.** We currently have an education program which is presented to children at the schools, but do not have a component currently that involves education for motorists.

R5. *By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should update or generate a new Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (or Active Transportation Plan) if their current plan is older than five years; consistent with the 2021 C/CAG San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.*

**This recommendation has not been implemented, but will be implemented by June 3, 2024.**

R6. *By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and the county should apply (or reapply) online to generate the Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card.*

**This recommendation has not been implemented, but will be implemented by June 3, 2024.**

R7. *By February 1, 2024, the County should meet with cities within the County that are willing to participate, to consider establishing a regional effort that integrates the cities' bicycle plans and to discuss how the cities and County could work together to apply for grant opportunities as a region.*

**This recommendation requires further analysis.** The Town will reach out to neighboring cities and the County to determine the feasibility and participation in a regional effort.

This response to the Grand Jury was approved by the Town of Hillsborough City Council at a public meeting on October 9, 2023.

Respectfully,



Christine Krolik  
Mayor, Town of Hillsborough



# TOWN of PORTOLA VALLEY

Town Hall: 765 Portola Road, Portola Valley, CA 94028 - Tel: (650) 851-1700

October 5, 2023

Hon. Nancy L. Fineman  
Judge of the Superior Court  
c/o Bianca Fasuescu  
Hall of Justice  
400 County Center; 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655  
Via Email: [grandjury@sanmateocourt.org](mailto:grandjury@sanmateocourt.org)

Re: Transmittal: Grand Jury Report: Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Bicycling Safer in the County

Honorable Judge Fineman,

Attached is the response letter signed by our Mayor that was approved at the Portola Valley Town Council meeting held on September 27, 2023.

Sincerely,



Howard Young  
Director of Public Works

Attachment 1: Response letter dated October 5, 2023

October 5, 2023

Hon. Nancy L. Fineman  
Judge of the Superior Court  
c/o Bianca Fasuescu  
Hall of Justice  
400 County Center; 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655  
Via Email: [grandjury@sanmateocourt.org](mailto:grandjury@sanmateocourt.org)

Re: Grand Jury Report: Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Bicycling Safer in the County

Honorable Judge Fineman,

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the above referenced Grand Jury Report released on July 10, 2023 with responses due by October 10, 2023. The Town of Portola Valley's response to both the findings and recommendations are listed below.

### **Response to Findings**

F1. Bicycle policy and the approach to ensuring/improving bicycle safety is not consistent across San Mateo County due, at least in part, to:

- a. Topography
- b. Urban vs. suburban environments
- c. Types of bicyclists (commuter, recreational)
- d. Varying levels of enforcement of bicycle laws
- e. Differing knowledge of bicycle laws and safe practices.

*The respondent **disagrees** wholly or partially with the finding. The Town of Portola Valley does not have knowledge or data of other agencies' practices or seen data or studies that justify this statement and does not have the resources itself to do so. Due to the remote location, rural character of the Town, and limited businesses, the Town has limited commuter traffic; however, the Town does draw recreational bicyclists from the region and specifically in the form of pelotons. In addition, the Town questions how the following statement in the Grand Jury report as there has not been communications with the Town regarding these statements: Page 8: "Portola Valley is focused on managing bicyclists on the weekend. But in both cases, the communities concentrate on ensuring quality of life for residents. They both see mostly recreational bicyclists." and "However, the communities don't make a strong effort to track riders or accidents. In both communities the Sheriff's Office, which is their policing arm, enforces rules at some problem locations, but not regularly."*

*The Town has a Bicycle, Pedestrian, Traffic Safety Committee that meets publicly monthly and has been actively addressing road safety issues.*

F2. Bicycle ridership as an alternative means of transportation (e.g., commuting to work, school, or transit hubs, running errands) is not increasing due, at least in part, to perceived safety issues.

*The respondent **disagrees** wholly or partially with the finding. The Town of Portola Valley has not seen data or adequate studies that justify this statement and does not have the resources itself to do so. Due to the remote location, topography, narrow residential roads, rural character of the Town, and limited*



*businesses, the Town has limited commuter traffic. Those providing services to the Town also need to bring in equipment. The Town does not have transit hubs, only limited bus service for the schools.*

F3. Bicycle accidents and incidents (such as near misses) are underreported, if reported at all.

