

**Bike to Work Day Recommendations**  
**Based on Bike to Work Day Assessment Report**  
**December 2011**

**Bike to Work Day**

- **Provide support for employers to promote Bike to Work Day at the workplace, encourage employers to provide bicycle support facilities such as bike parking and showers, and promote communications about bike routes between work and home.** These efforts can all help increase bicycling as a regular commute mode. The workplace is the most common place people got information about Bike to Work Day, most likely reflecting the heavy outreach to employers throughout Alameda County and the region. Bike to Work Day participants had most often heard of Bike to Work Day from their employer. People who did not participate did not receive much information about it from their employers. Workplaces are key partners in supporting biking to work and Bike to Work Day. Helping more employers create a culture where cycling can be easily integrated into worker commutes could help increase cycling in the county.
- **Build on people's enthusiasm for sharing about their participation in Bike to Work Day with friends, co-workers and classmates.** Many participants felt pride in their Bike to Work Day participation, shared it through social media, and discussed it with friends and coworkers. Encouraging this type of sharing can help spread the word about Bike to Work Day.
- **Spread more Bike to Work Day activities and advertising to South and East Alameda County.** There is a good deal of potential for increasing bike riding and participation in Bike to Work Day in the South and East County, where riding a bicycle is not as common as a form of transportation as it is in North County.
- **Team Bike Challenges and Walk and Roll to School Day are opportunities to reach throughout Alameda County.**
  - Participants in the Team Bike Challenge (TBC) are more likely to increase future bicycling frequency than the rest of Bike to Work Day participants; however, finding a team or teammates has been a challenge for some past TBC participants. Facilitating TBC team formation can encourage more people to bike ride more often.
  - Walk and Roll to School Day participants come from throughout the county, with the highest participation rates coming from East Alameda County. The Walk and Roll to

School Day event presents an opportunity to communicate about bicycling with a group that sometimes sees it as too difficult to fit into their daily lives.

### Advertising

- **Continuing to run image-based advertising similar to the current approach, at least at the current funding levels, increasing the number and placements of advertisements, and using a variety of messages and tactics to target most likely bicyclists throughout the county should help put cycling in mind as a viable option for transportation.** The current image-based advertising campaign is effective at communicating about bicycling as a mode of transportation, for those that have seen the ads. Delivering more ads to the populations most likely to increase their bicycling behavior is the most cost-efficient way to use limited resources to the greatest potential benefit.
- **Continue to place ads in highly visible places. Ads on buses** were highly visible in 2010, and flyers and handouts were most commonly recalled in 2011.
- **Place ads in alternate locations than buses in areas of the county where there bus service is not as prevalent, such as the East and South County.** Ads in these areas could also be complemented by other marketing approaches, such as increasing outreach to businesses and schools through the Team Bike Challenge and Walk and Roll to School Day.
- **The most compelling messaging and images about bicycling are those that communicate the potential to save money and the environment while improving personal health.** While some of the current images are communicating the money-saving potential (such as the image with high gas prices), more clearly connecting bicycle riding with money savings, the environment, and a healthy lifestyle would encourage more people who are “on the fence” to integrate cycling more into their regular travel habits.
- **A focus on increasing riding by people who are currently bicycling is likely to be a more effective strategy for reducing vehicle traffic and increasing bicycling than attempting to convert non-cyclists.** Those who are already bicycling on occasion, for any reason, are more likely to view cycling as a viable mode of transportation than those who are not currently bicycling.
- **Communications about bicycling logistics and using the right gear can help make those in the identified target groups to feel more comfortable thinking of bicycling as a form of transportation.** Many in the target groups are concerned about safety riding with cars,

distance, weather, and showering issues. These issues can be addressed in communications about gear (for safety and visibility, for bad weather, and for staying cool and sweat-free during the commute) and logistics (to help those concerned about effort or distance find solutions that allow them to commute more easily by bicycle). These types of messages could either be incorporated into the overall ad campaign, which focuses on potential savings, environmental benefits, and healthy lifestyles, or they could be addressed through events or promotions about biking throughout the year and during Bike Month in May.

