



# US DOT Policy Supports Walking and Bicycling

**“Bicycle and pedestrian ways shall be established in new construction and reconstruction projects in all urbanized areas,” with few exceptions.**

**— U.S. Department of Transportation policy statement, March 2000**

## Improving Conditions for Walking and Bicycling Has Multiple Benefits.

For more detailed discussions of these impacts on economic development, crime prevention, traffic safety and creating a more livable communities, see the companion “Focus on Livable Communities” fact sheets available from the Local Government Commission or on the web (in PDF format) at [www.lgc.org/clc/library/library.html](http://www.lgc.org/clc/library/library.html).



**Local Government Commission  
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In a landmark new policy statement, the nation’s premier transportation policy and funding agency recognized that it is no longer acceptable to design transportation infrastructure solely for the automobile. The U.S. Department of Transportation (US DOT) now expects every transportation agency to make accommodations for bicycling and walking a routine part of their planning, design, construction, operations, and maintenance activities.



Cathedral City – before



Cathedral City – after

## Street Redesign Helps Spur Downtown Revitalization in Cathedral City

In the mid-1990’s, Cathedral City used the redesign of Palm Canyon Drive (State Highway 111) as a catalyst for downtown revitalization. Through an innovative funding partnership, \$9 million in regional transportation funds were used to transform Palm Canyon Drive into a pedestrian-friendly boulevard with landscaped medians and a thriving new business district.

## Who Can Help?

### California Bicycle Coalition

Statewide membership-based organization which mobilizes local bicycle advocacy coalitions for legislative campaigns to make California more bike-friendly. ☎(916) 446-7558; [www.calbike.org](http://www.calbike.org).

### Office of Community Planning, California State Department of Transportation (Caltrans)

OCP establishes community-sensitive approaches to transportation planning through integrating land-use activities with transportation decisions. ☎(916) 651-6008.

### California Department of Health Services

Public health agency with staff dedicated to active community environment programs, safe routes to school projects, and Walk to School day. ☎(877) SAFE-RT; [www.dhs.ca.gov/routes2school](http://www.dhs.ca.gov/routes2school).

### Local Government Commission

A non-profit organization serving local elected officials and staff with an interest in livable communities, traffic calming, and bicycle and pedestrian projects. ☎(916) 448-1198; [www.lgc.org](http://www.lgc.org).

### Surface Transportation Policy Project

National non-profit advocacy organization based in Washington, DC, with offices in Sacramento, the Bay Area, and Los Angeles. Excellent source of information for transportation funding opportunities, regional planning initiatives, and local groups throughout California involved in transportation reform initiatives. ☎(213) 629-2043 or ☎(415) 956-7795; [www.transact.org/ca](http://www.transact.org/ca).



Visalia – before



Visalia – after

## Visalia's Street Improvements Make Walking Safer and Its Downtown More Appealing

**D**owntown Visalia before and after street improvements: Diagonal parking helped reduce a four-lane highway to two lanes. The addition of landscaping and curb extensions created a safe pedestrian environment and enhanced the historic downtown.

## US DOT: Adopt Local Policy Statement

**T**o facilitate the inclusion of walking and bicycling into planning, the US DOT now recommends that government agencies and community organizations adopt their policy statement.

Existing transportation design manuals should be amended or new ones created that incorporate design information that integrates safe and convenient facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians into all

new highway construction and reconstruction projects. In the interim, these manuals may be supplemented by stand-alone bicycle and pedestrian facility manuals.

Finally, local governments should undertake intensive training and education of transportation planners and engineers to make them conversant with the new information required to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians.

The complete US DOT Policy Statement on Integrating Bicycling and Walking into Transportation Infrastructure is available at [www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/Design.htm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/Design.htm).

## No More Excuses!

**T**he US DOT says that every transportation agency has the responsibility and the opportunity to make a difference in the bicycle-friendliness and walkability of our communities. The design information to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians is available, as is the funding. The U.S. Department of Transportation is committed to improving conditions for bicycling and walking and making them safer ways to travel.

# Funding Is Available.

## ■ Transportation Enhancements (TE)

This program provides \$58 million a year in California for everything from bicycle and pedestrian facilities to main street revitalization to historic preservation of train depots. Funds are available through Caltrans and your Regional Transportation Planning Authority (RTPA).