*The respondent **disagrees** wholly or partially with the finding. The Town of Portola Valley has not seen data or adequate studies that justify this statement and does not have the resources itself to do so. The Town contracts with the San Mateo County Sheriff Department for law enforcement services and handles reporting as required onto SWITRS. For near misses, the concern would be how and at what expense for these to be reported and how reliable will the information be since there is no official agency report of the facts. In addition, the Town has a Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Traffic Safety (BPTS) Committee and publicly holds meetings monthly. As part of the regular BPTS Committee meeting agenda, the Sheriff Department reviews general accident and citation data. BPTS Committee agendas are posted online.*

F4. Only bicycle accidents or incidents that trigger a 911 call are consistently logged in the State (SWITRS) database and law enforcement agencies do not log bicycle accident data consistently.

*The respondent **disagrees** wholly or partially with the finding. The Town of Portola Valley has not seen data or adequate studies that justify this statement and does not have the resources itself to do so. The Town contracts with the San Mateo County Sheriff Department for law enforcement services and they handle reporting as required onto SWITRS.*

F5. The amount of enforcement of laws, as they pertain to bicyclists and how motorists and bicyclists interact, is inconsistent due to other priorities (e.g., criminal enforcement and general automobile traffic) and the requirement that a citation can generally only be written if the violation is witnessed by an officer.

*The respondent **disagrees** wholly or partially with the finding. The Town of Portola Valley has not seen data or adequate studies that justify this statement and does not have the resources itself to do so. The Town contracts with the San Mateo County Sheriff Department for law enforcement services and they handle enforcement and reporting as required.*

F6. There is no official metric in San Mateo County and its cities to evaluate how safe it is to ride a bicycle.

*The respondent **disagrees** wholly or partially with the finding. The Town of Portola Valley has not seen data or adequate studies that justify this statement and does not have the resources itself to do so. The Town contracts with San Mateo County Sheriff Department for law enforcement services. The Town has a Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Traffic Safety (BPTS) Committee and publicly holds meetings monthly. As part of the regular BPTS Committee meeting agenda, the Sheriff Department reviews general information on accident and citation data. Agendas are posted online.*

F7. Bicycle safety education, for the bicyclist, pedestrians and motorists, is not consistently offered across San Mateo County.

*The respondent **disagrees** wholly or partially with the finding. The Town of Portola Valley has not seen data or adequate studies that justify this statement and does not have the resources itself to do so.*

F8. Communication between various entities with responsibility for bicycle safety, including Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committees (BPACs), Law Enforcement, City Transportation Planning, and Public Works departments, is not formalized, resulting in inefficiencies, and missed opportunities (e.g., funding for improvements, shared bike safety education, or improving signage).

*The respondent **disagrees** wholly or partially with the finding. The Town has a Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Traffic Safety (BPTS) and publicly holds meetings monthly, as part of the regular meeting agenda, the Sheriff Department reviews general accident and citation data. Agendas are posted online. The meeting is generally attended by the Public Works Department, County Sheriff Department Representative, and a Town Council Liaison. Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Traffic Safety issues and improvements are discussed monthly.*

F9. City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans or Active Transportation Plans, have not been adopted/created by all SMC cities.

*The respondent **disagrees** wholly or partially with the finding. The Town of Portola Valley has not seen data or adequate studies that justify this statement and does not have the resources itself to do so. Due to the remote location, topography, narrow residential roads, lack of official bike lanes, equestrian use of its trails, its rural character of the Town, and limited businesses, the Town, in addition to lack of resources and funds, does not see a need to develop a specific mandated plan.*

## **Response to Recommendations**

R1. By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies and the County Sheriff should submit bicycle related data to SWITRS monthly, and regularly post and update their websites with all reported bicycle accident data.

*The recommendation **has not been implemented, but will be implemented in the future**, with a timeframe for implementation. The Town contracts with the San Mateo County Sheriff Department for law enforcement services. They have indicated: The Sheriff's Office is already submitting bicycle collision data to SWITRS in compliance with their reporting requirements and will post and update bicycle collision data in our transparency portal by the end of December 2023 that will be updated cyclically.*

*However, the recommendation does not include detail and is too general. The Town assumes that the data required to be submitted is mandatory and required by law. Additional request for unmandated data may require additional resources and funding that the Town does not have, and does not see as warranted and is not reasonable.*

R2. By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies should begin sending warning letters to

motorists for violations of the 3 ft. law.

