



South Santa Rosa Bicycle-Pedestrian Plan



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PREPARED FOR SANTA ROSA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
BY WEST FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL IN CONJUNCTION WITH
SANTA ROSA COUNTY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Santa Rosa County obtained a grant from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity to develop a much-needed bicycle and pedestrian master plan for the unincorporated area of the south end of Santa Rosa County. In October 2014, the county contracted with the West Florida Regional Planning Council to provide the technical assistance for the development of this plan. The overarching goals of the South Santa Rosa Bicycle-Pedestrian Plan are to:

- provide a mapped bicycle loop route and/or grid that is both an alternative to automobile travel on US 98 as well as a quality of life and tourism enhancing recreational route;
- analyze existing bicycle/pedestrian plans to determine priorities based on identified goals and appropriate linkages;
- integrate transportation and land use decisions and identify funding strategies for the development of the plan.

This plan incorporates bicycle and pedestrian improvements, both identified and existing, and promotes connectivity between the systems while seeking to improve overall bicycle and pedestrian safety along the US 98 corridor. This plan synthesizes the various bicycle and pedestrian activities related to multi-modal mobility, quality of life, tourism promotion, safety, connectivity, health, education, and environmental concerns. It identifies 18 segments of two recreational loops, detailing needed projects and status of pending projects, as well as recommends eight strategies to further our objectives.

- Signage
- Ensure that the Loops Accommodate All Users
 - Maintenance
 - Bicycle Counters
- Marketing for Tourism and Economic Development
- Education and Safety Programs
- State and Federal Alignment



TASK ONE: CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

A web site, online survey and Facebook page were created for gathering feedback and sharing information on existing bicycle-pedestrian facilities, crash data and project ideas.

In November 2014, a series of public meetings was held to gather public feedback. The citizen comments are summarized below with corresponding survey result charts. Complete survey results are available in **Appendix A** and a full listing of comments can be found in **Appendix B**.

A second series of meetings in February completed the citizen participation process. Citizens who attended meetings, subscribed online or through Facebook, or completed a survey were notified so they could be updated on the project status. During these meetings, participants were given the opportunity to provide feedback on the prioritization methodology.



FACEBOOK.COM/SSRBPP

- THREE PUBLIC WORKSHOPS
- 63 CITIZENS IN ATTENDANCE
- 388 FACEBOOK FANS TO DATE
- WEB SITE - WWW.SSRBPP.ORG
- 199 COMPLETED SURVEYS
- 164 EMAIL SUBSCRIBERS

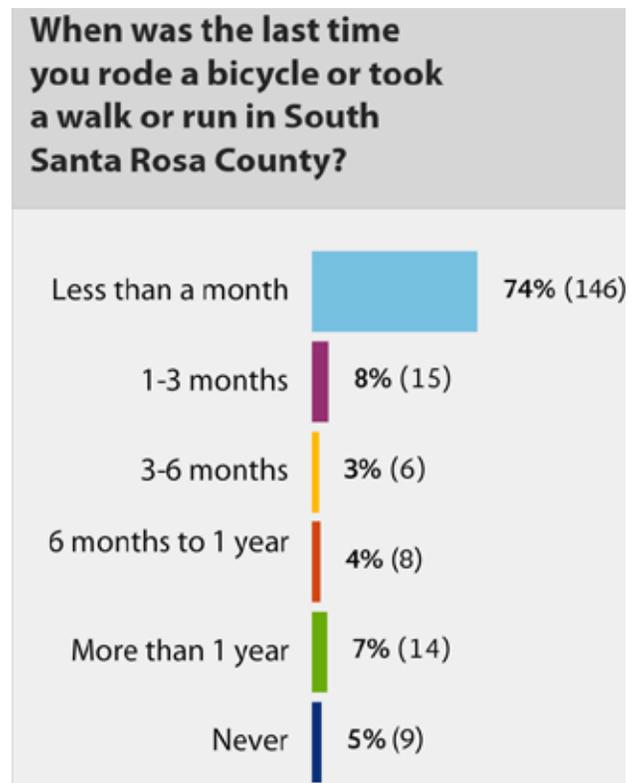
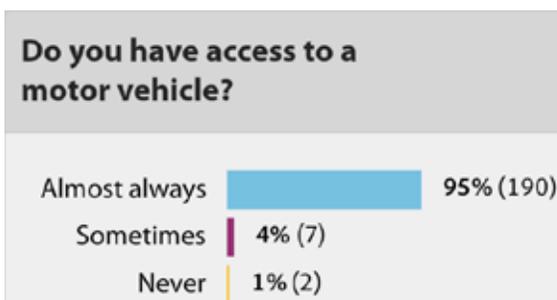
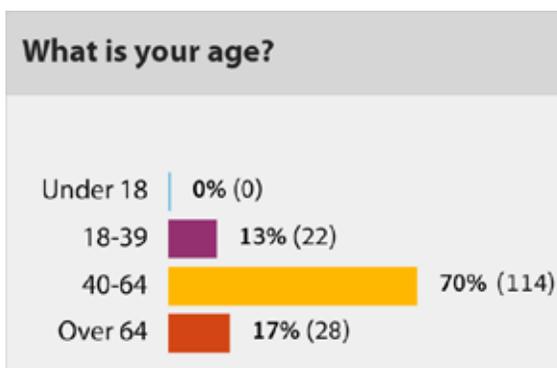
TASK TWO: IDENTIFICATION OF GOALS AND PRIORITIZATION OF OBJECTIVES

“Significant public investment in pedestrian and bike infrastructure will correspondingly significantly enhance the quality of life for the citizens and visitors in South Santa Rosa County. A community’s high quality of life has been proven to be the single most important driver of economic and job development in Santa Rosa County over the last 30 years. It’s why company owners want to bring their operations and employees families into our county... north or south end!”

SURVEY RESULTS SUMMARY

A survey (Appendix C) was developed and promoted through Facebook, public meetings and the web site, to identify pedestrian and bicycle related goals. The survey was available online throughout the extent of the plan development and hard copies were given out at all public meetings.

Of the survey respondents’ demographics and background, most are ages 40-64 and have walked/bicycled in the study area in the previous month. The vast majority (95 percent) almost always have access to a motor vehicle, 77 percent live within the study area, and 58 percent are employed outside of the home.

