

**CITY OF MERCED**  
**Development Services**

TO: Bicycle Advisory Commission  
FROM: Bill King, Principal Planner  
DATE: October 25, 2011  
SUBJECT: City of Merced Bike Plan

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**ACTION REQUIRED:**

Information item.

**BACKGROUND**

A local government must have a Bike Plan to be eligible to apply for Bicycle Transportation Account (BTA) funds from Caltrans. In order to qualify, the plan needs to be certified by an authorized representative of Caltrans and contain minimum content requirements (Attachment A). In partnership with local jurisdictions, the Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG) takes the lead to prepare bicycle transportation plans. [Please refer to the Bike Plan, which can be found in your reference binders].

**DISCUSSION**

Janelle York of MCAG will make a presentation to the Bicycle Advisory Commission, summarizing the overall process of updating Merced's Bicycle Transportation Plan, and will focus attention on those elements where local jurisdictions will play a role. Coordination between the City and MCAG will help to achieve our common goal to update the Merced Bicycle Transportation Plan, despite budgetary constraints.

**ACTION**

This is an information item. Staff invites questions from the Committee about the process to draft a Bicycle Transportation Plan.

**Attachment**

A. Overview of Bicycle Transportation Planning

## City of Merced Bicycle Transportation Plan (BTP)

Each year Caltrans funds projects through its Bicycle Transportation Account (BTA) grant program. As an eligibility requirement, applicants must first complete a Bicycle Transportation Plan (BTP).

A BTP outlines the City's goals for improving bike transportation and prioritizes specific projects. It also addresses 11 key bike transportation issues, such as safety, bike parking and bike-related community events. BTPs are considered active for five years. Since Merced's current BTP went into effect in October 2008, it will expire in October 2013, per Caltrans.

Eligible BTA grant projects are prioritized and listed by name (e.g., "Canal Street Bike Path") in the City's BTP. To be considered for funding, projects must have the potential to increase the City's number of bicycle commuters. Examples of eligible projects/expenses:

- New bikeways
- Improvement and maintenance of existing bikeways
- Striping and signage
- Bicycle parking at employment centers and bus stops
- Bicycle-carrying facilities on buses
- Installation of traffic control devices
- Elimination of hazardous conditions on existing bikeways
- Planning
- Engineering
- Right of way acquisition

The City must pay for 10% of any project; Caltrans will cover only 90% of the project's cost. A City may submit more than one application per year. Most project costs range from \$80,000 to \$500,000, and no City can receive more than 25% of the program's total funding. (Last year, 25% of total funding would have amounted to \$1.8M.)

BTPs often guide projects proposed for other grant programs, including Safe Routes to School and State Park grants.

# Bicycle Transportation Plan Checklist

BTP TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

LOCAL AGENCY: \_\_\_\_\_ ADOPTED Y  N  DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AGENCY: \_\_\_\_\_ APPROVED Y  N  DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Yes	No	Requirement	Pages	Comments
		(a) The estimated number of existing bicycle commuters in the plan area and the estimated increase in the number of bicycle commuters resulting from implementation of the plan.		
		(b) A map and description of existing and proposed land use and settlement patterns which shall include, but not be limited to, locations of residential neighborhoods, schools, shopping centers, public buildings, and major employment centers.		
		(c) A map and description of existing and proposed bikeways.		
		(d) A map and description of existing and proposed end-of-trip bicycle parking facilities. These shall include, but not be limited to, parking at schools, shopping centers, public buildings, and major employment centers.		
		(e) A map and description of existing and proposed bicycle transport and parking facilities for connections with and use of other transportation modes. These shall include, but not be limited to, parking facilities at transit stops, rail and transit terminals, ferry docks and landings, park and ride lots, and provisions for transporting bicyclists and bicycles on transit or rail vehicles or ferry vessels.		
		(f) A map and description of existing and proposed facilities for changing and storing clothes and equipment. These shall include, but not be limited to, locker, restroom, and shower facilities near bicycle parking facilities.		
		(g) A description of bicycle safety and education programs conducted in the area included within the plan, efforts by the law enforcement agency having primary traffic law enforcement responsibility in the area to enforce provisions of the Vehicle Code pertaining to bicycle operation, and the resulting effect on accidents involving bicyclists.		
		(h) A description of the extent of citizen and community involvement in development of the plan, including, but not limited to, letters of support.		
		(i) A description of how the bicycle transportation plan has been coordinated and is consistent with other local or regional transportation, air quality, or energy conservation plans, including, but not limited to, programs that provide incentives for bicycle commuting.		
		(j) A description of the projects proposed in the plan and a listing of their priorities for implementation.		
		(k) A description of past expenditures for bicycle facilities and future financial needs for projects that improve safety and convenience for bicycle commuters in the plan area.		