*The recommendation **has been implemented**, with a summary regarding the implemented action. The Town contracts with the San Mateo County Sheriff Department for law enforcement services.*

*The Sheriff Department has indicated: The Sheriff's Office has implemented an online process for reporting 3 ft. violation complaints and has been sending warning notices since May of 2023.*

*However, the recommendation does not include detail and is too general. The Town assumes that the data required to be submitted is mandatory and required by law. Additional requests for unmandated data may require additional resources and funding that the Town does not have and does not see as warranted and is not reasonable.*

R3. By June 3, 2024, all law enforcement agencies should provide a means for citizens to report bicycle-related incidents that are not currently reported to law enforcement, similar to the SMC Sheriff's Department Online Crime Reporting portal.

*The recommendation **has been implemented**, with a summary regarding the implemented action. The Town contracts with the San Mateo County Sheriff Department for law enforcement services.*

*The Sheriff Department has indicated: As indicated above, the Sheriff Office has successfully implemented this using an existing reporting portal and will collaborate with other San Mateo County law enforcement agencies to assist them in creating their own reporting mechanisms upon request.*

*However, the recommendation does not include detail and is too general. The Town assumes that the data required to be submitted is mandatory and required by law. Additional requests for unmandated data may require additional resources and funding that the Town does not have and does not see as warranted and is not reasonable.*

R4. By June 3, 2024 each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should offer a bike safety education program for riders and motorists about the laws and safety facts related to bicycles on the road.

*The recommendation **will be partially implemented** because it is not warranted or is not reasonable. The Town itself does not have the funding or resources to perform this by itself. However, the Town contracts with the San Mateo County Sheriff for law enforcement services. The Sheriff Department has indicated: The Sheriff's Office has created an educational bike safety brochure that has already been published and shared publicly and will be updated as needed to reflect changes in the law or new safety information. The Sheriff's Office will collaborate with members of the bicycling community to produce a series of short bicycle safety educational videos that will be shared publicly, with at least the first video in the series to be shared by June 3, 2024.*

R5. By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should update or generate a new Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (or Active Transportation Plan) if their current plan is older than five years; consistent with the 2021 C/CAG San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

*The recommendation **will not be implemented** because it is not warranted or is not reasonable. Due to the remote location, topography, narrow residential roads, lack of official bike lanes, equestrian use of its trails, its rural character of the Town, and limited businesses, the Town, in addition to lack of resources and funds, does not see a need to be part of or develop a bicycle and pedestrian master plan.*

R6. By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and the county should apply (or reapply) online to generate the Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card.

*The recommendation **will not be implemented** because it is not warranted or is not reasonable. Due to the remote location, topography, narrow residential roads, lack of official bike lanes, equestrian use of its trails, its rural character of the Town, and limited businesses, the Town, in addition to lack of resources and funds, does not see a need to generate a Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card. The Town already has a large regional recreational bicycling and peloton groups due to its rural character and scenic roadways.*

R7. By February 1, 2024, the County should meet with cities within the County that are willing to participate, to consider establishing a regional effort that integrates the cities' bicycle plans and to discuss how the cities and County could work together to apply for grant opportunities as a region.

*The recommendation **will not be implemented** because it is not warranted or is not reasonable. This request is for the County to implement. In addition, consideration of the Towns remote location, topography, narrow residential roads, lack of official bike lanes, equestrian use of its trails, its rural character of the Town, and limited businesses.*

This response to the Grand Jury was approved by the Town of Portola Valley Town Council at a public meeting on September 27, 2023.