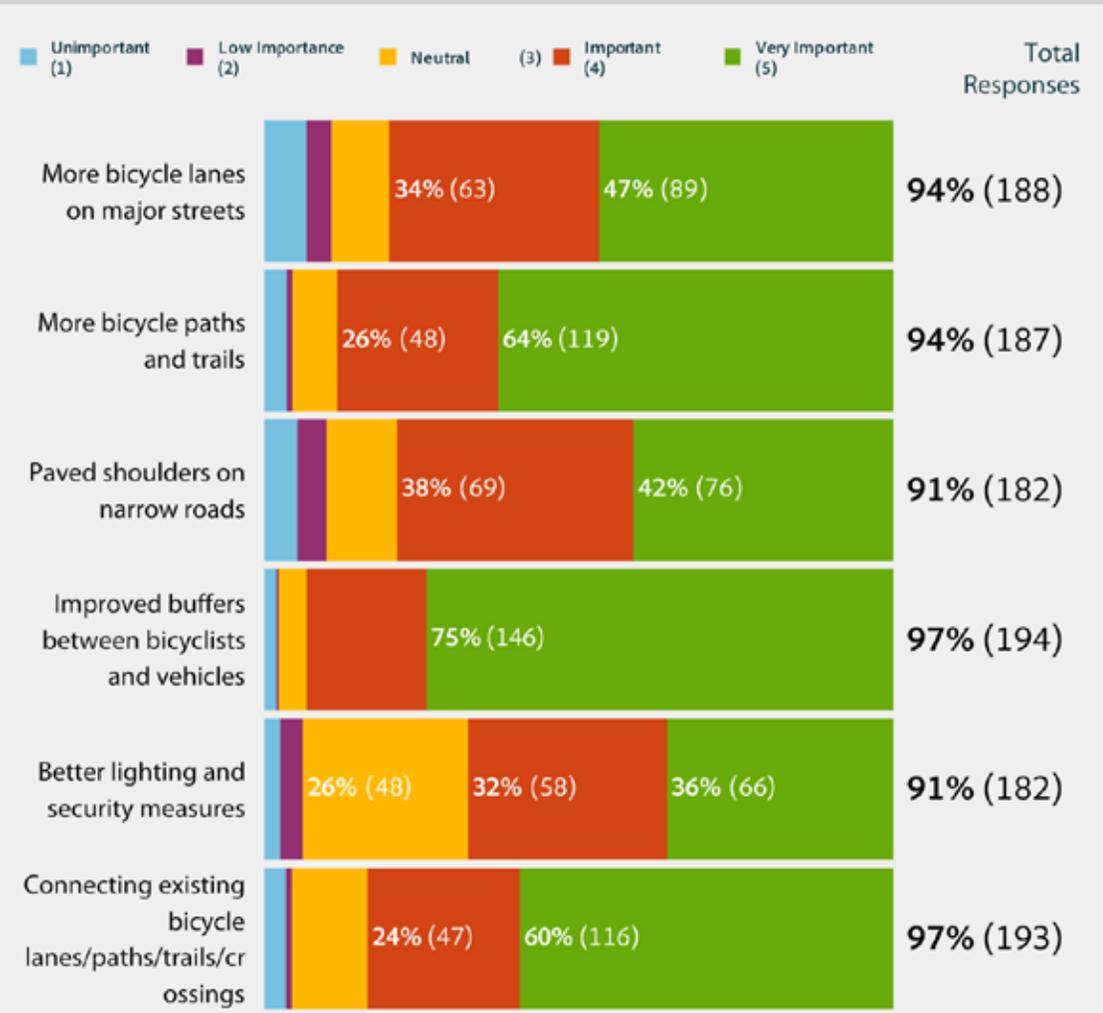




BICYCLE

When asked about ranking potential bicycle infrastructure improvements, respondents ranked “improved buffers between bicyclists and vehicles” the highest with 75 percent saying it is very important. “More paths and trails” and “more connections” ranked the next highest while “paved shoulders on narrow roads” and “better lighting and security measures” ranked the lowest.

Rank potential bicycle infrastructure improvements in South Santa Rosa County.

