San Bernardino County Active Transportation Network: County Active Transportation Vision

The goals of the San Bernardino County Active Transportation Network (the Network) are to improve public safety, clean transportation choices, the quality of life, the environment, wellness and image of San Bernardino County by focusing on planning and partnership efforts that assist members in expanding their active transportation networks and encourage sustainability in transportation and planning. Active transportation refers to human-powered transportation and low-speed electronic assist devices for elderly and disabled. Examples include bicycle, electric assist bicycle, tricycle, wheelchair, scooter and skateboard.¹ Excluded devices include mopeds, motorized skateboards, neighborhood electric vehicles and segways.² The Network recognizes access for bicyclists and pedestrians to public transportation is an important component of active transportation in San Bernardino County. The Network will work with members, local jurisdictions, and agencies to meet transportation, health, land use and economic development goals, as stated below:

- **Assist to Reduce Injuries:** In San Bernardino County, 8% of roadway injuries and 19% of roadway fatalities are suffered by people walking and bicycling.³ Traffic calming and bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure improvements has been shown to greatly reduce injury and fatality rates and improve public safety.⁴ Expanding transit ridership through improved first-last mile connections will also improve public safety given that public transit has one twentieth the passenger fatality rate as automobile travel.⁵

- **Assist to Improve Quality of Life:** Studies have shown that walking and bicycling to work, school and play “can result in increased recreational opportunities, improvements to individuals’ health and decreased healthcare costs.”⁶

- **Assist to Increase Daily Commute to School, Work and Short Trips by Bicycling,**

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¹ SCAG, 2013 Active Transportation Subcommittee
² SCAG, 2013 Active Transportation Subcommittee
³ SCAG, 2012 RTP/SCS
⁶ Active Living Research, Active Transportation - Making the Link from Transportation to Physical Activity and Obesity, Found at: http://www.activelivingresearch.org/node/12296
**Walking and Taking Public Transit:** Bicycling, walking and taking public transit as integral part of daily life in San Bernardino County should be encouraged, particularly for trips of less than five miles. In San Bernardino County, 15 percent of trips are already completed by walking and bicycling.\(^7\) Key strategies to increase the percentage of trips taken by walking and biking include implementing and maintaining a bikeway network, providing end-of-trip facilities for transit, implementing safe routes to school programs, improving bicycle/transit integration, encouraging walking and bicycling through events and encouragement programs, and making walking and bicycling safer and more convenient through infrastructure improvements.

Walkable and bikeable communities also support increased transit ridership. Currently only eight percent of all jobs are reachable via transit within 90 minutes in the San Bernardino-Ontario metropolitan area and only 2% of San Bernardino County residents commute to work on public transit.\(^8\) San Bernardino County’s public transit agencies are working to increase this mode share. In fiscal years 2010 - 2013, Omnitrans’ ridership increased 11% and is projected to increase another 6% from 2013 to 2014.\(^9\)

- **Assist to Reduce Air Pollution and Protect the Environment through cleaner transportation choices:** San Bernardino County is currently burdened by a severe air pollution problem, which threatens the lives and health of all county residents. According to the American Lung Association 2012 *State of the Air* report, the county is ranked the smoggiest in the nation. Most at risk are those with lung and heart disease, children and the elderly. In San Bernardino County, more than 150,000 adults and children have asthma, 60,000 residents have chronic bronchitis, 23,000 have emphysema, and 420,000 suffer from heart disease.\(^10\)

Shifting trips from private automobiles to bicycling, walking and public transportation\(^11\) will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce vehicle per miles traveled and help the region satisfy statewide goals under SB 375.

- **Assist to Expand Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities, Access and Connectivity:** Additional planning and funding is needed to maximize walking and bicycling access within and between neighborhoods, to employment centers, shopping areas, schools, and recreational sites. As of 2011, the combined total of centerline miles of bicycle infrastructure for all jurisdictions is 468 miles.\(^12\) There is 1,282 miles of new bike lanes and trails are planned for the region.\(^13\) Additional data collection and planning are needed for pedestrian and safe routes to school efforts to determine needed improvements and to develop cost estimates. It is crucial to insure connectivity and efficiency of the bicycle and pedestrian network in planning and

\(^{7}\) 2009 CA Household Travel Survey  
\(^{9}\) Omnitrans  
\(^{11}\) One person with a 20-mile round trip commute who switches from driving to public transit can reduce his or her daily carbon emissions by 20 pounds or more than 4,800 pounds in a year. A single commuter switching his or her commute to public transportation can reduce a household’s carbon emissions by 10% and up to 30% if he or she eliminates a second car. [http://www.epa.gov/cleanenergy/energy-resources/calculator.html](http://www.epa.gov/cleanenergy/energy-resources/calculator.html)  
\(^{12}\) SANBAG Non-motorized transportation plan (NMTP), ES-7  
\(^{13}\) SANBAG Non-motorized transportation plan (NMTP), ES-7
implementation.