Respectfully,

DocuSigned by:



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Jeff Aalfs

Mayor, Town of Portola Valley

cc: Town Clerk



The Town of  
Woodside

September 27, 2023

The Honorable Nancy L. Fineman  
Judge of the Superior Court  
c/o Bianca Fasuescu  
Hall of Justice  
400 County Center; 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Dear Members of the Grand Jury,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the report titled, "Bike Safety in San Mateo County: Making Bicycling Safer in the County." The Town Council for the Town of Woodside has had the opportunity to review the report and, after reviewing the report and allowing for public comment at its regular meeting of September 26, 2023, the Town Council offers the following responses:

### **Response to Findings**

**Finding F1.** Bicycle policy and the approach to ensuring/improving bicycle safety is not consistent across San Mateo County due, at least in part, to topography, urban vs. suburban environments, types of bicyclists (commuter, recreational), varying levels of enforcement of bicycle laws, and differing knowledge of bicycle and safe practices.

**Response:** The Town of Woodside agrees with this finding.

**Finding F2.** Bicycle ridership as an alternative means of transportation (e.g., commuting to work, school, or transit hubs, running errands) is not increasing due, at least in part, to perceived safety issues.

**Response:** The Town of Woodside does not have information available to agree or disagree with this finding.

**Finding F3.** Bicycle accidents and incidents (such as near misses) are underreported, if reported at all.

**Response:** The Town of Woodside does not have information available to agree or disagree with this finding.

**Finding F4.** Only bicycle accidents or incidents that trigger a 911 call are consistently logged in the State (SWITRS) database and law enforcement agencies do not log bicycle accident data consistently.

P.O. Box 620005  
2955 Woodside Road  
Woodside CA 94062

650-851-6790

Fax: 650-851-2195

townhall@woodsidetown.org

**Response:** The Town of Woodside does not have information available to agree or disagree with this finding.

**Finding F5.** The amount of enforcement of laws, as they pertain to bicyclists and how motorists and bicyclists interact, is inconsistent due to other priorities (e.g., criminal enforcement and general automobile traffic) and the requirement that a citation can generally only be written if the violation is witnessed by an officer.

**Response:** The Town of Woodside does not have information available to agree or disagree with this finding.

**Finding F6.** There is no official metric in San Mateo County and its cities to evaluate how safe it is to ride a bicycle.

**Response:** The Town of Woodside agrees with this finding.

**Finding F7.** Bicycle safety education, for the bicyclist, pedestrians and motorists, is not consistently offered across San Mateo County.

**Response:** The Town of Woodside does not have information available to agree or disagree with this finding.

**Finding F8.** Communication between various entities with responsibility for bicycle safety, including Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committees (BPACs), Law Enforcement, City Transportation Planning, and Public Works departments, is not formalized, resulting in inefficiencies, and missed opportunities (e.g., funding for improvements, shared bike safety education, or improving signage).

**Response:** The Town of Woodside agrees with this finding.

**Finding F9.** City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans or Active Transportation Plans, have not been adopted/created by all SMC cities.

**Response:** The Town of Woodside agrees with this finding.

### **Response to Recommendations**

**Recommendation R1.** By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies and the County Sheriff should submit bicycle related data to SWITRS monthly, and regularly post and update their websites with all reported bicycle accident data.

**Response:** Law enforcement within the Town of Woodside is provided by the Sheriff's Office. The Sheriff's Office is already submitting bicycle collision data to SWITRS in compliance with their reporting requirements and will post and update bicycle collision data in their transparency portal by the end of December 2023 that will be updated cyclically.

**Recommendation R2.** By December 2023, all law enforcement agencies should begin sending warning letters to motorists for violations of the 3 ft. law.

**Response:** Law enforcement within the Town of Woodside is provided by the Sheriff's Office. The Sheriff's Office has implemented an online process for reporting 3 ft. violation complaints and has been sending warning notices since May 2023.

**Recommendation R3.** By June 3, 2024, all law enforcement agencies should provide a means for citizens to report bicycle-related incidents that are not currently reported to law enforcement, similar to the SMC Sheriff's Department Online Crime Reporting portal.

**Response:** Law enforcement within the Town of Woodside is provided by the Sheriff's Office. The Sheriff's Office has successfully implemented this using an existing reporting portal.

**Recommendation R4.** By June 3, 2024 each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should offer a bike safety education program for riders and motorists about the laws and safety facts related to bicycles on the road.

