

**CITY OF ALBANY
MEMORANDUM**

DATE: May 16, 2018

TO: Sustainability Committee

FROM: Chelsea Plevy, CivicSpark Climate Fellow
Claire Griffing, Sustainability & Resilience Manager

SUBJECT: Clean & Active Transportation Initiatives

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

City staff recommends that the Sustainability Committee discuss their role in promoting the use of clean and active transportation within in the City.

BACKGROUND

The City of Albany promotes clean and active transportation through a variety of programs and projects. Active transportation is non-motorized transportation that is powered by human energy, and primarily includes walking and bicycling. Clean transportation does not produce emissions and includes active transportation as well as zero emissions public transport and alternative fuel passenger vehicles such as electric and hydrogen fuel cell cars. The following discussion is intended to serve as an overview of the City's efforts to promote clean and active transportation.

The City has completed most of the transportation improvement projects identified in the Active Transportation Plan, which identifies improvement projects approved by the Traffic and Safety Commission and has a primary focus on enhancing transportation routes to better ensure pedestrian and bicycle safety throughout Albany. The City has received over \$2.4 million in grant funding to conduct improvement projects.

DISCUSSION

Pedestrian & Bicycle Infrastructure Improvements

The City has implemented many infrastructure improvements to support active transportation. These improvements focus on pedestrian and bicycle safety, wayfinding, bicycle parking, and improvements that accommodate all users of the street.

Active Transportation Plan

The revision and adoption of the Active Transportation Plan to incorporate an expanded Complete Streets vision was achieved in 2012. Under the current plan, Stage 1 of the bicycle infrastructure improvements as described in the Bicycle Master Plan is 85% complete and Stages 2-3 are approximately 70% complete.

Parking Requirements

In November 2016, voters approved Measure N1, allowing City Council to change residential and commercial parking requirements in the city. Changes to parking requirements were made by Council in 2012.

Complete Streets Projects

The Transportation Element in the General Plan update focuses on the Complete Streets vision, which identifies street improvements to ensure that all roads accommodate the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, seniors, children, people with disabilities, and motorists. The City currently has two Complete Streets projects underway. The Transportation Division is preparing construction plans for the installation of medians, pedestrian bulb outs, flashing pedestrian beacons, traffic signal improvements, and high visibility crosswalks along San Pablo Avenue. This project also includes safety improvements at three intersections along Buchanan Street, a pocket park at the merge of Marin and Buchanan, a pedestrian signal at Buchanan and Taylor, and gateway improvements at Pierce and Buchanan Streets. The City has also initiated a planning process for improvements on Solano Avenue from Masonic Avenue east to the Berkeley city limit. The improvements aim to make Solano Avenue more pedestrian and cyclist friendly as well as more accessible to people with disabilities and all users of the street.

Kains & Adams Bicycle Facility Study

The Kains and Adams Bicycle Facility Study includes determining the feasibility of installing bikeways along Kains Street and Adams Street as alternatives to cycling on San Pablo Avenue and has included a walk audit and community meetings.

Buchanan/Marin Bikeway & Utility Undergrounding

The City has completed Phases I-III of the Buchanan/Marin Bikeway project, including the undergrounding of utilities along Marin, the extension of bike lanes, the addition of pedestrian bulb outs and high visibility crosswalks, and the cycletrack from San Pablo to the Buchanan bridge overcrossing to improve safety along Marin Avenue from Cornell Avenue to San Pablo Avenue. Vehicle access was blocked to Buchanan Avenue at Pierce Street and a multi-use bicycle path was created on the west side of the 500 block of Pierce Street and will continue through the future Pierce Street Park and connect to Cleveland Avenue and the Buchanan-Marin Bikeway. The City has received funding for the upcoming Buchanan Phase IV Project, which includes traffic signal modifications at the intersection of Marin and San Pablo Avenues and an eastbound bike lane.

Codornices Creek Trail Connection

The City is currently in the design process for Phase IV of the Codornices Creek project, which will connect the Codornices Creek trail to regional bicycle trail networks. The project addresses the last section of the creek, from San Pablo Avenue to 8th Street. Phase IV will include a multi-use path from 8th-10th Streets, including a pedestrian crossing at 8th street to support the path, and minor vegetation management.

San Pablo Cycletrack Extension

The UC Village project has a cycletrack along San Pablo that will connect to the Codornices Creek trail. The City has included the connection of this trail to the Marin/Buchanan cycletrack in the five year

capital improvement plan. In the meantime, signage indicates that it is legal to ride on the sidewalk for that unconnected portion of the cycletrack.

Traffic Calming

Project plans are being developed for traffic calming along Brighton Avenue. Improvements will include minicircles, high visibility crosswalks, bicycle sharrows, and signage. The improvements are intended to slow vehicles and improve pedestrian safety. The Washington Avenue project will receive traffic calming measures and ensure sidewalk is available for pedestrians to pass. The City has budgeted for additional traffic calming measures throughout the city.

Ohlone Greenway Striping

The City worked with BART to ensure that the Ohlone Greenway was striped with a separate right-of-way for pedestrians and cyclists after retrofit work was completed.

Bicycle Boulevards & Wayfinding

Wayfinding signage for bicycles has been installed along the Ohlone Greenway and at Pierce Street Plaza. Additional striping and wayfinding projects for all bicycle boulevards will be completed this year.

Bike Racks

With funds from Measure B, the City has been able to partner Albany Strollers & Rollers, the Albany Unified School District, and local merchants to install additional bike racks at the swimming pool, Albany Middle School, the Senior Center, the waterfront, the YMCA, the Community Center, and along Solano and San Pablo Avenues.