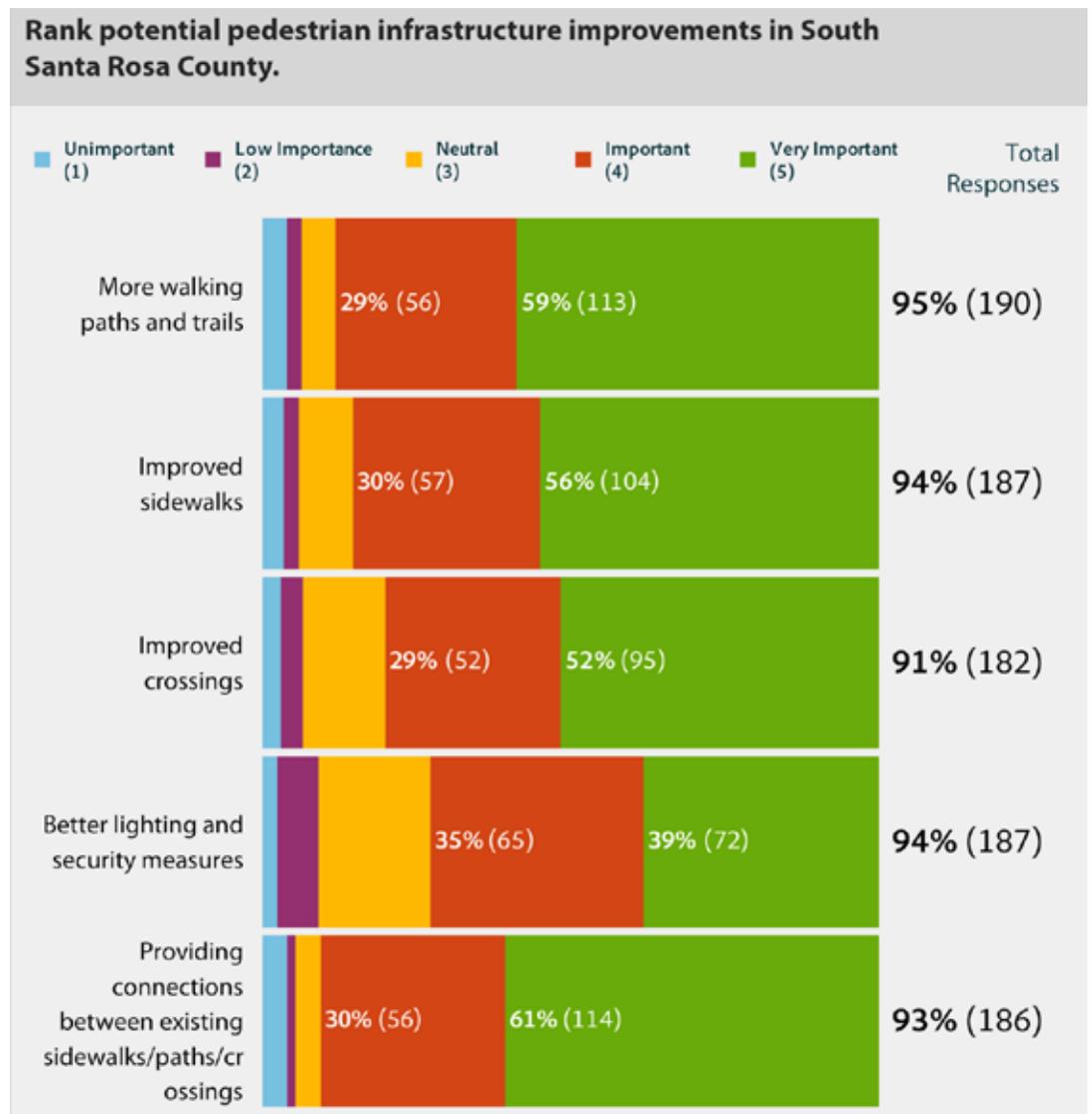


“I work just over a mile from my house. I would ride my bicycle much more frequently if I did not have to travel down Bay Street at a busy time. There is no bicycle trail at all, and the road is too narrow, with dangerous drop off shoulders on both sides.”

Ranking infrastructure improvements

PEDESTRIAN

Majority of respondents ranked all pedestrian infrastructure improvements as very important with the exception of “Better lighting and security measures”. This may be because they feel safe and/or they do not walk at night when lighting would be an issue. “Providing connections between existing sidewalks/paths/crossings” and “More walking paths and trails” received the highest number of votes for being important and very important.

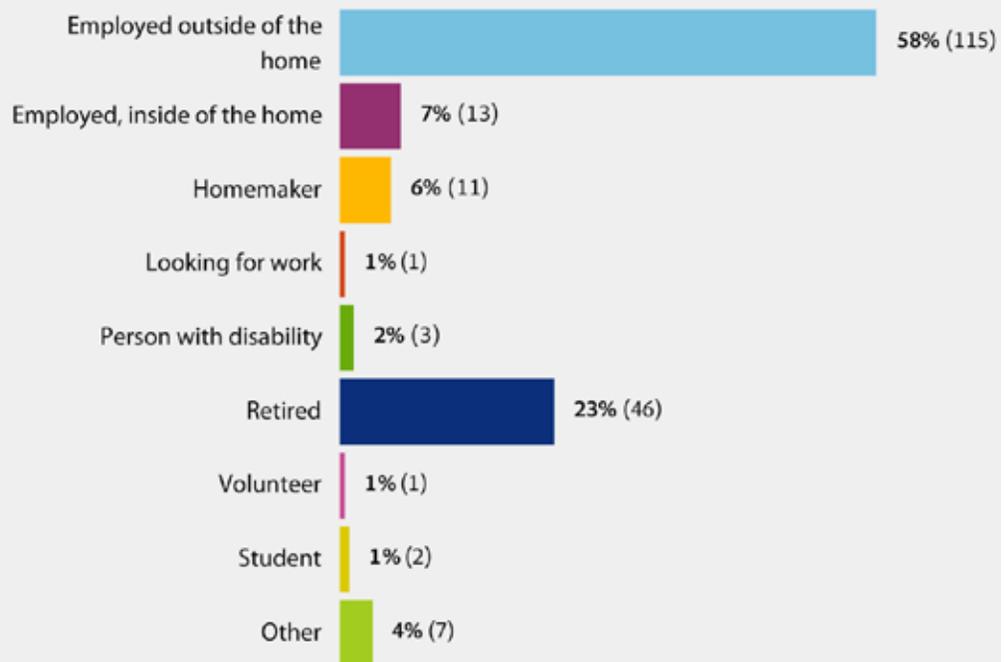


“We need more nature walks in Navarre, maybe up 87 around East River, or the few creeks we have. Nature is the cure to our stressful lives and better health for our community. I would love to have a beautiful nature trail in Navarre without having to drive 30 minutes in each direction to get to one.”

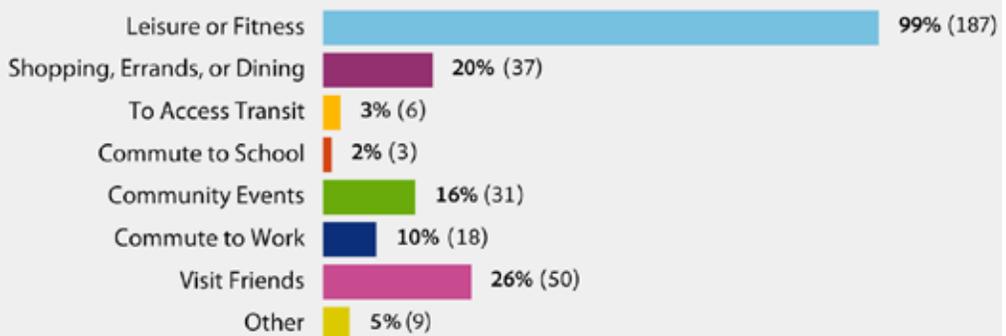
To ensure the respondents were a good representation of the area, there were asked questions related to their demographics and background with bicycle and pedestrian activities.



How would you describe yourself?



Why do you ride a bicycle?