### **Additional Approaches to Encouraging Bicycling in Alameda County**

- **Bicycle safety infrastructure improvements should be pursued to encourage more cycling.** The safety of cycling is a major concern across the board. This concern appears to be related more to riding with cars on the roads and lack of bicycle facilities (like bicycle lanes and bicycle paths) than it is to the bicyclists' concern of their bike riding skills. Facilities that separate cars from bicyclists, such as bike lanes and bike paths, were more frequently mentioned as making people more likely to ride than other facility improvements. The need for safe and secure bicycle parking also rose to the top as a major barrier to biking to work.
- At the same time, **finding ways to help cyclists be more comfortable on the road**, such as through bicycle safety education classes for all ages, would help lower one major barrier to cycling.
- **When marketing bike safety classes, a greater focus on riding confidently and safely with cars on the road, with less focus on how to handle a bike, would appeal to a wide range of potential participants and address some of the barriers felt by the target groups.** Some of the target groups report that riding with cars on the road is one of their greatest concerns about bicycling more often as a form of transportation. Communicating that bike safety classes will give them tools and strategies for safely sharing roadways with cars can boost participation in classes, and lead to increased bicycling.

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## Findings from Bike to Work Day Assessment December 2011

### Bicycling in Alameda County

- About half of Alameda County residents (48%) have access to a working bicycle, while 83% have access to a car.
- One in five Alameda County residents (20%) report riding a bicycle at least once a week for any purpose, while another 15% say they ride less frequently (but more than never).
  - North County (the four areas of the county are defined on page XX of this report) has the highest concentration of cyclists using their bicycles for transportation, while East county residents are most likely to ride for health and recreation.
- More people ride bicycles for health and recreation than for any other purpose, and the health benefits are the most compelling reason to ride for both overall residents and cyclists.
  - Environmental benefits, reduced energy usage, air quality improvements, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions are also strong motivators for bicycle riding.
  - Reduction in traffic congestion and avoidance of traffic do not rank as highly as motivators for bicycle riding.
- One in ten (10%) working residents in the county say they ride their bicycle for at least part of their trip to work at least once a week.
- One out of four Alameda County residents who drive (or 21% of the county adult population) say it would not be difficult to replace at least one car trip per week with bicycling.
- The safety of riding a bicycle is a top concern for many current and would-be bicyclists, particularly with cars on roadways – 66% are worried about riding with cars on the road, 65% believe there aren't enough bike lanes on their route, 64% are worried about personal safety, and 63% are worried about getting home in an emergency. Trip distance is also a significant barrier for many residents, with 65% saying they go places that are too far away to ride.
  - The top concerns remained consistent over the two-year study period.
- Residents are most likely to ride more often if they have more places where bikes can ride away from cars, like bike paths (56% more likely to ride), followed by safety improvements at major intersections (54% more likely to ride), more secure bike parking (51%), more dedicated bike lanes (49%), and more secure parking at transit stations (47%).

### Bike to Work Day

- Nearly two-thirds (72%) of adult residents of Alameda County have heard of Bike to Work Day (BTWD).
- In the 2011 telephone survey, 9% of adult residents said they have participated in Bike to Work Day at some point, with 2% participating in 2011.

- These figures are lower than reported in 2010, when 17% said they had participated in Bike to Work Day at some point, and 5% said they participated in that year.
- Three quarters (74%) of 2011 BTWD participants from the bicyclists' web survey rode their bikes the entire distance to work on Bike to Work Day; 20% combined biking and public transit; 2% combined biking and driving a car.
  - Two out of three bicyclists who participated in Bike to Work Day were likely to have ridden their bicycles anyway, but 30% would have driven in a car alone.
- In the two years studied, according to self-reported participation and mileage figures, and understanding that survey data is subject to known and unknown sources of sampling and other margins of error, Alameda County residents drove about one hundred thousand to one hundred fifty thousand miles less on Bike to Work Day.
  - **2010:** 15,210 solo trips replaced x 10.25 average miles traveled by bicycle = 156,358.8 reduced VMT.
  - **2011:** 7,005 solo trips replaced x 13.17 average miles traveled by bicycle = 92,250 reduced VMT.
- Participants in the 2011 bicyclists' survey heard about Bike to Work day from a variety of sources, including the EBBC website (33%), their employer (32%), a coworker (32%), a poster or billboard (18%), 511.org (16%), a local bicycle organization newsletter (16%), or [www.youcanbikethere.com](http://www.youcanbikethere.com) (the Bay Area BTWD website) (15%).
- Almost all Bike to Work Day participants are likely to participate again. In 2011, 67% of adult residents and 94% of bicyclists who participated in Bike to Work Day say they are very likely to participate in 2012, with most of the remainder saying they are somewhat likely to participate in 2012.
- Twenty-seven percent (27%) of participants from the bicyclists' web survey who participated in BTWD 2011 say they ride their bicycles more often since participating, with 11% of this group saying they ride a lot more often.
- Those residents whose employers generally support bicycling to work report a higher level of participation in BTWD than those who have less supportive employers.