Sidewalk Rehabilitation Program

The purpose of the Sidewalk Rehabilitation Program is to improve continuous sidewalk passability in public right-of-way by repairing sidewalk damage and removing vegetation obstructions. In June 2016, Council adopted a Sidewalk Repair Policy and Ordinance that established a process for staff to prioritize and recommend repairs to the T&S Commission and ultimately to Council for approval. This process will include a public review process as well as refinement to the Street Tree Program to evaluate situations where street trees are causing structural damage to sidewalks. In November 2016, city residents approved a parcel tax to help fund this work. In October 2017, Council approved criteria for sidewalk evaluation and directed staff to proceed with development of a prioritized sidewalk repair list. Staff is currently conducting a sidewalk survey and prioritization for Traffic & Safety Commission review.

Citywide Red Curbs

This project consists of the implementation of red curbs at City intersections per City Red Zone Policy, adopted by Council Resolution No 2017- 73 on September 5, 2017. Red zones at intersections provide necessary protection by daylighting pedestrians when crossing the streets. Often, vehicles park too close to the pedestrian crosswalk obstructing visibility of pedestrians about to cross the street putting them at risk of being struck by a vehicle.

Dartmouth Bicycle Crossing

This project includes the installation of a bicycle signal head on the Hybrid Pedestrian Beacon (HAWK) and striping of bicycle crossing markings on San Pablo Avenue at Dartmouth. The HAWK signal was

installed as part of the UC Village Mixed Use development. The Dartmouth Bicycle Boulevard connects directly to the cycle track installed as part of the UC Village Mixed Use facility at the intersection with San Pablo Avenue. It provides important local and regional connections, such as the Codornices Creek Multiuse trail.

Rapid Pedestrian Beacons

The City is in the process of evaluating intersections for potential installation of Rectangular Rapid Pedestrian Beacons (RRPB). RRPB's provide high visibility pedestrian crossings for high traffic areas. The City has identified key intersections where there is a significant number of pedestrian crossings due to proximity to pedestrian trip generators including schools and parks.

Public Transit

Bus Stop Parklets

The City works closely with AC Transit to improve bus service and infrastructure within the City. The City recently worked with local business owners to create a bus stop parklet on Solano Avenue, and a second one is currently in the design phase. Bus stop parklets encourage people to walk on Solano, create a safe, well lit, and interesting place to wait for the bus, and increase the efficiency of bus routes.

Rideshare Station

The City is working with MTC to establish a Park and Ride lot on Buchanan Street under the freeway overpass. The lot will be fee based and include electric vehicle charging stations.

Zero Emission Vehicle Infrastructure

The City has worked to encourage electric vehicle charging stations on private property and is working to install them in publicly-owned lots.

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

The City is working to incentivize the use of electric vehicles (EVs) through the development of automobile charging infrastructure. The City received grant funding from the Air District for the installation of five EV charging at City facilities; installation will take place this fall. The City is also performing research on incentivizing charging infrastructure on private property. A recommendation for charging rates and demand management policies will be presented to the Traffic & Safety Commission on May 24.

Trip Reduction

The City is currently partnering with services that can reduce vehicle trips within the City.

Car Sharing Services

City staff has worked with City Car Share and the Traffic and Safety Commission to identify potential car share locations and encourage car sharing in Albany. Gig Car is a new car-sharing service created by the emergency roadside assistance organization AAA. Unlike the traditional car share model, Gig does not require users to return cars to a designated location. Users rent any of Gig's fleet vehicles for \$2.50 per mile, \$15 per hour, or \$85 per day, drive it to a destination using a smartphone app and keyless entry, and then drop it off at any available parking space (as long as the spaces are for 2-hour parking or over).

The average car is parked 95% of the time, and there is limited space for parked cars. One-way car sharing can more efficiently use cars and the curbs they park at, while reducing demand for individual car ownership. Studies have shown that every car sharing vehicle removes between 9 and 13 other vehicles from the road. Members either sell their car or avoid buying a car.

The service launched in April 2017 in Berkeley and Oakland and expanded into Albany on April 6 of this year. Gig's fleet team maintains 15-20 cars in Albany. Before launching in Albany, Gig had 151 members. Since launch, another 17 members have been added. Gig has seen 314 trips taken from Albany so far, which averages out to approximately 22 trips per day.

Bike Share

This past February, Albany announced a six-month pilot program to test and experience bike sharing around town. LimeBike, a bike sharing organization headquartered in San Mateo, is leading the pilot program. One hundred bikes were made available throughout the City for riders. They are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The easy-to-use bikes can be unlocked and paid for using the LimeBike smartphone app. Rides cost \$1 per 30 minutes. Bikes may be parked and left in appropriate locations such as bike racks and sidewalks away from pedestrian walkways. Bikes cannot block driveways, entryways, crossroads, bus stops, or wheelchair accessible areas.

An analysis and official results of the City's bike sharing pilot program will be presented to the Traffic & Safety Commission in the next few months. Feedback to-date has been mixed. The City is also working with regional partners to establish a docked bikeshare program in Albany.

Education & Outreach

Safe Routes to School Program

The City established the Safe Routes to School Program in Albany schools in 2007 and continues to provide staff support and grant funding for initiatives that encourage walking and biking to school. The City has also completed three major infrastructure improvements to increase safety around schools in the past few years. This includes projects on Jackson Street, Marin Avenue/Santa Fe Avenue, and Marin Avenue/Curtis Street. The City is seeking additional grant funding to perform infrastructure improvements on Marin Avenue/Cornell Avenue.

National Drive Electric Events

The City has partnered with the cities of Berkeley, El Cerrito, and Richmond the past several years to put on an event each September to encourage people to learn about electric vehicles.

Bay Area SunShares Program

The City partnered with the Bay Area SunShares Program in 2017 to provide outreach, education, and bulk discounts to residents interested in purchasing electric vehicles. They hope to also offer home charging stations in the future.