

**Proposed Interim Mayor and City Council Response to County Grand Jury Report:  
San Diego – A Bicycle Friendly City, Many Opportunities for Improvement**

**Finding 01: The City does not have a specific fund to finance the cost of bike lane installation, maintenance, and accessibility.**

**Response: The City disagrees with the finding.**

The City allocates TransNet funds to the portion of its Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) identified as “Bike Facilities.” These funds can only be used for capital projects for new bike facilities and infrastructure that support bike safety and accessibility. New bike facilities include signing, striping, markings, bike detection and any traffic control devices that improve bicycle ridership. It also includes bike racks and corrals. From FY 2010 through FY 2013, the City allocated a total of \$517,000 toward new bike facilities. As the Bicycle Master Plan update neared completion in 2011, funding and staff resources were ramped up to prepare for plan implementation. Funding has significantly increased in FY 2014 to \$639,000 for bike infrastructure.

The City also conducts bike facility maintenance, including restriping, sign replacement (as striping and signs fade), street resurfacing, and street sweeping in bike lanes and bike paths. These activities are funded by the General Fund, Gas Tax, and TransNet. The funds are allocated through specific budget recommendations and actions of the Mayor and City Council via the adoption of the annual Budget Appropriation Ordinance. However, it is important to note that the City has tight financial constraints and competing priorities and these funding sources are also used for street maintenance and resurfacing, among other things.

***Finding 02: Narrow bike lanes combined with high speed limits present a significant safety danger to cyclists.***

**Response: The City agrees with this finding.**

This statement is correct in all circumstances nationwide, and the City is working to mitigate or eliminate that danger on San Diego roadways. The City’s standard bike lane width is a minimum of five or six feet when adjacent to curb and gutter. Standard bike lanes are constructed with all newly constructed roadways. The City’s standards for bike lanes are consistent with the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials’ (AASHTO) Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities (2012, Fourth Edition).

Although five- or six-foot wide bike lanes meet national and City standards, City staff recognize that there is ample need for bike lanes built in excess of that standard, and understand that finding opportunities for enhanced bike lanes and bike paths will improve the safety of bicyclists. As a result, the City is installing bike lanes that exceed typical standards—such as painting lanes green and/or installing buffers between the traffic lanes and bike lanes—in locations throughout the City. These locations include: Nimitz Boulevard, Montezuma Road, Kearney Villa Road, Aero Drive, Santo Road, Genesee Avenue, Mira Mesa Boulevard, Tierrasanta Boulevard, Morena Boulevard, and Lake Murray Boulevard. In addition, there are several other bike lanes planned for construction/improvements in FY 2014 as part of the City’s street resurfacing efforts, such as Balboa Avenue and Fairmount Avenue. The list of improved bicycle infrastructure will continue to grow as staff works with street resurfacing efforts in the City—such as the Street Preservation and Undergrounding Programs—to identify opportunities for creating new and safer bike lanes.

***Finding 03: Without an identified source of funds, improvements for the biking community will remain static.***

**Response: The City disagrees with this finding.**

As stated in the Response to Finding 01 the City has dedicated funding sources for making bikeway improvements and adding bicycle infrastructure, such as TransNet, and has efforts underway for enhancing bicycle infrastructure.

Improvements to bicycle infrastructure in FY 2013 included:

1. Striping, signing, and markings for safer bikeways as roads are resurfaced;
2. Green bike lanes in bicyclist/motorist conflict areas;
3. Plans for pedestrian hybrid beacons at path/street crossings and innovative bicycle detection equipment at signalized intersections;
4. Bicycle infrastructure including racks and corrals; and
5. Public outreach and encouragement for bicycling as an alternative mode of transportation.

For FY 2014, the City budgeted \$639,000 to implement the above improvements for the bicycling community. The City's Transportation & Storm Water (TSW) Department presented a report to the City's Land Use & Housing Committee on June 19, 2013 that outlines the City's Bike Program and how the five improvements listed above will enhance and expand the bicycling conditions throughout the City. This report is included as Attachment 2. Walk San Diego provided its support of the TSW's efforts to enhance bicycling and walking safety in a letter to the Land Use & Housing Committee on June 19, 2013.

The City's commitment to improving bicycle infrastructure and safety is also reflected in the new Bikeshare Program. Bikesharing was recommended for regional implementation in the 2010 SANDAG Regional Bicycle Plan. The City Council approved a 10-year partnership with DecoBike on July 9, 2013, to install between 180 and 220 bike-sharing stations throughout the city. This includes a capital investment of about \$7.2 million which will be paid entirely by the company; revenue will be generated through daily rentals or monthly and yearly memberships. Implementation of the program will begin in January 2014 and be rolled out during the year.