## ■ Safe Routes to School

California's "Safe Routes to School" Bill specifically provides \$20 million a year for projects through Caltrans. An additional \$9 million is available for general pedestrian safety projects and education through their Pedestrian Safety Program. More information is available through the Caltrans Office of Local Programs at ☎(916) 653-4727, by e-mail at [Local.Programs@dot.ca.gov](mailto:Local.Programs@dot.ca.gov) or at [www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms).

## ■ Surface Transportation Program (STP)

This is the largest and most flexible program for capital projects, with \$535 million available annually for a wide range of projects including transit capital projects, road construction and improved access for people with disabilities programmed by RTPAs.

## ■ Hazard Elimination / Safety (HES)

Every year, \$54 million in Caltrans-administered funding is available for safety improvement projects which may include bicycle, pedestrian and traffic calming projects.

## ■ Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ)

At least \$300 million in funding is available annually for projects that help improve air quality such as ridesharing, clean fuel buses, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities programmed by RTPAs.

## ■ Bicycle Transportation Account

Starting in FY 2001-02, \$7.2 million will be available annually through Caltrans for bicycle transportation. For more information: Ken McGuire, Caltrans, ☎(916) 653-0036.

## ■ Learn More about Working with Your RTPA

For a more detailed account of how California local government officials can work with their Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) to control expenditure of transportation dollars and to qualify for funding, read *New Opportunities for Innovative Transportation Planning: How To Use Senate Bill 45 to Fund More Livable Communities*, Local Government Commission, 1998. For a copy: ☎(916) 448-1198 or e-mail [center@lgc.org](mailto:center@lgc.org).

## Pedestrian and Bicycle Design On-line Resources

Smart Growth Network  
[www.smartgrowth.org](http://www.smartgrowth.org)

National Center for  
Bicycling and Walking  
[www.bikefed.org](http://www.bikefed.org)

Pedestrian and Bicycle  
Information Center  
[www.walkinginfo.com](http://www.walkinginfo.com)  
[www.bicyclinginfo.com](http://www.bicyclinginfo.com)

Walkable Communities, Inc.  
[www.walkablecommunities.org](http://www.walkablecommunities.org)

Odyssey 20/20  
[www.odyssey2020.org](http://www.odyssey2020.org)

Association of Pedestrian  
and Bicycle Professionals  
[www.apbp.org](http://www.apbp.org)

Local Government  
Commission  
[www.lgc.org](http://www.lgc.org)



# Focus on Livable Communities



Bakersfield – before



Bakersfield – after

## Trees and Street Amenities Make Downtown Bakersfield “Cool”

In 1998, Downtown Bakersfield transformed Chester Avenue into an attractive, green, pedestrian-friendly main street. Brick paving, benches, trash receptacles, tree-planting and improved crosswalks have enhanced the pedestrian environment while revitalizing downtown.

Working with the RTPA, the City used a combination of ISTEA funds, Environmental Enhancement Mitigation monies, Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and general funds to cover the \$2.5 million price tag. Peter Smith at Kern COG, the RTPA, attributes the “instantaneous success” of the streetscape to the decision to plant mature trees rather than small ones.

Downtown urban reforestation reduces daytime temperatures and improves air quality — both serious issues in the Central Valley. In combination with new pedestrian amenities, the trees have created a desirable environment for those on foot. Plans to expand the streetscape and to plant 150 additional trees are now underway with funding from ISTEA and CDBG programs.



Bakersfield – before



Bakersfield – after

## RESOURCES FOR PEDESTRIAN- AND BICYCLE-FRIENDLY DESIGN

“Streets and Sidewalks, People and Cars: The Citizen’s Guide to Traffic Calming,” Dan Burden, LGC, 2000.

“Street Design Guidelines for Healthy Neighborhoods,” Dan Burden, LGC, 1999.

“Walkable Streets and the Fire Department” video, Walkable Communities, Inc. and LGC, 2000.

“New Opportunities for Innovative Transportation Planning: How to Use Senate Bill 45 to Fund More Livable Communities,” LGC, 1998.

“Flexibility in Highway Design,” Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), 1997. ☎(202) 366-5007.

“Improving Conditions for Bicycling and Walking,” Federal Highway Administration, 1998. ☎(202) 366-5007.

“Guide for the Development of Bike Facilities,” American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), 1999. ☎(888) 227-4860.

For a complete list of printed resources and contact info: [www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/Design.htm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/Design.htm).

This project is funded by the Physical Activity and Health Initiative, California Department of Health Services under a Preventive Health Services Block Grant from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Work performed as part of a UC San Francisco contract.