

IV. BICYCLING - PART OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

The San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors has recognized that the greatest contributing factor to the environmental concerns of air quality, traffic congestion and noise levels is the reliance on the private automobile as people's primary mode of transportation. Bicycling is a viable and desirable option in a comprehensive system which must include all modes of transportation in order to meet the needs of the public as this County continues to grow. In order to enhance the viability of bicycle transportation along with adequate bikeways, auxiliary facilities such as bicycle parking and rest areas must be provided. Additionally, the bikeway system must make efficient connections with other modes such as public transit, and bicycle transportation must be integrated into the relationship which exists between land use planning and circulation.

Bicycle Parking

In order to encourage people to choose bicycling for their transportation needs, secure and convenient bicycle parking facilities must be available at their destinations.

Existing facilities. In February, 1995, County staff conducted an inventory of existing public bicycle parking in the County's unincorporated areas. Staff members tallied the number of bicycle parking spaces which are available to the general public in the twelve communities for which the Plan designates a system of local bikeways. Included in the inventory were schools, parks, retail and office developments (where the bike parking is for the public, not just employees), park and ride lots and public buildings.

Appendix E summarizes the 1995 Survey of bicycle parking facilities in the unincorporated areas of San Luis Obispo County. The locations given may be used to identify the approximate locations on the maps in Appendix A. In the case of parks and schools, the responsible agencies have also supplied an estimate of the needed increase in bicycle parking space. This information will be used by County staff and the Advisory Committee to develop an implementation plan for installation of additional racks in public areas by the County.

In addition to the 1995 survey the following has changed. The Central Coast Area Transit has installed bike racks on all of the buses running in the unincorporated county; these buses can now hold 4-6 bikes each. The San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority (SLORTA) has also installed bike racks at various bus stop and rideshare parking locations countywide.

Recommended policy. The following policies are recommended to provide adequate bicycle parking facilities:

- At existing locations of bicycling demand, the County Public Works Department will identify locations where bicycle parking is needed by working with the Bicycle Advisory Committee, and work with other agencies such as SLORTA to implement such parking. This includes, but is not limited to, schools, other civic and public buildings, transit terminals, parks, and the central business districts of the unincorporated urban areas (Cambria, Los Osos, Nipomo, Oceano, and others).
- New developments in the unincorporated area are required to provide bicycle parking under the Site Design Standards of the Land Use Ordinance. These developments should provide adequate secure bicycle parking at locations which are convenient for potential users. The County Planning Department should develop a policy, as part of a comprehensive Trip Reduction Ordinance, for allowing developers "credit" for the provision of bicycle parking; that is, fewer automobile parking spaces would be required when a minimum amount of bicycle parking is installed.
- Existing major employers, which are not proposing any development that would trigger the requirements of the Land Use Ordinance, should be encouraged to provide bicycle parking for their employees. Such employers may have incentive for doing so as they seek compliance with the forthcoming Commute Alternatives Rule (Rule 901), being developed by the Air Pollution Control District.

Bicyclists' Rest Facilities

Also important in encouraging people to choose bicycling is the provision of rest facilities at key points along their routes and at their destinations. Rest facilities should include drinking water, restrooms, telephones and air for tires. Locations that can serve as rest facilities are schools, parks, service stations and other public facilities.

Other needs for bicycle commuting are the installation of showers at business locations and other end trip locations; major employers could encourage their employees to commute by bicycle if these facilities were provided at the work site. The County Planning Department should develop a policy establishing specific requirements for these as part of the Site Development Standards of the Land Use Ordinance. These requirements should include, but not be limited to, a threshold for the size of employer required to provide showers and lockers and a recommended ratio for the number of employees to the number of showers and lockers provided.

In future updates of this Plan, the County should identify locations of existing rest facilities and potential sites for new public facilities in each of the communities served by the Local Bikeways depicted in Chapter 3 on appropriate bikeways maps.

Coordination with Public Transit

Bicycling is a viable transportation choice for most people for trips of up to 5 to 10 miles in length. The concentration of employment in San Luis Obispo and lower housing costs in the outlying communities have created a "bedroom community" effect in much of San Luis Obispo County. As a result, many daily commute trips are of lengths much longer than this. One way to facilitate bicycling being a valid choice for such commuters in this County's multimodal transportation system is by providing effective links between bicycling and public transit.

