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08/31/04

Generalized Steps of Bicycle Facility Implementation

BICYCLE FACILITY IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

A. PROJECT IMPETUS

A project can originate from several different sources:

- Noted by staff as a necessary safety improvement;
- Recommended by the Bicycle Plan;
- Requested by the public or advocacy group;
- Requested by an elected official; and
- Opportunity presented by another project or another agency.

B. BICYCLE PROGRAM STAFF ANALYSIS

Once a project is initiated, typical questions and data collection that Bicycle Program staff initiate are:

Design

What is the current condition of the facility and what is being proposed?

Data: drawings and descriptions of current and proposed conditions

Problem/Solution

What is the problem and how does this project solve it?

Data: bicycle counts, collision history, prevailing motor vehicle speeds, knowledge of route and existing bicycle facilities in the project area, and consideration of alternative solutions or routes

History/Background

What is the history of transportation related requests in the area?

Data: knowledge of correspondence related to the project (requests for bicycle facilities, traffic calming, tow-away changes, etc.) and existing plans for the area

Traffic Capacity

Has capacity changed in any way?

Data: recent traffic volumes

Can significant LOS/travel time degradations be mitigated?

Data: proposed traffic signal changes, tow-away lanes, turn restrictions, and motor vehicle lane changes

What effect will changes have on neighboring streets?

Data: knowledge of area and potential cut-through traffic routes

Transit

Is this project on a transit route?

Data: what route(s), what transit headway, use by "dead head" routes (transit vehicles not carrying passengers, usually operating to/from transit yards), and location of any tracks

How will it affect transit?

Data: travel time and delay studies, width of lanes used by transit vehicles, location of and effect on transit stops or zones, and accommodation of transit turns

Parking

Are there any parking changes?

Data: existing vs. proposed parking, number of parking spaces gained/lost, and changes in colored curb zones

What is the current parking occupancy for various times of day?

Data: parking survey

What is the public response to parking changes?

Trucks

Is the project on a truck route?

Data: approximate frequency of truck use, width of lanes used by trucks, and accommodation of truck turns

Pedestrian Concerns

Will this project improve or degrade pedestrian access or safety?

Data: traffic speed data (if the project may have a traffic calming effect) and planned pedestrian or DPT Livable Streets projects

Land Use

How will this project fit in with existing land use?

Data: knowledge of land use and location of heavily used driveways or loading docks

Other Departments or Agencies

Does this project require outreach to other City departments or non-City agencies?

Data: evidence of outreach and departments' and/or agencies' recommendations

Will street be repaved in near future?

Data: Check DPW paving schedule and modify schedule for bike lane striping as appropriate.

C. ADDITIONAL REVIEW AND ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Upon completion of data collection and initial project design, the DPT Bicycle Program reviews the project with other City departments, external agencies, advocacy groups, and internally within DPT to determine if there are any additional data needs or concerns. This review includes conformity to CEQA, the San Francisco General Plan, the Bicycle Plan, and other relevant planning documents. Depending on the level of environmental impact, either a categorical exemption or a negative declaration is sought by the DPT from the Planning Department. Typically, projects with impacts that include an immitigable change of LOS to E or F would require a full Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Historically, the DPT Bicycle Program has attempted to mitigate the impacts, in the steps above, so that a project would not require a full EIR. Whenever possible, solutions are recommended that require no significant negative impacts on the circulation of other vehicles or pedestrians. In some cases, it is not possible to improve conditions for bicyclists without having some impacts on other modes.

D. LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

The California Vehicle Code (CVC) delegates authority for certain traffic changes to local jurisdictions, provided that approval of the governing body (BOS for San Francisco) is obtained. If a proposed bicycle project includes any of these traffic changes, the DPT Bicycle Program drafts the necessary legislation. The legislative process involves the following steps that occur in the order below, unless otherwise specified.

DPT Staff Meeting

The project is discussed at a bimonthly DPT Traffic Engineering staff meeting. Projects may need modification and discussion at more than one meeting.

ISCOTT Meeting

ISCOTT (chaired by a DPT Traffic Engineering staff member and consisting of representatives of DPT, DPW, Police, Fire, Public Health, Muni, City Planning, and other City departments) reviews projects as described below. The intent of ISCOTT is that its members represent and express their department's position and interests on agenda items. Projects may need modification and discussion at more than one meeting.

ISCOTT considers proposed projects when they are in their final design phase and from an important perspective. ISCOTT reviews projects for functional compatibility to make sure that their final design does not interfere with other current and projected transportation uses, especially the delivery of essential services (ie.: Police, Fire, Muni, etc.). Design details such as precise lane widths and curb heights, exact signage placement, and compatibility with emergency response plans are reviewed by ISCOTT. Since final design details will not be determined by the end of the Bicycle Plan Update process, this type of review is impossible at such an early stage of these projects. Therefore, ISCOTT review is necessary in addition to review by the Bicycle Plan Update Technical Advisory Committee (that represents many, but not all, of the departments represented by ISCOTT). The Bicycle Plan Update process, with interdepartmental cooperation, will greatly reduce the chance that unforeseen issues arise at ISCOTT.

Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) Meeting

Prior to the Board of Supervisors Committee (see below), the BAC should pass a resolution recommending Board of Supervisors' action on a potential bicycle project. Public comment can be heard at this meeting.

DPT Public Hearing

Prior to this hearing, public notices are posted in the project area and distributed to interested parties. A DPT staff Hearing Officer presides and records public concerns and questions received prior to and at the meeting. Some projects are returned to Traffic Engineering staff for possible modification to address concerns raised at the hearing.

MTA Board Meeting

Additional public comment is heard at this meeting. If the MTA Board does not approve the item, it is sent back to DPT staff for possible modification.

Board of Supervisors Committee Meeting

Prior to a Board of Supervisors Hearing, public notices are posted in the project area and distributed to interested parties. Before an item can be heard by a Board Committee (currently the Land Use Committee), environmental clearance must be obtained. If the Committee does not approve the item, it is sent back to DPT staff for possible modification.

Board of Supervisors Meeting

Public testimony is not permitted at Board of Supervisors Meetings for items referred by a Board of Supervisors Committee (since public testimony was already heard at the Committee meeting). If the Board of Supervisors does not approve the item (an unusual circumstance, if the Committee approved it), it is sent back to DPT staff for possible modification.

Mayors' Approval

If the Mayor does not approve the item (an unusual circumstance), it is sent back to DPT staff for possible modification.

NOTE: Trial projects are required to go through this entire process twice: (1) to approve the trial and (2) to approve the permanent facility.

E. IMPLEMENTATION

After the legislative process completion, the project can be implemented. For projects requiring new striping, pavement quality is a major consideration. Generally, new pavement striping would occur after a roadway-resurfacing project. Resurfacing projects are scheduled by DPW using its Pavement Management and Mapping System (PMMS).

F. FUNDING

The above process generally occurs after grant funding has been secured. The MTA Board, Board of Supervisors Committee, full Board of Supervisors, Mayor, and Controller must approve a resolution to apply for, accept, and expend funds for all grants, with the exceptions below. This Plan's Funding Section provides more information on funding opportunities and approvals. Funds for projects from the SFCTA half-cent sales tax (Prop. B and Prop. K) do not require MTA Board approval per current policy of the MTA Executive Director. Sales Tax Project funding approved by a formal SFCTA resolution does not need Board of Supervisors approval, since the SFCTA and the Board of Supervisors are comprised of the same members. However, grant funds from other sources require both MTA Board and BOS approval.