**Response:** Law enforcement within the Town of Woodside is provided by the Sheriff's Office. The Sheriff's Office has created an educational bike safety brochure that has already been published and shared publicly and will be updated as needed to reflect changes in the law or new safety information. The Sheriff's Office will collaborate with members of the bicycling community to produce a series of short bicycle safety educational videos that will be shared publicly, with at least the first video in the series to be shared by June 3, 2024.

**Recommendation R5.** By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and unincorporated SMC should update or generate a new Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (or Active Transportation Plan) if their current plan is older than five years; consistent with the 2021 C/CAG San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

**Response:** The recommendation will be implemented, but at time beyond June 3, 2024. The Town has other planning initiatives that it is working on and has scheduled prior to consideration of a new Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. The Town will consider the creation of a new Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan during the 2024-25 budget adoption process.

**Recommendation R6.** By June 3, 2024, each city, town, and the county should apply (or reapply) online to generate the Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card.

**Response:** The recommendation will not be implemented. As stated in the Grand Jury report, the application is very detailed and runs 88 pages in length. The Town does not have the staff resources to commit to compiling the necessary information to complete the application.

**Recommendation R7.** By February 1, 2024, the County should meet with cities within the County that are willing to participate, to consider establishing a regional effort that integrates the cities' bicycle plans and to discuss how the cities and County could work together to apply for grant opportunities as a region.

**Response:** The Town of Woodside is willing to participate in a Countywide effort to apply for grant opportunities as a region.

The Town Council had a full discussion, and a Town resident provided a memorandum with advocacy recommendations, anecdotal statements, and description of experiences that helped to illuminate the issue, and which differ from the Town's findings. The Council voted to include this memorandum as an enclosure with this letter.

Please feel free to contact Town Manager Kevin Bryant at (650) 851-6790 or [kbryant@woodsidetown.org](mailto:kbryant@woodsidetown.org) if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Chris Shaw  
Mayor

Enclosure



Riding against traffic on a sidewalk increases risk of not being seen by drivers.

### Lights and Reflectors [CVC 21201 (a)]

A bicyclist riding during darkness on a roadway, sidewalk (where permitted), or bikeway must have a front white light, rear red reflector and other required reflectors. It is best to use a rear light, as well. Many bicycle crashes happen in poor lighting conditions. It is very important to see and be seen when riding during twilight or darkness. Learn more about riding safely at night in Chapter 7, pp. 36-37 and see CVC 21201 (d) for additional reflector requirements.

### Helmets [CVC 21212]

A bicyclist or passenger under 18 years of age must wear a helmet when traveling on a public road, bikeway, bicycle path, or trail. A bicyclist or passenger of any age is required to wear a helmet on a Class 3 electric bicycle. Head injuries account for about one-third of emergency room visits for bicycle-related injuries. Bicycle helmets, properly fitted and worn, have been found effective in reducing the incidence and severity of head, brain, and upper facial injury. Learn more about proper helmet use on page 4.

### Headphones and Earplugs [CVC 27400]

Bicyclists may not use headphones or earbuds that cover, rest on, or are inserted in both ears. Use of such devices can be distracting. Sounds of an approaching vehicle may not be heard.

### Electric Bicycles [CVC 312.5; 21207.5; 21213; 24016; ]

California recognizes three classes of electric bicycles. Manufacturers are required to label them as Class 1, 2 or 3. Class 1 and 2 electric bicycles are limited

to power assistance up to 20 mph. Class 3 electric bicycles provide power assistance up to 28 mph. Electric power is limited to less than 750 watts.. Class 1 and Class 3 electric bicycles are pedal-assist only and do not have a throttle. Operators of Class 3 electric bicycles must be at least 16 years of age and must wear a helmet.

[CVC 24016(d)]

*It is illegal to tamper with or modify an electric bicycle to increase its speed capability.*

This subsection does not apply if the manufacturer or distributor of the electric bicycle appropriately replaces the label indicating the new classification as required in CVC 312.5 (c).

Electric bicycles may be operated where a conventional bicycle is allowed. However, local governments have the authority to restrict all classes of e-bikes on an equestrian, hiking, or recreational trail that allows conventional bicycles. Electric bicycles may be operated on bicycle paths or bicycle trails, except if restricted within California State Park properties. Check with the government having jurisdiction for any electric bicycle restrictions where you plan on riding.