The BikeShare Program is a self-service kiosk rental system where individuals can rent and return a bicycle anywhere within a network of stations. DecoBike is currently conducting stakeholder and community outreach as part of the site selection process, including obtaining public input on BikeShare locations via a website ([www.decobikesandiego.com/](http://www.decobikesandiego.com/)). The goal is to locate stations in close proximity for quick trips where users live, work, visit and go to school.

***Finding 04: The City has failed to properly construct and maintain bike paths and lanes necessary to provide safe travel conditions.***

**Response: The City disagrees with this finding.**

The City strives to enhance bicycle infrastructure and safety as noted in the City's Response to Finding 03, but it is important to understand that the City has tight financial constraints and competing needs and priorities. The City recently updated its Bicycle Master Plan<sup>1</sup> which was approved by the Planning Commission on July 25, 2013, and is going to the City Council for

---

<sup>1</sup> The updated plan can be found at: [www.sandiego.gov/planning/programs/transportation/mobility/pdf/sdbmpu\\_final\\_draft\\_july\\_2013.pdf](http://www.sandiego.gov/planning/programs/transportation/mobility/pdf/sdbmpu_final_draft_july_2013.pdf).

approval in September 2013. The updated plan identifies and prioritizes needed bicycle infrastructure in the City.

The updated master plan shows that the city has 72 miles of off-street paved bike paths (Class 1 Bikeway) and 309 miles of Bike Lanes (Class 2 Bikeway). All newly constructed bike paths and lanes are built to current standards or better. The City has made recent improvements to bike lanes on Nimitz Boulevard, Montezuma Road, Kearney Villa Road, Aero Drive, Santo Road, Genesee Avenue, Mira Mesa Boulevard, Tierrasanta Boulevard, Morena Boulevard, and Lake Murray Boulevard. There are several other bike lanes that will be constructed/improved in FY 2014 as part of the City's street resurfacing efforts, such as Balboa Avenue and Fairmount Avenue. In addition, as noted in the Response to Finding 03, Attachment 2 identifies some of the improvements being implemented throughout the City that enhance the accessibility, safety, and enjoyment of cycling.

The City also conducts maintenance for bike facilities which includes restriping, sign replacement (as striping and signs fade), street resurfacing and street sweeping in bike lanes and bike paths. As indicated in the City's Response to Finding 01, TSW funds the maintenance of bike facilities through a number of sources including the City's General Fund, Gas Tax, and TransNet.

***Finding 04 [sic: Finding 05]: Many bicyclists are violating the California Vehicle Code without being cited. One example is lack of understanding of the laws as they apply to Class 3 (sharrow) bike lanes.***

**Response: The City agrees with this finding.**

The City agrees that nationwide there are cyclists that violate traffic laws. The City works closely with bicycle advocacy groups including the San Diego Bicycle Coalition and Walk San Diego, to educate cyclists through blogs, public notices, and the media. Class 3 bike lanes or sharrows are relatively new to the San Diego region; however, they have been used in many other cities for years. Sharrows are state-approved traffic control devices that are placed in the roadway travel lane indicating that motorists should share the lane with bicyclists. Sharrows are typically accompanied with "Share the Road" signs to emphasize the meaning and intent of the sharrows. Sharrows have been well received, and the City has received numerous requests to install additional sharrows throughout the City.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The 2012-2013 San Diego Grand Jury recommends that the Mayor and City Council of San Diego:**

***Recommendation 13-57: Improve bicycle safety and operational convenience by more frequent sweeping of bicycle lanes and paths.***

**City's Response: The recommendation requires further analysis.**

The Transportation Engineering Operations (TEO) Division of TSW will assess the extent to which more frequent sweeping of bikeways is needed to improve safety. Based on this analysis, TEO will provide recommended routes to TSW's Storm Water Division, which is responsible for

street sweeping 29 miles of bike paths annually.<sup>2</sup> Storm Water staff will assess whether there will be an additional cost above the City's budgeted miles and make recommendations to the Mayor and City Council during the FY 2015 budget process.

Service Requests for sweeping can be made online at [www.sandiego.gov/stormwater/services/servicerequest.shtml](http://www.sandiego.gov/stormwater/services/servicerequest.shtml) or by calling (619) 235-1000.

Information on street sweeping routes and frequencies can be found online at [www.sandiego.gov/stormwater/services/sweepschedules.shtml](http://www.sandiego.gov/stormwater/services/sweepschedules.shtml).