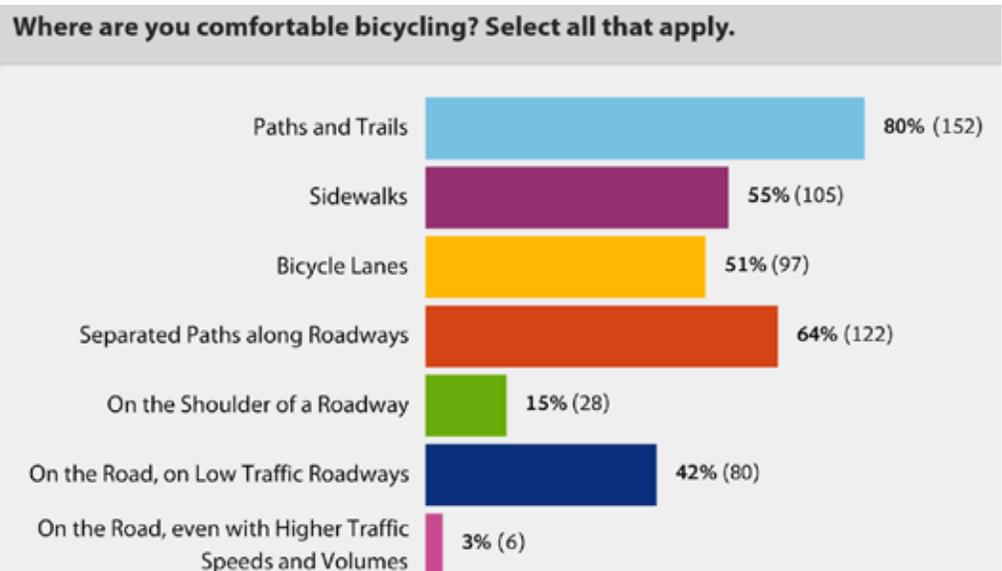
BICYCLING BACKGROUND

To get an idea of the level of bicycling comfort and experience, respondents were asked to categorize themselves as one of the “four types of cyclists,” as developed and defined by the Portland Office of Transportation (Geller): “The Strong and The Fearless,” “Enthusied and Confident,” “Interested but Concerned,” and “No Way, No How.” Most ranked in the middle two categories of “Interested but Concerned” and “Enthusied and Confident,” while only two percent said “No Way, No How.” Also, almost all respondents (99 percent) reported cycling for leisure or fitness, while accessing transit and commuting to school or work received the lowest number of responses.

The “four types” categorization was developed in 2005, by the city of Portland to better understand what types of infrastructure the city needed to dramatically increase bicycle use. The goal in developing this typology was to better understand the market for bicycle transportation (Geller). In Santa Rosa County, survey respondents identified themselves predominately (79 percent) in either the “Interested but Concerned” or “Enthusied but Confident” categories. The basic assumption for the “Interested but Concerned” group is “that under conditions where people feel safe and where bicycling makes sense, they will ride...but they are afraid.” For the “Enthusied but Confident” category they are less afraid, but prefer to ride on their own facilities such as bike lanes. These classifications represent important considerations in determining the type of cycling infrastructure to install. In Santa Rosa County, 64 percent of the respondents may be more inclined to ride on separated facilities.

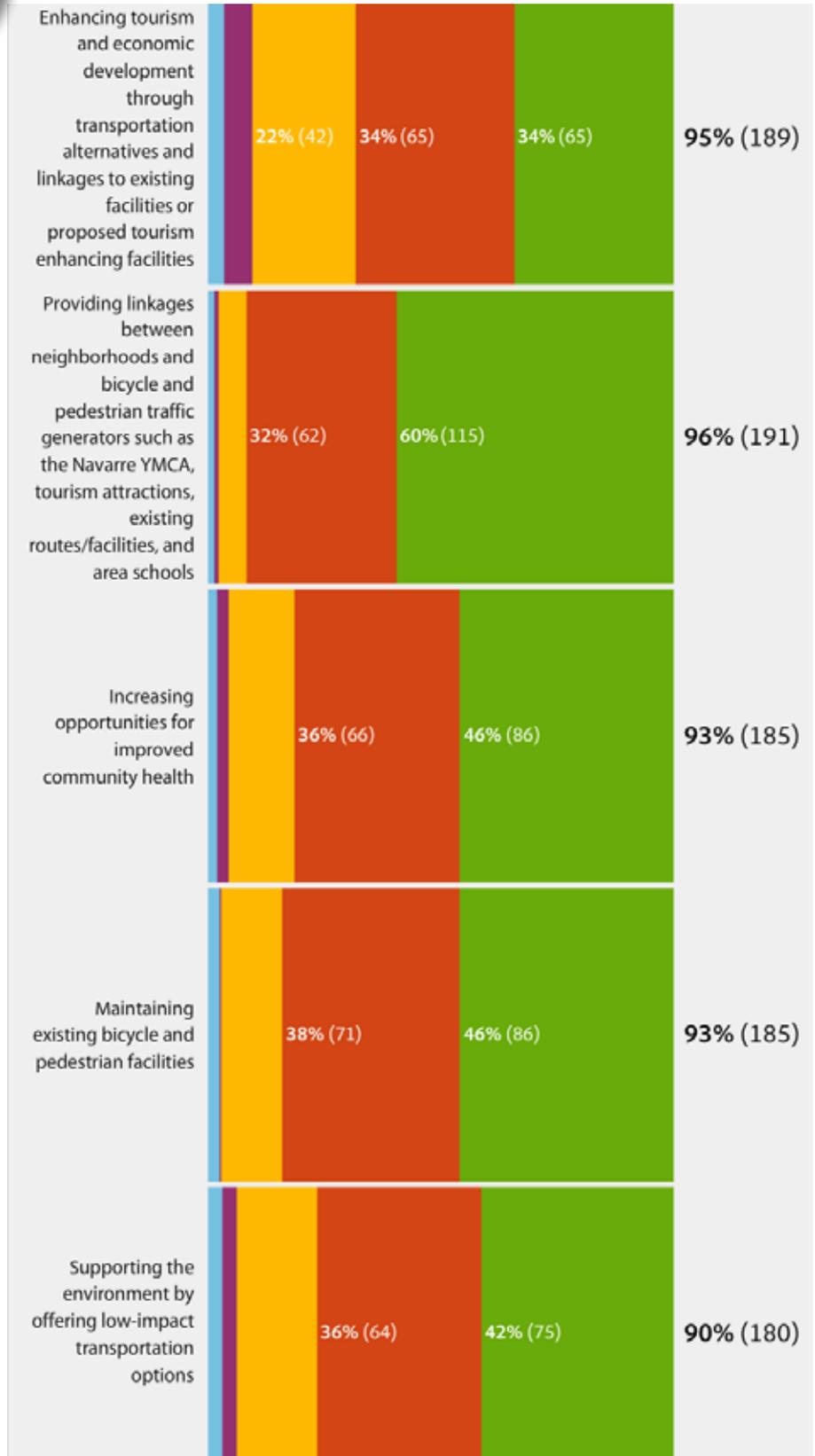
Even though the survey respondents’ background with bicycling would suggest they mainly use bicycle and pedestrian facilities for recreational purposes, they do see the need for safety improvements for those who depend on these facilities to travel throughout the area. The survey also asked where people felt comfortable cycling. The results show they prefer facilities that provide separation from the motor vehicles unless it is on a low traffic roadway. It follows the responses yielded from the question regarding the biggest obstacles to bicycling in the area with the top responses of “motorists do not exercise caution around cyclists,” “traffic is too fast or heavy” and “lack of, or poor condition of bicycle facilities.”