### Resources for California Bicyclists

**California Association of Bicycling Organizations (CABO):** [cabobike.org](http://cabobike.org) protects the rights of California cyclists and promotes laws, policies, and actions that treat cyclists equitably.

**American Bicycling Education Association (ABEA):** [aben.bike](http://aben.bike) | [cyclingsavvy.org](http://cyclingsavvy.org) provides information about safe bicycling via online and in-person bicycling courses.

## Bicycling Street Smarts, CyclingSavvy Edition Supplement for California Bicyclists

This supplement for California bicyclists has been created to accompany the print and electronic versions of *Bicycling Street Smarts* (CyclingSavvy Edition, 2019) by John S. Allen (author) and Keri Caffrey (illustrator). Print copies of *Bicycling Street Smarts* may be ordered from [CyclingSavvy.org](http://CyclingSavvy.org). An electronic Kindle version can be purchased from Amazon and borrowed free by Kindle Unlimited subscribers.

What follows is a selection and summary of traffic control devices and laws relevant to bicyclists in California. For more information see [cyclingsavvy.org/streetsmarts/ca](http://cyclingsavvy.org/streetsmarts/ca) or scan the QR code above.



### California Traffic Control Devices for Bicyclists

California uses some roadway signs and pavement markings specifically for bicyclists. Here are some of the newer ones.

#### Bikes May Use Full Lane

Sign  
[CA-MUTCD, Section 9B.06]



This sign may be

used on roadways with no bicycle lanes or adjacent shoulders usable by bicyclists and where travel lanes are too narrow for bicyclists and motor vehicles to share safely side by side. It may also be used where it is important to inform road users that bicyclists might occupy the travel lane.

#### Shared Lane Marking (SLM or "Sharrow") [CA-MUTCD, Section 9C.07]

This pavement marking is intended to assist bicyclists with lateral positioning on streets with parallel parking and in lanes too narrow for a motor vehicle and a bicycle to share side by side. In addition, it alerts road users to where bicyclists are likely to be in the travel lanes, encouraging motorists to respect their right to be there. The SLM also can indicate where bicyclists may legally proceed straight in a right-turn-only lane.

**NOTE:** These markings are sometimes placed incorrectly and should not be followed if they are near the right edge or in the door zone.



#### Proceeding Straight From A Turn Lane [CVC 22101(e)(1)]

In California, bicyclists are required to obey the rules for turn lanes and should merge out of a turn-only lane to go straight. If an "Except Bicycles" sign is posted or a sharrow is marked in a turn lane, bicyclists are permitted to proceed straight ahead.



#### Bicycling on Freeways [CVC 21960]

Bicycling is prohibited on most California limited-access roadways. When bicycling is allowed on a freeway, the standard regulatory sign will say only **NO PEDESTRIANS**. Any prohibition for "motor-driven cycles" does not apply

For a PDF of this document, visit: [cyclingsavvy.org/streetsmarts/ca](http://cyclingsavvy.org/streetsmarts/ca)

to Class 1, 2, or 3 electric bicycles because they are legally considered bicycles.

### Bicycle Traffic-Signal Heads [CVC 21456.2 & .3]

Traffic control signals showing the bicycle symbol apply to bicyclists in the signal-controlled bikeway, not to bicyclists in general travel lanes.

### California Traffic Laws for Bicyclists

This section outlines several key California Vehicle Code (CVC) laws applicable to bicyclists. The entire CVC is available via [cyclingsavvy.org/statutes](http://cyclingsavvy.org/statutes).

#### Bicyclists' Rights and Responsibilities [CVC 21200] (a)

*Every person riding a bicycle upon a highway has all of the rights and is subject to all the provisions applicable to the driver of a vehicle...*

Bicyclists on public roads must follow the same laws as vehicle drivers, including riding on the right side of the roadway, yielding appropriately at intersections and driveways, and observing all traffic control pavement markings, signs and signals.

