



EAST BAY BICYCLE COALITION

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Joint Policy Committee (MTC, ABAG, BAAQMD, BCDC)
Climate Change Workshop 1
MTC MetroCenter, 101 Eighth St, Oakland

Dear Committee members:

We have a global emergency and the bicycle represents the emergency vehicle that does not emit carbon. The problem is that gaps in bikeways—including many routes on the Regional Bike Plan—cause many people to be reluctant to regularly ride to nearby transit, shopping, schools or work. Riding a bike cannot require a gut-check for common trips.

Closing many **gaps in on-street and off-street bikeways** can occur in the short term with very little financial investment. We call for your four agencies to help us shine a bright light on three specific **“sacred cows” of road design that compromise the safety** and access for bicyclists.

1) **12-foot lane widths** are widely adopted by local jurisdictions and often leave inadequate room for bicyclists to safely share the road. When the Bay Bridge opened, the standard traffic lane was under 10-foot wide. To limit liability claims many communities have adopted Caltrans' design guidelines, yet Caltrans' designs were intended for freeways, not local streets and roads! With **leadership** from the MTC and BCDC (on bridges), we can provide regional roadway design guidelines that encourage narrower lane widths to safely **accommodate bicyclists** on the remainder of the road, while also promoting traffic calming and pedestrian safety.

2) **Free curbside parking** usurps much of the roadway, reducing the available space available for bicycle travel. According to the courts, the primary purpose of roadways is for travel, hence local jurisdictions are empowered to regulate parking with fees. Yet by giving away valuable space for vehicle storage, ownership of multiple automobiles is encouraged while compromising the access and safety for bicyclists. With **leadership** from the MTC, ABAG and BAAQMD, local jurisdictions can be encouraged to **remove free parking where it acts as a barrier to bikeway continuity**, and at the same time fund a greater share of road maintenance costs through **parking fees that reflect real land values** where demand warrants.

3) **Level of Service (LOS)** criteria are currently employed by traffic engineers to justify expanded capacity for carbon emitting vehicles while ignoring the safety and access needs of bicyclists, pedestrians, disabled persons and transit users. With **leadership** from the MTC and BAAQMD, local jurisdictions and CMAs need to adopt a **Multimodal Level of Service** that would become the inclusive standard for assessing how the Bay Area spends transportation funds.

Finally, the EBBC encourages **PRICING** to both discourage unnecessary automobile trips and help fund improvements for non-motorists. Included in our short list of suggestions are 1) **fuel fees**; 2) **parking fees** that reflect the real cost of land given to vehicular storage; and 3) **bridge tolls** that exceed transit costs.

Our grassroots leadership is essential to demonstrate to the rest of the world that the Bay Area takes the threats of global warming seriously and is willing to take immediate action to reduce carbon emissions.

Sincerely,

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Executive Director

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