SLORTA operates a bus system called Central Coast Area Transit (CCAT) which runs four regional routes which connect most of the major population centers in the County, as well as Santa Maria in northern Santa Barbara County. All CCAT buses are equipped with bike racks, so that commuters may ride from their home to the nearest regional bus stop, ride the CCAT bus to their destination city, then bicycle to their final destination from the transit terminal. At times, the demand for this service is greater than the capacity of the racks, in which case, bicycles may be brought on board the bus if there is room. The Regional Transit Authority is continuing to explore ways to improve this bikes-on-buses service, and have recently increased the capacity of these bike racks to 6 bikes per bus on key routes.

Coordination with public transit systems may also be enhanced by provision of secure bicycle parking i.e. bicycle lockers at transit stops, as mentioned in the previous section. In addition to public transit, such facilities should also be provided at bus stops, train stations and airports. Some of these locations have had secure parking installed, a list to follow.

It is the recommendation of the San Luis Obispo Bicycle Advisory Committee that bicycle lockers be considered for placement at all Bus Stops in the County.

Residential Street Speed Control ("Traffic Calming")

In other reports traffic-calming strategies have been used to address future traffic concerns. At this time Public Works Department is pursuing enhancements on a case by case basis. In the future the Department will be developing a countywide guideline that will be approved through the Board of Supervisors and will consider all modes of transportation. This guideline will be applied to the individual cases as needed.

Whenever a Traffic Calming Program is proposed, the Bicycle Advisory Committee shall be informed of such proposal by the Public Works Department and asked to comments about any additions, deletions or modifications which are necessary to enhance the bicycling aspects of the proposed program.

Relationship with Land Use Planning

The recommended bikeways in Chapter III and Appendices A and B have been designed to serve existing land use patterns as determined from the County's General Plan - Land Use Element. Regional bikeways have been selected to connect to and through major population centers and rural recreational destinations. Within each community, local bikeways are designated to connect residential areas with local destinations such as schools, parks and commercial areas. The following policies are recommended to continue to serve new land uses as the County continues to grow:

- Whenever Specific Plans or Amendments to the General Plan - Land Use Element are proposed which will affect transportation planning issues, the Bicycle Advisory Committee shall be informed of such proposals by the Department of Planning and Building and asked to comment or make recommendations of any new bikeways that are needed to serve the area in question, or if any modification to the proposal might be recommended which would enhance bicycling. The BAC should make its recommendations to the Board of Supervisors for inclusion in a Circulation Program for that General Plan Amendment or Specific Plan.
- Whenever large development is proposed (such as a new school sites, mobile home parks or large housing developments) the Bicycle Advisory Committee shall be informed of such proposals by County Staff and asked to comment or make recommendations of any new bikeways that are needed to serve the area in question, or if any modification to the proposal might be recommended which would enhance bicycling. The BAC should make its recommendations to the Board of Supervisors for inclusion in the County's response to that project's environmental determination, a process which is conducted by agencies other than the County for these types of projects.
- When any subdivision or other development is proposed which triggers a requirement to provide roadway improvements along its frontage or within its boundaries, the County shall refer to this Plan in determining if a bikeway facility should be included in such improvements, and to require the appropriate type of facility.

Recreational/Multipurpose Trails

There are many locations in the County where construction of paved bicycle lanes or paths, built according to Caltrans standards, is neither necessary or appropriate. The County Department of General Services - Parks Division prepared the County Trails Plan, which is under revision. It addresses the need of pedestrians, equestrians and bicyclists for a network of recreational trails throughout the County. The recommended

networks of Trails and Bikeways from the two documents should complement each other as an important link in this County's multimodal transportation system.

Routes that have the primary purpose of providing recreational opportunities or of linking recreational sites will continue to be included in the Trails Plan. Routes which are primarily transportation corridors appear in the Bikeways Plan. Some routes will have the opportunity to function in both capacities, and will therefore appear in both documents. Following is a list of some of the more significant "trails-type" routes which have been discussed by the Bicycle Advisory Committee, for consideration for possible inclusion in future updates of the Trails Plan:

- Highway 1 corridor; Santa Barbara County to Monterey County
- Highway 101 corridor; Santa Barbara County to Monterey County
- The Morros; a trail encircling their bases
- Coastline; a trail connecting Montana de Oro with Avila Beach
- Coastline; a trail connecting Avila Beach with Point Sal
- Los Padres National Forest; a trail connecting Huasna Townsite with Twitchell Reservoir