

bicycle plan Public Workshop #1 Summary

**City of Menlo Park Comprehensive Bicycle Development Plan, Public Workshop #1  
Menlo Park Senior Center, Belle Haven  
April 3, 2004, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM**

Attendees

Rene Baile – City of Menlo Park Transportation Division  
Jamal Rahimi – City of Menlo Park Transportation Division  
John Fox – Menlo Park Bicycle Commissioner  
Pipo Bui – Former Menlo Park Bicycle Commissioner  
Rhoda Alexander – Menlo Park Transportation Commissioner  
Steve Van Pelt – Menlo Park Resident  
Rebecca Wallace – The Almanac  
Irwin David – Palo Alto Resident  
Mike Bloomenfeld – Resident and Sun Microsystems employee  
Mary Kenney – Menlo Park Resident  
Jana Menard – Menlo Park Resident  
Jack Hawkins Smith – Menlo Park Resident  
Devina Stone – Menlo Park Resident  
Brett Hondorp – Alta Planning + Design  
Lev Anderson – Alta Planning + Design

Workshop Summary

Rene Baile opened the workshop with some remarks about the Comprehensive Bicycle Plan project and the purpose of the first public workshop. He introduced the members of the Bicycle Plan Steering Committee who were present: John Fox, Rhoda Alexander, and Pipo Bui. Brett Hondorp from Alta Planning + Design then gave a Powerpoint presentation on why Menlo Park is preparing a bicycle plan, key elements of the plan, and the different types of bicycle facilities that will be included in the plan. This presentation is available online at the City's Bicycle Plan project website:

[http://www.ci.menlo-park.ca.us/departments/trn/bike\\_project.html](http://www.ci.menlo-park.ca.us/departments/trn/bike_project.html)

Following the presentation, the meeting participants gathered at a table with a map of the City's Existing Bicycle Network to discuss what types of bicycle facility improvements they would like to see as part of the Comprehensive Bicycle Development Plan. The comments of the participants are summarized below. Comments have been grouped by generally similar topic areas (e.g. east-west bike facilities, Belle Haven facilities, etc).

Existing Bicycle Network Map

Several participants had comments about the content of the Existing Bicycle Network Map that was displayed. These included:

- The map should show all significant destinations and activity areas including parks, civic buildings (e.g. library), and major employment centers.
- The map shows both sides of Bay Road as being located within Menlo Park city limits. It was asked if the west side of Bay Road is actually in Atherton. Mr. Rahimi responded that the west side of the road is within Atherton city limits. At issue was the maintenance of the bike lanes along Bay Road.
- The map should show railroad right-of-ways, as these could provide opportunities for parallel Class I paths.
- The map should show connecting bicycle facilities in adjacent jurisdictions.
- The map should include inserts with details of specific projects, such as intersection improvements.

### Bicycle Parking

Workshop participants discussed ways to increase the availability of bicycle parking in commercial districts and at public events in Menlo Park such as the farmer's market and seasonal fairs. The use of valet parking at downtown destinations was discussed. In addition, participants discussed encouraging businesses to offer incentives to customers that ride bicycles to their businesses. For example, a café could offer two-for-one coffee or ice cream specials for customers on bicycles.

### North-South Facilities

Workshop participants discussed the existing condition of north-south bicycle facilities and roadways, as well as potential improvement projects.

- Increased enforcement of Laurel Street's commute-hour bike lane is needed (which reverts to on-street parking outside of the commute period). Cars are frequently parked in the bike lane during the No Parking commute period, requiring cyclists to weave in and out of parked vehicles.
- Bay Road was noted as a north-south facility that could use better maintenance. Also, due to a lack of stop-controls along Bay Road between Marsh and Ringwood, it was noted that making a left turn onto Bay (from a side street such as Hedge or Greenwood) during the commute hour was very difficult
- The segment of Santa Cruz Avenue from Avy Avenue to Alameda de las Pulgas, which has no existing bike lanes, was described as difficult for bicyclists because of the fluctuating roadway widths and high auto speeds. It was pointed out that there appeared to be some new landscaping along that segment of Santa Cruz Ave. One participant asked why there had been no dedication for bikeway improvement or roadway widening required as part of this recent work.
- One participant noted that a crosswalk had been moved from Santa Cruz Avenue/Oakdell, but questioned why the crosswalk could not have been left in place. Mr. Rahimi stated that there was a sight-distance safety issue that prompted the moving of the crosswalk.
- It was stated that the Alma Street roadway condition is very poor and should be resurfaced. Mr. Rahimi said that the resurfacing project, including bike lane striping, will begin in three weeks.
- Mr. David, a Palo Alto resident, outlined his recommended route from Laurel Street (via Willow Road or Waverly Street) to the Bike/Ped Bridge crossing of San Francisquito Creek at Willow Place. Mr. David stated that he does not like Alma Street, and prefers to take streets such as Waverly as it provides more visual interest.
- Mr. David also suggested that the Chaucer Street bridge crossing of San Francisquito Creek be part of a north-south Class III Bike Route from Palo Alto into Menlo Park. Entering Menlo Park via Chaucer/Pope could connect onto Gilbert Street and continue north to Willow Rd.
- Coleman Ave. was identified as a good north-south route, connecting to Ringwood or Oak Grove for east-west connections.