### **Team Bike Challenge**

- One in ten adult residents of Alameda County (9%) have heard of the Team Bike Challenge, while three-quarters (73%) of those from the bicyclists' web survey have heard of it.
  - Amongst bicyclists from the web survey, awareness of and participation in the Team Bike Challenges (TBC) is highest in Central County: 80% are aware of TBC, and 45% participated.
- Nearly half of bicyclists who participated in the Team Bike Challenge did so due to workplace support or peer relationships.
  - Fifteen percent (15%) of past participants who did not participate in TBC in 2011 couldn't find a team/teammates.
- Thirty-five percent (35%) of 2011 Team Bike Challenge participants from the web survey of bicyclists say they ride more after participating in the TBC (with 9% saying a lot more).

- Compare this with BTWD participants, 27% of whom say they bicycle more after participating in BTWD (11% a lot more)

### **Walk and Roll to School Day**

- One in five adult Alameda County residents (21%) have heard of Walk & Roll to School Day, with awareness slightly higher amongst those who took the bicyclist survey (30%).
  - Participation in Walk & Roll to School Day is consistent across surveys as well, as well, with 9% of adult residents in the 2011 telephone survey and 10% of bicyclists in the web survey reporting participation.
  - Participation in Walk and Roll to School Day 2011 by adult residents was highest in East County (17%), followed by South (12%) and North (11%). Just 2% of Central County adult residents participated in Walk & Roll to School Day.

### **Advertising**

- Four out of five (81%) of those from the 2011 bicyclists survey who said they had seen *Get Rolling/Ride Into Life* ads thought they had something to do with bicycling.
- Upon viewing a sample of the ads in the 2011 web survey, 60% of bicyclist respondents thought the ads were either very or somewhat effective, while 34% thought they were not very effective, and 5% thought they were not at all effective.
- The image that recalls gas prices and suggests that money could be saved by cycling was cited most often as the most effective component, with 37% finding that imagery effective in 2011, as compared to 22% in 2010. (The 2011 survey was taken more shortly after Bike to Work Day than the 2010 survey.)
- The fact that nearly the same size target group resulted from two very distinct “segmentation methods” shows that there is some widespread receptivity to messaging about cycling as transportation with about one in five adults in Alameda County.
- While advertising penetration is low in Alameda County, people that have seen the advertisements find them effective, and the campaign gets the message of riding a bicycle as a regular form of transportation across to those who have seen it.
- *Ride Into Life / Get Rolling* ad campaign penetration is low, but consistent across the two years of this research.
  - Bicyclists are more likely than the overall population to recall the ads.
  - When they view the ads, most bicyclists believe they are effective in promoting bicycling as a form of transportation.

### **Segmentation of Bicyclists and Potential Targets**

- Committed bicyclists who already use a bicycle as transportation with frequency are largely men in North County. Whites (36%) and Hispanics (28%) make up a majority of this group.
- While encouraging bicycling as a means of transportation for all residents and workers in Alameda County is a goal, several potential bicycling groups were identified for future targeting as having the highest potential for increasing bicycle ridership:

- One of the groups with the highest potential to increase bike ridership is white men in North County who ride bicycles as transportation occasionally, but could be encouraged to ride more. They tend to be solo drivers who are concerned about safety issues and ride logistics (like weather, secure bicycle parking, and showers).
- Another potential target group to increase bike ridership is those who frequently ride recreationally, but do not use their bicycles as a mode of transportation. Two-thirds of this group are men, with East County residents having the largest share (as compared with the overall population). This group also tends to drive alone most often, with safety and distance to travel ranking high on their list of concerns.
- A third target group was created from those who drive regularly but say they can replace a car trip with a bike trip with relative ease. Half of this group are women, and they tend to be from North or Central County. This group equally cites safety concerns and difficulty as reasons they don't ride more often as transportation.