



June 10, 2026

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Ms. Abey:

Please see below the feedback and recommendations on the City of San Rafael's Draft Citywide Bicycle Pedestrian Plan (CBPP) 2026 Update. We believe that the city has made meaningful progress toward improving its walkability and bikeability since the last plan, and has been extremely successful in winning competitive grants that we look forward to seeing implemented.

However, the number of injury crashes remains stubbornly high. According to the Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) and its 2023 data, San Rafael was ranked 6/103 among cities its size (population 50k-100k) for injury collisions. No city in that group had a greater number of pedestrians injured, with San Rafael seeing itself in 2nd of 103 for senior pedestrians injured and 3rd of 103 for number of bicyclists. These numbers are a sobering reminder of how much work remains to be done, and we trust that the staff of the Department of Public Works (DPW) and the City Council will treat the CBPP with the seriousness and urgency that it deserves.

Bikeway Progress Since 2018 BPMP

Chapter 2.2 of the Draft CBPP states that San Rafael and its partner agencies implemented 26% of the 2018 bike plan by total mileage. This is admirable progress, and the changes on 2nd Street and on Grand Avenue mark real improvements over the status prior to the 2018 Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan (2018 BPMP). However, of the 3.7 miles of shared use path or projected bikeways completed, projects implemented by the City of San Rafael represent only about a half-mile of that total. The remaining projects were implemented by partner agencies such as SMART and MTC/Caltrans.

While no doubt, the projects on the SMART trail or involving Richmond-San Rafael Bridge access required coordination with city staff, we worry the pace may slow as few projects remain that will be led by partner agencies.

The city does currently have a pipeline of several grant-funded projects and is applying for funding to implement several important projects, but dedicated city funding may be needed to maintain the necessary pace of change. We would urge that the plan recommend that the city pursue a dedicated funding mechanism for implementation of low-cost or pilot project bikeway upgrades.

One further note - a meaningful lack of progress on the 2018 BPMP has the failure to implement *any* of the recommended Bicycle Boulevard projects - see below for more detail.

Policy Progress Since 2018 BPMP

In addition to the bikeway map, the 2018 BPMP made a series of excellent policy recommendations. To date, a number of these have not been initiated and no mention of this lack of progress is made in the Draft CBPP. We urge a lookback of the “Tracking Progress” section (pages 60-63) of the 2018 BPMP. Without doing a comprehensive review, here are some brief notes on that front:

Reducing Injury Collisions

By 2024, the city aimed to “reduce overall bicycle- and pedestrian-involved collisions by 20% from baseline; reduce bicycle- and pedestrian-involved severe injuries and fatalities by 40% from baseline.

Per Berkeley TIMS, in 2018 there were 39 bicyclists and 25 pedestrians reported injured in traffic on San Rafael-owned streets, a total of 64 victims. Eleven of these people (four bicyclists and seven pedestrians) were seriously injured or killed.

In 2024 (2026 data are not yet available) there were 30 bicyclists (a 23% decrease) and 44 pedestrians (a 76% increase), for a total of 74 victims (a 16% increase compared to the goal of a 20% decrease). Regarding serious or fatal injuries, 2024 saw two bicyclists and four pedestrians as victims, a decrease of 45% compared to the goal of a 40% decrease.

One note of caution: both 2023 and 2025 had more fatal or serious bike/pedestrian injury crashes than 2024 (11 and 10 respectively), making 2024 look more like an outlier than part of a steady trend.

Citywide Bicycle/Pedestrian Policies

The 2018 BPMP recommended reviewing distracted driving policies, sidewalk bicycling policies, and “Idaho stop” (aka “stop as yield”) and making changes to citywide policy. To date, none of these processes have been initiated.

Pilot Projects

The 2018 BPMP had a section recommending the use of demonstration and pilot programs to build support for protected intersections and Class IV bikeways. To date, we are aware of one

short-lived demonstration project on Tamalpais Avenue in 2018, but no other efforts have been attempted since, aside from the Spinnaker Point Traffic Calming Pilot.

Progress Reports to City Council

To our knowledge, between the adoption of the 2018 BPMP and the release of the Draft CBPP, there have been no reports given to the City Council on the plan's progress.

Resident Survey

The 2018 BPMP recommended developing and releasing a bicycle user satisfaction survey instrument in 2022 with a second round of responses gathered in 2024. To our knowledge, no such survey has been developed by the city.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Counts

The 2018 BPMP recommended that the city develop a bicycle/pedestrian counter program, in order to determine whether more or fewer people are traveling or commuting by bicycle or by foot. While TAM is currently considering implementing an automated trail counter program, no effort such as that proposed has been made by the city.