### East-West Facilities

Workshop participants discussed the existing condition of east-west bicycle facilities and roadways, as well as potential improvement projects.

- Mr. Bloomenfeld described his recommended route from the Sharon Heights area to his workplace at Sun Microsystems. His route uses Monte Rosa Drive from Sand Hill Road to Avy Avenue, connecting to the

existing Class II bike lanes on Santa Cruz Avenue, and proceeding downtown. From downtown the route varied, but typically utilized Ringwood to the US 101 crossing.

- The Sand Hill Road crossing of San Francisquito Creek was noted as an existing constrained area. Mr. Rahimi noted that construction will begin shortly on the widening of Sand Hill Road from Alpine Road to the creek; this project is being led entirely by Stanford. Discussions of ways to route bicycle traffic during construction were discussed, including possibly using a golf course access road as an alternative.
- Crossings of El Camino Real are major a concern for east-west travel. The Menlo Avenue crossing of El Camino Real was suggested as a location for potential improvements. Participants noted that they will cut through business parking lots or alleyways in order to avoid cycling on El Camino Real
- Oak Grove Avenue from University Drive to Fredrick Avenue was suggested as a good bicycle route. Extensions of the suggested Oak Grove route included; turning south onto Fredrick to connect to the Ringwood Avenue and Bay Road facilities; turning south onto Toyon Road to connect to Ringwood Avenue and Coleman Road.
- Another suggested alternative route parallel to Ringwood Avenue was on Menlo Oaks Drive from Arlington Way to Bay Road.

#### Belle Haven/East Menlo Park Facilities

The workshop participants discussed the need to enhance safety of the existing Ringwood Avenue/Highway 101 crossing and for increasing the connections between the Belle Haven area with the rest of Menlo Park. East Menlo Park is currently considered as being underserved in term of bicycle facilities.

- Several minutes were spent discussing the Ringwood Bike/Ped crossing of US 101. Participants noted this as a key non-motorized connection between east and west Menlo Park, but many had safety concerns about using the facility, especially after dark, due to loitering, a lack of visibility (from the tight corkscrew ramp design), and a general feeling that there was a lack of “eyes” on the structure. One participant suggested posting signs that the bridge was under surveillance from a nearby traffic camera. Mr. Rahimi stated that a redesign of the existing Bike/Ped Bridge would be done as part of the Highway 101 auxiliary lane project currently underway. It was suggested that the redesign should address safety concerns by installing additional lighting, improving visibility, and perhaps include the installation of an emergency call box.
- Participants stated that the Belle Haven neighborhood was underserved in terms of bicycle facilities and that, with activity centers like the Boys and Girls Club and other public recreational facilities, bicycle facilities are needed. It was noted that a Bicycle Commissioners tour of the Belle Haven area identified a lack of bicycle parking at many of the civic and recreational facilities in the area.
- The workshop participants asked about the status of the Willow Road/Highway 101 crossing. Mr. Rahimi stated that the City had submitted a report identifying desired bicycle improvements to Caltrans, which was reviewing it.
- A potential connection across the Railroad ROW from Kelly Park to Chilco Avenue was noted; this connection is currently available for cyclists who carry their bikes across the tracks.

#### Bayfront Facilities and Connections

- Mr. Bloomenfeld suggested creating a bike/ped undercrossing of Bayfront Expressway by converted a currently unused tunnel that passes under Bayfront Expressway near Willow Road. He stated that more Sun Microsystems employees would likely bicycle to work if they could use the tunnel or if the Willow Road crossing of Highway 101 was improved. Mr. Rahimi said that money for reconstruction and maintenance for the tunnel had been applied for under Measure A, but suggested the high costs would mean the project

wouldn't be a priority.

- Participants stated that the Peninsula/Gateway Corridor Study should include money and plans for bicycle facilities to be implemented along with the planned projects adjacent to the Dumbarton Bridge and Bayfront area.

#### Safe Routes to School

Workshop participants recommended the need to implement more Safe Routes to School projects in Menlo Park. They said that the Oak Knoll School program was successful, and suggested that the Bicycle Development Plan recommend a Safe Routes to School program for Hillview School where the pick-up and drop-off situation at Santa Cruz and Elder could use improvement.

#### Specific Problem Locations Identified on Workshop Map

- Santa Cruz Avenue between Avy and Alameda de las Pulgas
- Hillview School pick-up/drop-off at Santa Cruz and Elder
- El Camino Real/Ravenswood
- Alma Street between Burgess and El Palo Alto Park
- Middlefield/Ravenswood and Middlefield/Ringwood
- Bay Street/Greenwood
- Ringwood/US 101 Bike/Ped Bridge
- Willow/US 101 crossing

#### Specific Opportunity Sites Identified on Workshop Map

- Bayfront Expressway Undercrossing at Willow Rd.
- Kelly Park – Chilco Street Railroad ROW crossing

#### next public workshops

Bicycle Plan Public Workshop #2 will be held on Saturday May 22, 2004 from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM. Public Workshop #3 will be held Saturday June 26, 2004 from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM. Locations for the two workshops are to be determined. For details about the upcoming workshops, and other information about the Bicycle Plan project, visit the city's website:

[http://www.ci.menlo-park.ca.us/departments/trn/bike\\_project.html](http://www.ci.menlo-park.ca.us/departments/trn/bike_project.html)