**Recommendation 13-58: Develop and implement a plan, no later than June 30, 2014, to install more Class I Bike Lanes next to thoroughfares that provide a direct route into and out of the city.**

**City's Response: The recommendation has been implemented.**

The City is not certain if Recommendation 13-58 is in reference to bike paths or bike lanes and would like to clarify that Class 1 is a bike path & Class 2 is a bike lane. The City's Bicycle Master Plan (Final Draft, July 8, 2013)<sup>3</sup> identifies a network of existing and proposed bikeway facilities throughout the City including Class 1 (bike paths) and Class 2 (bike lanes). Note that the Citywide network of facilities is illustrated in the updated plan in Figure 6-1 (Proposed Bicycle Network with Classifications – North) and Figure 6-2 (Proposed Bicycle Network with Classifications – South). In addition, Table 6-1 (Recommended San Diego Bicycle Network) tabulates the total mileage of all existing and proposed bikeways.

In an effort to promote cycling, TSW staff have also taken the initiative to work with the City's street resurfacing efforts—such as the Street Preservation and Undergrounding Programs—to make striping modifications and add bike lanes or redesign existing lanes to improve safety. The modified traffic striping includes narrower travel lane widths, wider bike lanes (Class 2 Bikeway), and/or a separation of space between the bike lane and adjacent travel lane known as a “buffer”. In the past six months, approximately 20 miles of roadways have been redesigned with modified traffic striping along major roadways including Nimitz Boulevard, Montezuma Road, Kearney Villa Road, Aero Drive, Santo Road, Genesee Avenue, Mira Mesa Boulevard, Tierrasanta Boulevard, Morena Boulevard, and Lake Murray Boulevard that promote safer bicycling. New bikeways that have recently been constructed and others that are currently in the design and planning phases of development are identified in the updated master plan<sup>3</sup> in Table 3-4 (List of Existing On-Going Bikeway Projects).

**Recommendation 13-59: Update the City's Transportation Plan, by the next budget cycle, to remove the Class 3 (sharrow) bike lanes in downtown San Diego and, as practical, replace them with dedicated bicycle/pedestrian only thoroughfares.**

**City's Response: Recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted.**

Class 3 bikeways or sharrows are a recognized and useful tool that allows motorists and bicyclists to safely share the road, particularly in cases where the road is too narrow and it is not

---

<sup>2</sup> Note that the street sweeping function underwent Managed Competition in 2012, and the City employees (the Most Efficient Government Operation or “MEGO”) won the competition. The MEGO is responsible for sweeping approximately 29 miles of bike paths annually on an as-needed basis.

<sup>3</sup> The updated plan can be found at:

[www.sandiego.gov/planning/programs/transportation/mobility/pdf/sdbmpu\\_final\\_draft\\_july\\_2013.pdf](http://www.sandiego.gov/planning/programs/transportation/mobility/pdf/sdbmpu_final_draft_july_2013.pdf).

feasible to install separate bike lanes. Sharrows improve bicycle safety by recommending where it is generally safest to ride—toward the middle of the lane and away from vehicles to avoid being struck by suddenly opened car doors. The update to the Bicycle Master Plan<sup>4</sup>—the City’s transportation plan for bicycle infrastructure, which has been vetted and is going to Council for approval in September 2013, fully assessed the City’s needed bicycle infrastructure, including Downtown. The updated plan proposes bikeways throughout the City, including sharrows (Class 3 bikeways).

While additional updates to the Bicycle Master Plan are not warranted or feasible before the next budget cycle, a Downtown mobility study is planned to be completed in the next 18 months, which could recommend additional bikeway facilities including replacing Class 3 (sharrow) bikeways with Class 2 or Class 1 bikeways.

***Recommendation 13-60: Identify a funding source to finance the cost of bike lane installation, maintenance, and accessibility by the end of the next budget cycle.***

**City’s Response: The recommendation has been implemented.**

As noted in the City’s response to Finding 01, the City currently has several funding sources, including TransNet, Gas Tax, and the General Fund to finance the cost of bike lane installation facilities in FY 2014. However, it is important to note that the City has tight financial constraints and competing priorities and these funding sources are also used for street maintenance and resurfacing, among other things. The identification of new resources in the future could enable the City to do more bicycle infrastructure projects and maintenance of bike lanes and paths.

---

<sup>4</sup> The updated plan can be found at:  
[www.sandiego.gov/planning/programs/transportation/mobility/pdf/sdbmpu\\_final\\_draft\\_july\\_2013.pdf](http://www.sandiego.gov/planning/programs/transportation/mobility/pdf/sdbmpu_final_draft_july_2013.pdf).