Goals and Metrics

While the goals of the bike plan are unobjectionable, we would assert that they are insufficiently concrete and lack any sort of metric of success or failure. In eight more years, when the updated bike plan is presumably up for approval, will those members of the City Council have any way of determining whether staff succeeded or failed in their implementation of the plan?

As described above, the 2018 BPM set ambitious benchmarks for success, many of which were clearly not attained. Perhaps that plan promised more than staff could deliver given their many competing responsibilities. But that should not be a reason to avoid making *any* promises.

We urge the city to make a set of commitments that the residents of San Rafael, both riders and pedestrians, may reasonably expect staff to try their hardest to achieve. Obviously success is often dependent on external factors such as the state budget, and often external events intervene (there was a pandemic between this plan and the last), a plan is incomplete without a timeline and clear metrics of success.

Existing Bicycle Network

While Figure 11 is a (mostly) accurate catalog of the bicycle facility *classification* on the roadways of San Rafael, it does not accurately represent the experience of riding, particularly with respect to Class III bicycle routes.

As it stands, there are signed Class III bike routes Greenfield Avenue that function perfectly well for most bicycle riders. By contrast, there are also Class III bicycle routes on Bellam Boulevard

and Point San Pedro Road that only the most risk tolerant riders would use, with most people choosing to ride on the sidewalk if at all.

Due to the discrepancy between the bike route network and the network that any normal resident would consider viable for transportation, we would have hoped to see a Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) map, which would have provided a much more complete picture of where people can ride and what barriers to riding exist today.

One additional correction: the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge is home to a Class I multiuse path, not a Class IV bikeway.

Bicycle Boulevards

The 2018 BPMP recommended a dozen bicycle boulevard treatments on existing signed Class III bike routes. At no point did the 2018 BPMP define what a bicycle boulevard actually is, and none of the bicycle boulevards proposed in the plan have been implemented to date, suggesting they were not an implementable recommendation.

The Draft CBPP improves on this only marginally. Despite 17 bicycle boulevards being proposed, the only definition is found in Figure 12, defining bicycle boulevards as, “shared lane bikeways accompanied by traffic calming measures such as speed humps.” This is a very nebulous definition and is accompanied by no corresponding standards or guidelines.

Here are some questions we have about how the city plans to implement bike boulevards:

- Does the city plan to develop its own bike boulevard standards or adopt them from another jurisdiction (e.g. the [City of Oakland Neighborhood Bike Route Implementation Guide](#))? Either way, that should be spelled out in this plan.
- Does a bike boulevard have a target design or 85th percentile speed? Are there target volumes that the city would hope to see in order for a bicycle boulevard to be considered low-stress?
- What other traffic calming treatments might be used in order to facilitate the above goals? Speed humps are mentioned, but what about speed cushions, traffic circles, neckdowns, gateway treatments, chicanes, or traffic diverters?
- Does this mean that traffic calming will be installed proactively by the DPW as standalone projects? How will this interact with the proposed neighborhood traffic calming policy, which is resident-initiated? Will bike boulevard traffic calming installations require express support from nearby residents?
- Is further coordination required with other city agencies? Is the fire department supportive of traffic calming installed as part of bicycle boulevard treatments? If so, then a focus on speed cushions may be a path forward for alignment on competing goals.
- Because they do not typically entail large capital expenditures, we would hope to see a recommendation that planned bike boulevards be installed alongside annual pavement rehabilitation in addition to as standalone projects. However, opportunities to do this have recently been missed, including on 1st St, which was recommended as a bicycle

boulevard in the 2018 plan (Project C-13) but no traffic calming was installed when the roadway was repaved in 2024.

Project Implementation and Roadway Rehabilitation

Pavement rehabilitation is an excellent time to implement bikeway recommendations. Designs have to be completed, coordination with utilities is required, construction crews are mobilized, and residents expect that their street will not be torn up multiples over the course of a few years. If projects are properly designed alongside repaving, many in the plan could be implemented at marginal costs above the repaving budget, certainly less than standalone projects. Implementing projects with repaving, as the City of Oakland has done quite effectively, can also speed the pace of bike plan completion.

While the city has taken some opportunities to use pavement rehabilitation to improve an existing bikeway (as on Las Gallinas Avenue, as the plan mentions), we are not aware of any instances where a new bikeway was fully implemented alongside regular pavement rehabilitation. In some instances, a clear opportunity was missed, as on 1st Street (Project C-13 from the 2018 BPMP), on Manual T. Freitas Parkway (Project B-1), on Montecillo Road, (Projects B-2 and B-3), and on Los Ranchitos Road (Project A-28).