“Maintain bicycle and pedestrian paths - remove rocks, glass, debris and sand = remove risks of falling.”

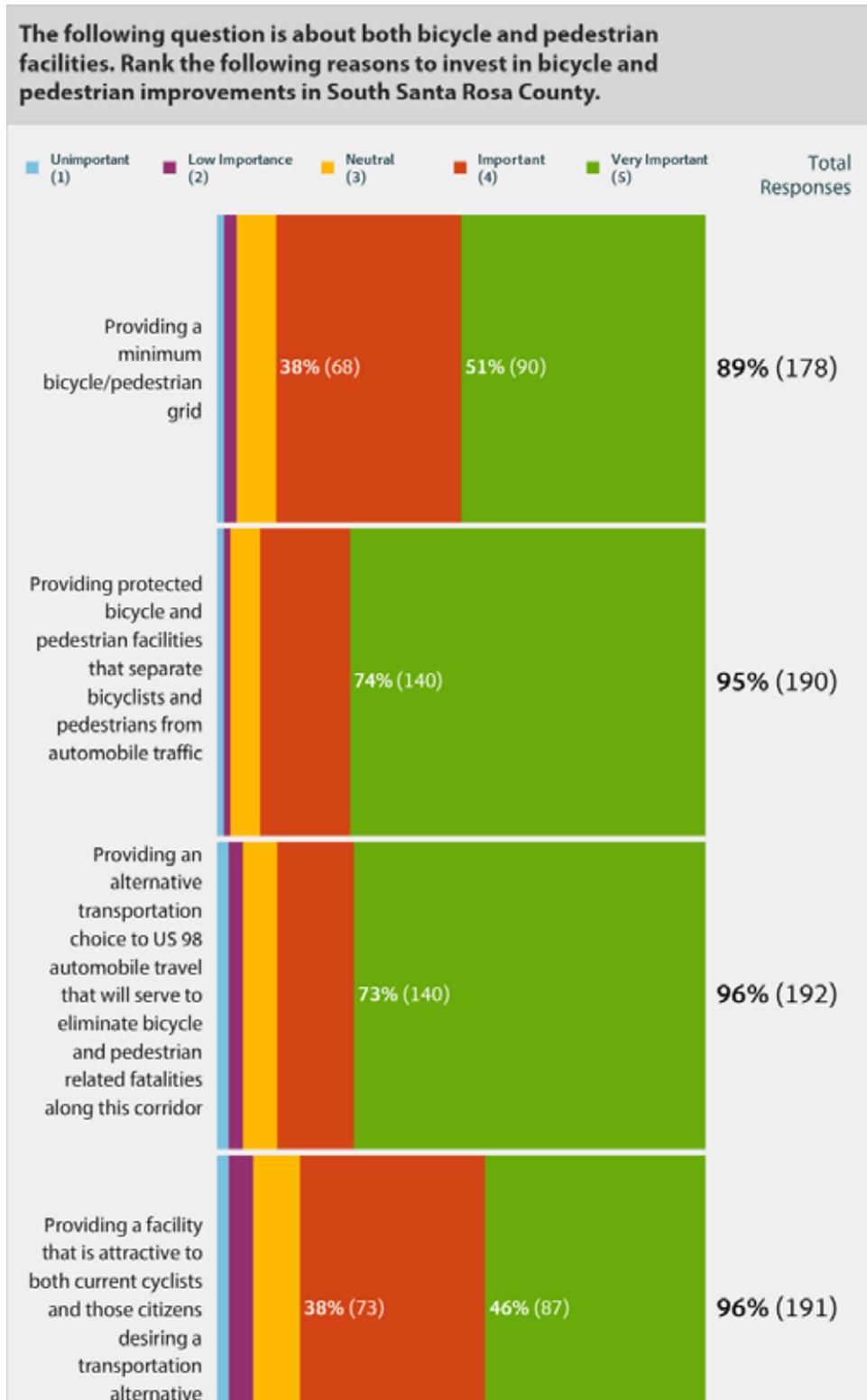




“Actually a few benches (maybe every four miles) might be nice also. It would encourage people to ride longer if they could stop and rest if needed. (I’m 71 but still love to ride my bike... just have to take a rest once in a while.) I ride about five miles right now for exercise but would ride longer if connectors were made and they had an occasional bench. Thanks for allowing our input.”



“It would be wonderful to have a safe walking and riding path away from HWY 98 to go shopping!”



“Connect isolated neighborhoods with interior streets.”



