



July 26, 2012

Dave Campbell, Program Director  
East Bay Bicycle Coalition  
P.O. Box 1736  
Oakland, CA 94604

**RE: Request to extend comment deadline for draft Alameda Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans**

Dear Mr. Campbell:

Thank you for your letter, dated July 23, 2012, requesting an extension to our deadline for comments on the draft Alameda Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans. The Alameda CTC, like the East Bay Bicycle Coalition (EBBC), wants our county to have meaningful and useful plans, which have an achievable vision for our county, specific implementation actions to meet that vision, and regular monitoring to ensure that the county is meeting our goals. We feel that, overall, both of our draft plans meet these objectives, and in response to comments received thus far on the draft plans, we will be strengthening the implementation actions further. With these edits, substantial changes to the implementation chapter and the addition of performance goals are not needed at this time. For this reason and those further described below, we do not propose to extend the comment deadline beyond Friday, July 27<sup>th</sup> and recommend that we meet in early August to discuss the changes we are proposing to make based on the comments received on the draft plans.

Over the past two and a half years, since the Plans Working Group (PWG) first met to discuss the scope of work for the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan updates, there have been 34 meetings to collect input on the draft chapters of the plans and the elements and approaches on which the chapters are based. The EBBC participated in many of these meetings as a member of the PWG. During this time, we received a substantial number of comments on the draft chapters and elements, many of which have been incorporated into the draft plans. We are now at the end of an extensive planning process in which these plans have received much review. In early June, we announced that the draft plans would be released later that month. In late June, we released the draft plans for public comments, providing a five week comment period. We have taken the plans to five Alameda CTC public meetings in June and July to collect comments on the plans, and will present the plans to the Board on Thursday, July 26th.

The purpose of the Countywide Bicycle Plan is to serve as a policy tool to guide future investment, to encourage people to choose modes other than the automobile to travel, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants, promote healthy lifestyles, and promote a balanced transportation system where people can choose to ride their bicycle safely, walk, take transit or drive, depending on their needs. As a funding guide, the Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans need to be adopted in September, as we are moving into the next fund programming phase for the OneBayArea Grant, Vehicle Registration Fee and Measure B funding sources. The Bicycle Plan needs to be finalized so

that projects that are available for funding can be identified, and funding decisions made based on up-to-date Plans and not dated ones.

This update to the Countywide Bicycle Plan has met our objectives to improve upon the 2006 Countywide Plan in several significant ways:

- Closely explored Alameda CTC role in promoting or hindering bicycling in our county, and made recommendations on how our policies, practices and procedures can be improved to encourage bicycling.
- Increased the emphasis on improving bicycle access to transit, by providing bikeways from all four cardinal directions to every major transit stop and station in the county.
- Revised the priority bicycle network to be more flexible and extensive, so that local jurisdictions will have a much larger pool of potential projects to submit for countywide discretionary funding.
- Created more detailed and comprehensive cost and revenue estimates to more accurately reflect the true costs to implement the Bicycle Plan, and the funding gap.

The draft Countywide Bicycle Plan now has a bicycle vision network of 775 miles, up 40% from the 549 miles in the 2006 plan. Almost \$325 million in revenue is estimated to be committed to bicycle projects and programs in the Countywide Plan over the next 28 years, which is approximately three times larger than in the 2006 plan. Over half of this is locally-generated funds that would come from the proposed Transportation Expenditure Plan.

This draft plan is a countywide document that provides policy direction and fund programming guidance. Although it establishes a vision for the entire county which can only be met with the partnership of local jurisdictions, countywide agencies, non-profits and others, the plan is focused on those actions Alameda CTC can take, as it is the only agency adopting this plan. Alameda CTC has no direct control over local implementation of projects and programs, although it can leverage project implementation by offering funding, setting policy and providing other resources. In addition, mode shift is influenced by many factors, most of which are outside the realm of Alameda CTC, such as gas prices, local land use decisions, the state of the economy. For these reasons, we have not included performance goals in the current plan.

The draft Bicycle Plan has five performance measures that will be tracked over time: bicycle mode share, bicycle collisions and fatalities, bicycle counts, miles of built local and countywide bikeways, and the number of local jurisdictions with up-to-date bicycle plans (see page 55). These measures will be expanded in the future, if new data sources become readily available. Each of these five measures will be reported on annually in the agency's Performance Report. The agency could also consider including statistics for other similar counties and/or model bicycling cities, so that Alameda County can be compared to others.

At the July PWG and Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) meetings, comments were made on the Next Steps section (starting on page 91), which is the road map of implementation actions that are needed in the next four to five years to begin or continue implementing the plan. The comments were that more concrete actions, with a timeline, are needed. As stated in the meetings, we agree that this section can be improved and will address this in final draft plans. The agency and the plans themselves acknowledge that every update cannot cover all issues. For this reason, the plans includes next step #14 (see page 95), which is to "conduct research to inform future plan updates and countywide planning." The next update to the Countywide

Bicycle Plan will begin in several years, and will allow an opportunity to further improve upon the plan.

We look forward to receiving comments from the East Bay Bicycle Coalition by this Friday, July 27<sup>th</sup> and working together to create a strong and implementable plan. We would also like to extend the offer to meet with you and review our responses to the PWG, BPAC and Committee comments on the draft plans. Rochelle Wheeler of my staff will be contacting you to set up a meeting for early August.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Beth Walukas". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Beth Walukas  
Deputy Director of Planning

cc: Alameda CTC Board  
Art Dao, Executive Director  
Rochelle Wheeler, Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator, Alameda CTC  
Chron File