

This item is the third of three action items for the Parks and Recreation Commission in its designated capacity as the San Mateo County Bicycle Advisory Committee

BAC Agenda Item 1.C

COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

Parks Department



DATE: July 1, 2015

COMMISSION MEETING DATE: August 6, 2015

TO: Parks and Recreation Commission

FROM: Marlene Finley, Parks Director

SUBJECT: Recommendation for Establishment of a San Mateo County Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission

RECOMMENDATION

Review and recommend to the Board of Supervisors the establishment of a San Mateo County Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission.

BACKGROUND

On January 27, 2015, the Board of Supervisors passed Resolution No. 073601 designating the San Mateo County Park and Recreation Commission as the County Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC). This action was taken in order to meet the eligibility and schedule requirements for the Transportation Development Act Article 3 Pedestrian and Bicycle grant program application process. The action enabled County departments to remain eligible to apply for the Fiscal Year 2015-2016 grant funds.

On December 4, 2014, the Park and Recreation Commission agreed to accept the duties of the BAC on an interim basis for the purposes of the grant requirements. In approving the motion, the Commission also unanimously recommended to the Board of Supervisors to consider establishment of a separate BAC or County Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission.

DISCUSSION

The Parks and Recreation Commission is tasked with establishing policies to guide the Parks Department in issues of parkland use, and in programmatic issues such as recreational uses. Some types of bicycling and walking can be recreational activities which fall within the Commission's existing charter. However, bicycling and walking for transportation constitutes a different and wider expertise area from recreational uses.

One example of the expanded expertise areas required for bicycle and pedestrian transportation is transit ridership. Transit generates a walking or cycling trip at each end of the bus or train ride. Facilities to serve these walk and bike trips include sidewalks, cyclepaths, and accessible design such as curb ramps and audible crossing signals.

Expertise in these areas would be beyond the current capacity of the Parks and Recreation Commission to evaluate and properly develop recommendations.

San Mateo County has certified its compliance with Assembly Bill 1358 "Complete Streets Act." AB 1358 requires jurisdictions to include complete streets policies as part of their general plans to ensure that all roadway users – including people walking, bicycling, riding the bus or using wheelchairs -- are accommodated in the design and construction of public roadways. The implementation of the Complete Streets policies and guidelines represents an increased role for an advisory commission dedicated to bicycle and pedestrian issues.

In addition to the above example, there are other expanded opportunities for the role of a BAC or County Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission (CPBAC). The growing proportion of County residents who are older adults heralds an increasing need for walk-friendly community design. The growing proportion of residential development near transit corridors indicates a higher proportion of residents will walk or bike for more local trips.

The San Mateo County Office of Sustainability has new capacity to administer a County Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission. As of July 1, 2015, the San Mateo County Office of Sustainability transitioned from a pilot project to an established County Department. Within the Office of Sustainability, the Active Transportation Coordinator is a staff position with the role of supporting increased daily transportation trips made by walking, bicycling, and other physically active modes. The Director of the Office of Sustainability has indicated that the Active Transportation Coordinator has the capacity to support and administer the CBPAC.

Given the expanded duties and roles for a bicycle and pedestrian advisory commission, the Parks and Recreation Commission recommend the establishment of a separate CBPAC.