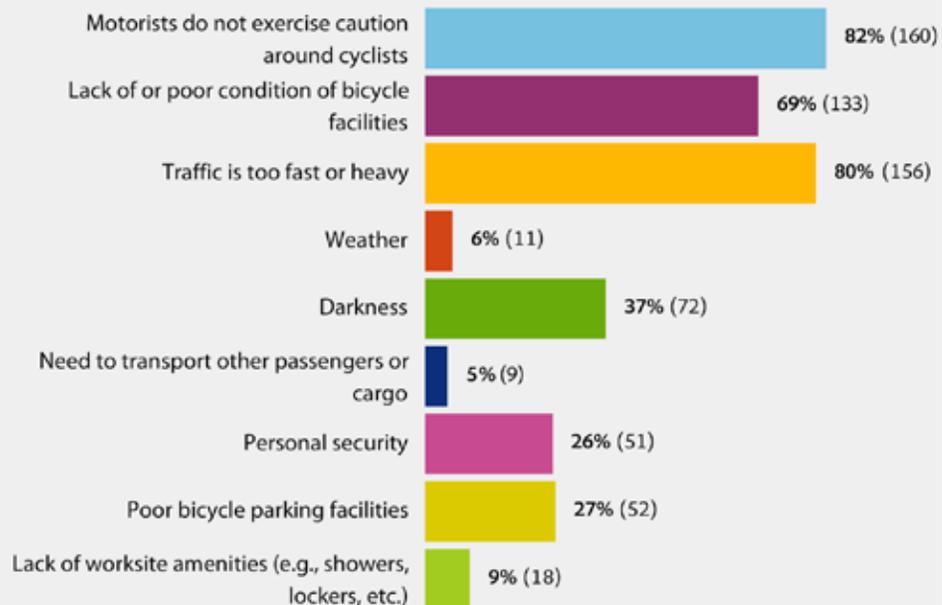
INVESTING IN BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS

Overall, respondents ranked all reasons to invest in bicycle and pedestrian improvements as important and very important. “Providing protected bicycle and pedestrian facilities that separate cyclists, runners and walkers from automobile traffic ranked the highest with almost 75percent saying they are both very important. While still over 50percent saying it is important or very important, “enhancing tourism and economic development” ranked the lowest for importance of investing in bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

The next set of questions are about bicycle facilities. What is your level of bicycling comfort and experience?



What are the biggest obstacles to bicycling in South Santa Rosa County? Select all that apply.



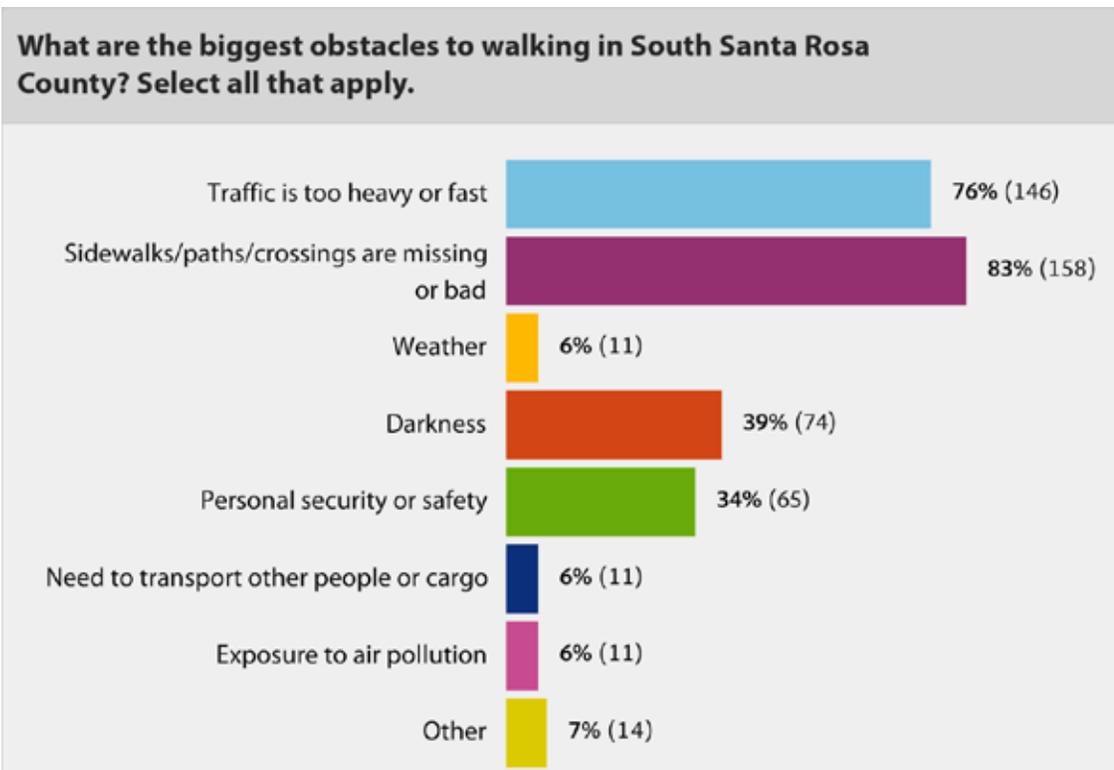
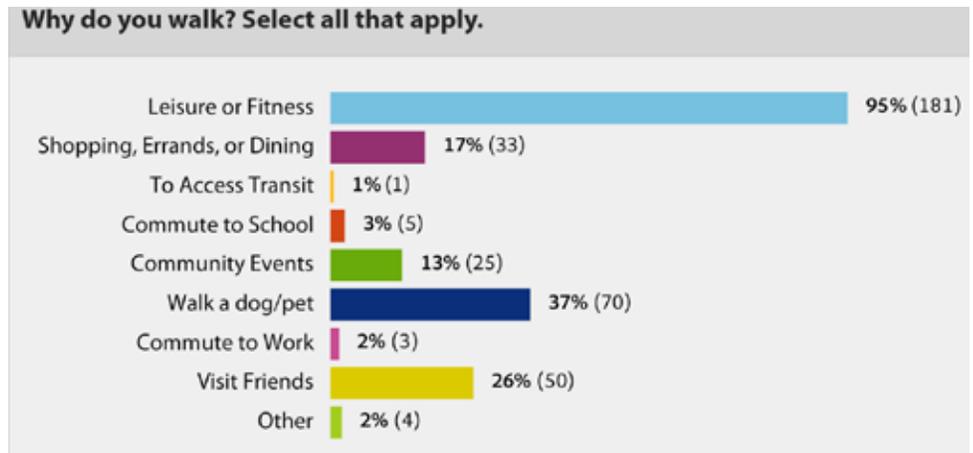
“If you want to save lives, then please install the white bumps on the white lines so that drivers are alerted that they are crossing into space that cyclists occupy (the shoulder).”