We were disappointed to find that the Draft 2026 CBPP makes no mention of the possibility of bikeway implementation with repaving, which we find to be a serious omission.

Furthermore, the plan does not highlight that some of the projects recommended are indeed on the city's current 3-year repaving plan. These are as follows:

2026

- Canyon Oak Drive (Project A01)
- Las Gallinas Avenue (Project A02)

2027

- Andersen Drive (Projects B31, C13, C17)
- Baypointe Village Drive (Project C14)
- Grange Way (Project C24)
- Kerner Boulevard (Projects C15 and C22)

We hope that the final 2026 CBPP will include a recommendation that project implementation take place alongside pavement rehabilitation, and that future iterations of the three year repaving plan will include coordination with the plan.

Project Support

Before making comments on specific projects, we would like to draw special attention to several recommendations, which we would like to thank staff and the consulting team for including in the plan. These might not all be the highest priority projects, but we appreciate their inclusion.

Strong Support:

- Projects A05/A36: The Gallinas Creek pathway and McInnis Parkway pathway are useful existing pathways but badly degraded. Maintaining our existing pathways is as important as building new projects, so we are happy to see these included. However, it should not take decades of inattention and pathways becoming hazardous to ride to get them maintained.
- Project C13: This project will partly be implemented via the TAM 101/580 Bellam Boulevard project, but San Rafael will have an important role in taking it the final 450'.
- Project C17: We are very happy to see this project included, which we had supported alongside our partners at Rails to Trails Conservancy.
- Project B48: This project will likely not happen for a long time given the recent construction of the 8' sidewalk, but we appreciate its inclusion.

Chapter 6. Recommendations

Below are specific comments on the projects listed in the three geographic groups. Some notes are minor corrections, others are suggestions that a recommendation be altered or amended. As always, we are available to answer any follow up questions.

Group A Recommended Projects:

Page 38

- Northgate Drive between Las Gallinas and Nova Albion planned for Class I with Northgate Mall redevelopment
- Figure 21 suggests that Los Gamos Drive does not go through between Freitas Park and Lucas Valley Road. In fact, because of the diverter through the parking lot at Legal Aid of Marin, this is a viable N/S bike route, particularly with the long-term project in the County bike plan to create a Class I path parallel to US-101 linking Marinwood Avenue and Lucas Valley Road.

Page 39

- Project A01: Recommend a feasibility study for Canyon Oak Drive one-way conversion with a two-way bikeway
- Project A09: Description misspells "Montecillo Road" as "Montecello Road"
- Project A10/A11: There should be a stronger recommendation than a feasibility study for "bicycle improvements." There is clearly space for Class IV bikeway with low-demand parking removal (this is the location of the city's most recent fatal bike crash)

Page 42

- Project A39: [TAM US 101 Interchange study](#) recommended Class I path on the *north* side of N San Pedro Road between Merrydale Rd and Civic Center Drive rather than the south side.

Group B Recommendations

Page 45

- Project B07: Last bike plan also had concept study for Fifth Avenue and no progress has been made. Carryover projects recommending only “further study” give us pause.

Page 46

- Project B15: The 2018 bike plan also had a concept study for Fourth Street and no progress has been made. According to this updated plan, Fourth Street is intended to be the primary east-west path of travel through downtown north of the Second/Third Street couplet. This aligns with the Downtown Precise Plan, and is an alignment we support. But implementing this will require *action* on the part of the city, and difficult decisions involving the deprioritization of automotive traffic traveling through the corridor.

Page 48

- Project B37: Typo in the “Notes” section, referring to a “left-tun pocket.”

Group C Recommendations

Page 54

- Project C18: This project is listed as having a length of 1.08 miles. This appears to be incorrect. Bellam Boulevard and Jacoby Street are only 200’ apart. The proposed ramp connecting to the SMART pathway will be a Class I path and will likely be ~400’ in length. This incorrect 1.08 miles appears to be included in the 4.2 miles of Class IV bikeway proposed for Group C.

Additional projects recommendations

Finally, there are several additional projects we would like to see added to the recommendation list. These are as follow:

- Las Gallinas Avenue between Lucas Valley Road and Freitas Parkway - While there is not room for a protected bikeway without removing or relocating parking, we would like to see additional traffic calming on this road, as it is the only way to travel N/S west of US-101.
- There is a missing ramp at the SE corner of Lincoln Avenue/Hammondale Court to allow uphill bike traffic on Lincoln to access the Puerto Suello Hill Pathway.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sincerely,

Warren J. Wells, AICP
Policy & Planning Director
Marin County Bicycle Coalition