#### Roadway Position [CVC 21202] (a)

*Any person operating a bicycle upon a roadway at a speed less than the normal speed of traffic at that time shall ride as close as practicable to the right-hand curb or edge of the roadway except under any of the following situations... (see provided flowchart)*

"As far right as practicable" means "as far right as reasonable and safe," not "as far right as possible." While California



- 12ft Normal width is NOT shareable
- 14ft Shareable with cars and small SUVs at low speeds
- 16ft Shareable with most vehicles

### Is the bicyclist...

- ...riding the same speed or faster than other traffic? YES
- ...passing a slow or stopped vehicle? YES
- ...preparing to turn left? YES
- ...in a lane that is too narrow to share? YES
- ...encountering unsafe conditions on the edge? YES
- ...approaching a driveway or intersection? YES

If the answer to ALL questions is NO: The bicyclist must ride as far to the right as practicable.

law requires bicyclists traveling slower than other traffic to ride as far right as practicable, it also provides several exceptions, and at least one usually applies. This CVC 21202 flowchart outlines the exceptions, any of which authorizes bicyclists to use the full lane. Learn more about where to ride on the road in Chapter 2 (p. 10) as well as Chapters 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8 of *Bicycling Street Smarts*.

See [CyclingSavvy.org/cvc21202/](http://CyclingSavvy.org/cvc21202/) for more information about the history CVC 21202 in California.

#### Bike Lanes [CVC 21208]

*Whenever a bicycle lane has been established on a roadway . . . any person operating a bicycle upon the roadway at a speed less than the normal speed of traffic at that time shall ride within the bicycle lane, except that the person may move out of the lane under any of the following situations... (see provided flowchart)*

While California law requires bicyclists traveling slower than other traffic to use a bike lane marked off with a paint stripe (called a Class 2 Bikeway), it also provides several exceptions to this

requirement. The CVC 21208 flowchart provided outlines these exceptions, any of which permits bicyclists to use a general travel lane instead of the bike lane. Learn more about bike lanes in Chapters 2 (pp. 12-13) and 3 (p. 20).

### Is the bicyclist...

- ...riding the same speed or faster than other traffic? YES
- ...passing a slow or stopped vehicle? YES
- ...preparing to turn left? YES
- ...encountering unsafe conditions in the bike lane? YES
- ...approaching a driveway or intersection? YES

If the answer to ALL questions is NO: The bicyclist must ride in the bike lane.

### Separated Bikeways

No California laws require bicyclists to use a path on its own right-of-way (Class 1 Bikeway), or a barrier-separated bikeway on or next to a roadway (Class 4 Bikeway). Class 4 Bikeways are also referred to as physically separated bikeways or cycle tracks, and are sometimes imprecisely called "protected bike lanes."

### Riding Two Aboard

Despite what some people believe, there are no laws in California limiting the number of bicyclists who may ride side-by-side in a traffic lane. Riding double is often safer, and a shorter group is easier for motorists to pass (see Chapter 6). Bicyclists in a group are, however, subject to the laws concerning Roadway Position and Bike Lanes presented above. Bicyclists are therefore legally required

Aiding an additional rider, or line of riders, makes no difference.



Safe and legal lane position for solo rider in a lane too narrow to share



to ride single file (a) in a lane that is wide enough for a single rider to share safely side-by-side with a motor vehicle, or (b) when a usable bike lane is available and none of the exceptions to CVC 21202 or CVC 21208, apply. Group riding is covered in Chapter 6.

### Slow-Moving Vehicles Turning Out [CVC 21656]

If five or more vehicles are unable to pass, a slow vehicle driver must turn out where it is safe to do so.

On two-lane roads, a cooperative bicyclist makes it easy for motorists behind to pass when safe and may discourage a motorist from endangering others by passing when unsafe. Learn more in Chapter 2, pp. 10-11, Two-lane Roads: Balancing Courtesy with Safety.

### Sidewalk Riding [CVC 21206 & 21100 (h)] [CVC 21456.2 (b)]

There is no California law prohibiting sidewalk bicycling. However, cities, towns and other local authorities may prohibit bicycle operation on some or all sidewalks. Sidewalks and crosswalks are designed for walking speed, not normal bicycle speeds. Some crosswalk signals give an advanced-start walk signal before the travel lanes get a green. Bicyclists are allowed to proceed on a walk signal, even if the traffic signal is red, unless a specific bicycle signal is present (effective 1/1/24) but should always check to confirm that no traffic is turning across their path. It is more predictable to ride on a sidewalk in the same direction as roadway traffic.