- **Assist to Improve the Local Economy:** Walkable places perform better for the local economy. Residents who use cars less have more disposable income to spend locally.\(^{14}\) People arriving on foot and by bicycle have been shown to visit more often and spend more money per month than those arriving by car.\(^{15}\) Additionally, more local job opportunities are created through building walking infrastructure than building road projects.\(^{16}\) For every $1 invested in transit, there is a $4 return to the economy. According to American Public Transportation Association’s Transit Saving Report, a two-person household can save, on the average, more than $9,700 a year by downsizing to one car.\(^{17}\)

- **Assist to Improve Wellness and Public Health:** 30% of adults in San Bernardino County are obese and 34% are overweight.\(^{18}\) By providing safe and convenient alternatives to driving by expanding the number of trips taken by active transportation and public transportation San Bernardino County can facilitate incorporating physical activity into daily life and help individuals achieve their recommended levels of daily activity (minimum 30 minutes for adults and 60 minutes for children).\(^{19}\) On average, Omnitrans riders are walking \(\frac{1}{2}\) mile to and from each stop in each direction, amounting to a total of 2 miles of walking per day.\(^{20}\)

- **Assist to Build an Image of a Healthy Desirable San Bernardino County:** Studies have demonstrated that communities with bicycle facilities and walkable neighborhoods have higher home prices, perform better economically and are more desirable. Investing in these improvements will help San Bernardino County attract a vibrant workforce and improve the quality of life for its residents.

**Policy Opportunities**
The following represent policy opportunities that can help San Bernardino County achieve its countywide vision and improve active transportation conditions.

**Develop a Sustainable Transportation Demonstration Program** that will provide local agencies with planning, programming, and/or capital funds to implement SANBAG’s Non-Motorized Transportation Plan and the Access to Transit Plan. This program would develop a project list of high priority Regionally Significant Active Transportation Projects to be included in future long-range planning efforts. Partner with local jurisdictions to apply and support efforts in securing active transportation funds.

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\(^{17}\) [http://www.apta.com/members/memberprogramsandservices/advocacyandoutreachtools/Pages/TransitCalculator.aspx](http://www.apta.com/members/memberprogramsandservices/advocacyandoutreachtools/Pages/TransitCalculator.aspx)


\(^{20}\) Omnitrans 2011 On-Board Rider Survey, conducted by Redhill Group
**Develop a Countywide Safe Routes to School Strategic Plan** to identify a strategy to help local communities establish new Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs and to sustain and enhance existing efforts. The strategic plan will include: assessing current SRTS efforts and needs; coordinating with agencies, organizations, and stakeholders for exchange of information and ideas; identifying data needs and performance metrics; pursuing additional funding sources to increase SRTS investment in San Bernardino County and to provide technical resources to communities; and connecting agencies and organizations involved in SRTS to resources.

**Support Regional Transportation Agencies in Exploring Opportunities to Expedite Active Transportation Funding** planned in the RTP/SCS to ensure local jurisdictions have adequate funding to build active transportation infrastructure. This would include SRTS Projects, first-last mile connections to transit, development of walkable urban centers to stimulate private investment, and development of infrastructure to support the expansion of the Metrolink system at the time when new stations come online.

**Determine a policy framework for a Countywide Complete Streets Policy** this would apply to projects that receive funding from SANBAG. In addition, a method for tracking the percentage of Complete Streets projects in the Constrained Plan for the 2016 Regional Transportation Plan and the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) should be developed to track agency progress.

**Routine accommodation in transportation and land use planning** Consistently consider bicyclists and pedestrians in the planning and design of land development, roadway, transit, and other transportation facilities, as appropriate to the context of each facility and its surroundings.

**Support SCAG developing Performance Measurement and Monitoring** of the health benefits and co-benefits (greenhouse gas reduction, economic benefit, etc.) of transportation projects and plans and quantifying chronic reductions disease through the transportation and land use decision making process. Support local agencies by providing grants for automated bicycle and pedestrian counts to improve data available for modeling. Include Active Transportation Estimates and Projections for Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Public Health Benefits, Cost Benefit Analysis, and Public Safety in all future studies and planning activities.

**Support Public Health Efforts in Health Impact Assessments** related to built-environments to determine the public health impacts and help prioritize projects based on public health performance metrics such as reducing asthma incidence, obesity or heart diseases through promotion of Active Transportation policies and facilities.