“Keep beach bike trails free of sand.”

“Connecting neighborhoods so that travel to and from shops, the beach etc. can happen without having to get on 98.”

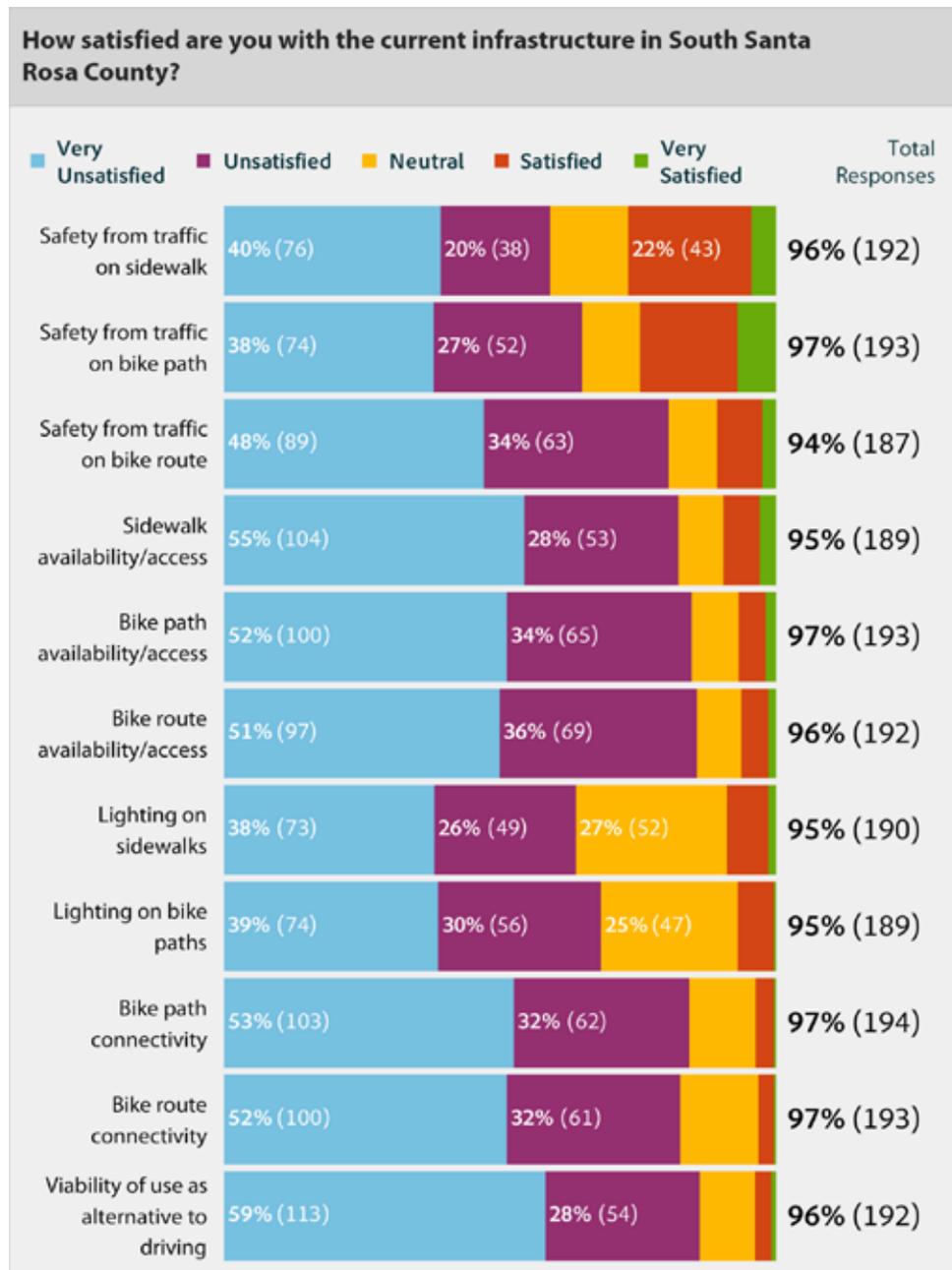
PEDESTRIAN BACKGROUND

Similar questions were asked about the survey respondents’ familiarity and views of pedestrian-related issues. Similar to the bicyclist question, most people (95percent) responded they walk for leisure or fitness purposes. Other top reasons for walking are to “walk a dog/pet” and to “visit friends.” Respondents claimed the biggest obstacles to walking in south Santa Rosa County are “traffic is too heavy or fast” and “sidewalks/paths/crossings are missing or bad.”



SATISFACTION RESULTS

Overall, analysis of the completed surveys, posts on Facebook and verbal comments shared in the public meetings show the majority of respondents are unsatisfied with the current bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.



“Inter-connectivity between sub-divisions. Installation of ADA sidewalks mandated on all new sub-divisions. Designated bike/ped lane on all new streets. Mandatory sidewalks within one mile from all schools.”

Prioritized goals

Overall, people are concerned about the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists in the study area. The predominance of citizens surveyed (between 94-97percent) indicated they are generally dissatisfied with current infrastructure and would like to see more bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in south Santa Rosa County. With US 98 being the only facility to traverse the entire region, it is a highly used roadway. However, with its high speeds, it is a dangerous route for pedestrians and bicyclists. The citizens want to see safer options on US 98, with buffers to provide better separation from vehicles. Between 95-96percent of respondents prefer bicycle and pedestrian facilities that are physically set apart from traffic to provide a safe alternative transportation choice to US 98 automobile travel.

PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE GOALS BY ORDER OF PREFERENCE*

- a. **Provide protected or separated facilities, i.e. multi-use path, trail or sidewalk (74percent)**
- b. **Provide connections between existing sidewalks/multi-use paths/crossings (61percent)**
- c. **Providing linkages between neighborhoods and other generators such as the Navarre YMCA, tourism attractions, existing routes/facilities and schools (60percent)**
- d. **Provide improved street crossings (52percent)**
- e. **Provide a minimum grid (51percent)**
- f. Increasing opportunities for improved community health (46percent)
- g. Maintaining existing pedestrian facilities (46percent)
- h. Supporting the environment by offering low impact transportation options (42percent)
- i. Provide better lighting and security measures (39percent)
- j. Enhancing tourism and economic development via linkages to existing facilities or proposed tourism-enhancing facilities (34percent)

BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE GOALS BY ORDER OF PREFERENCE*

- a. **Provide improved buffers between bicyclists and vehicles – separated facilities, paths trails (74percent)**
- b. **Provide an alternate transportation choice to travel on US 98 (73percent)**
- c. **Provide connections to existing bicycle lanes/paths/trails/crossings (60percent)**
- d. **Providing linkages between neighborhoods and other generators such as the Navarre YMCA, tourism attractions, existing routes/facilities and schools (60percent)**
- e. **Provide a minimum grid (51percent)**
- f. Provide more bicycle lanes on major streets (47percent)
- g. Provide facilities that meet the needs of all cyclist including commuters and recreational cyclist (46percent)
- h. Increasing opportunities for improved community health (46percent)
- i. Maintaining existing bicycle facilities (46percent)
- j. Provide paved shoulders on narrow roads (42percent)
- k. Supporting the environment by offering low impact transportation options (42percent)
- l. Provide better lighting and security measures (36percent)
- m. Enhancing tourism and economic development via linkages to existing facilities or proposed tourism enhancing facilities (34percent)

TASK THREE: EXISTING AND PLANNED BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES ANALYSIS

Existing projects

There are currently several different types of bicycle and pedestrian facilities located in south Santa Rosa County, including unmarked signed-designated on-road bicycle routes, separated bicycle lanes, wide shoulders, multi-use paths and sidewalks. As the Existing Facilities Map shows, many of the roads in south Santa Rosa County do not have any bicycle or pedestrian facilities and the few existing facilities do not adequately connect to different points of interest or serve as a viable alternative to travel on US 98

BICYCLE LANES

Currently, bicycle lanes are located or planned to be located along US 98 and SR 87. The Navarre Beach Causeway has a very narrow grated pedestrian facility attached to the sides of the bridge. This facility on the Navarre Beach Causeway is too narrow for many cyclists and some choose to ride with vehicular traffic. There are also bike lanes located through the undeveloped portion of the Gulf Islands National Seashore which are heavily used. However, with its proximity near the beach, Gulf

Boulevard's bicycle lanes are often covered in sand in sections. Bicyclists

do not feel safe under this type of condition and prefer riding in the vehicular travel lanes. Cyclists have also raised concerns with the condition of the road indicating safety concerns related to the surface of the road. Soundside Drive, which is an important bike route, has a partial wide shoulder on the north side of the road only. This shoulder is unmarked. .

DESIGNATED BICYCLE ROUTES

The Soundside Loop is a very popular bicycle route in the study area. It is marked by signs along the route and vehicles and bicyclists must share the road with most of the roads not having bicycle facilities. The route is located on the western



unpaved sandy path connecting Madura Road to Soundside Drive. Depending on the type of bicycle they have, cyclists can walk or ride through this path to continue their journey. Unfortunately, to complete this loop as currently marked, cyclist must return using the US 98 shoulder.



FLEXPOST FACILITIES

Flexpost facilities exist on Oriole Beach Road and Sunrise Drive. Both roadways have the flexpost design on only one side of the road. It provides bicyclists and pedestrians a clearly identified space, as the flexposts offer a buffer between them and automobiles. However, individual flexposts are removed as more driveways are added to these types of roadways and maintenance has been an issue.

MULTI-USE PATHS/TRAILS

There is currently an existing multi use path along US 98 through the Gulf Islands National Seashore Naval Live Oaks Area. This trail is approximately three miles long and extends from Gondolier Boulevard into Gulf Breeze. There is an additional multi use path along Gulf Boulevard on Navarre Beach that extends from the Navarre Beach Causeway road to the undeveloped portion of the Gulf Islands National Seashore. The multi-use paths provide for physical separation from vehicular traffic. At the focus group meetings, many higher speed cyclists reported not liking to use these multi-use paths because of the conflict between themselves and other bikers and pedestrians using the facilities.

SIDEWALKS

There are sidewalks located in a few neighborhoods within the study area. However, most of the sidewalks do not connect to each other. The most notable areas lacking sidewalks are the neighborhoods in the immediate vicinity around schools. Historically, sidewalks are included in neighborhoods at the developer's discretion.

The county has also sought funding and completed sidewalk projects at various locations within the study area as funding has materialized. For instance, the county is currently working to install sidewalks from US 98 to Tiger Point Park along Tiger Point Boulevard. One very notable county sidewalk project has been the popular East Bay Boulevard (CR 399) sidewalk. This large sidewalk currently extends from SR 87 to just past Edgewood Drive. The Santa Rosa County Commission recently approved extending the East Bay Boulevard sidewalk to US 98 and the project is programmed for Fiscal Year 2016.

EXISTING NATIONAL AND STATE TRAIL FACILITIES IN THE STUDY AREA

The Gulf Islands National Seashore Trail runs throughout the study area along US 98 and north along SR 87. It connects to the Florida National Scenic Trail. As part of the Florida Greenways and Trails System Plan, Gulf Islands National Seashore

Trail is intended to connect to the Blackwater River State Forest in the

northern end of the county and its many trails. The following links provide additional information:

- The **Florida National Scenic Trail** through the Gulf Islands National Seashore in our study area: www.fs.usda.gov/main/fnst/maps-publications
- The **National Trails System** which includes Gulf Island National Seashore in our study area: www.nps.gov/nts/maps/Nationalpercent20Trailspercent20map.pdf
- Graphic illustration of how the **National Seashore Trail** is intended to connect to Blackwater River State Park: www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/FGTS_Plan/PDF/FGTS_Plan_2013-17_publication.pdf (page 14)



Planned projects

US 98

US 98 is currently under construction. Eight-foot paved shoulders are being added from Gondolier Boulevard to the Navarre Beach Causeway. Plans indicate there will be a two-foot buffer and a six-foot paved bicycle lane. The buffer area is narrow enough that a bicyclist cannot confuse the buffer with a designated bicycle lane. The six-foot bicycle lane is wide enough for bicyclists to maneuver to avoid any debris that may collect at the edge of the paved shoulder. Audible/vibratory edge line marking on the painted stripe adjacent to the travel lane will also be included.

Shoulder widening is also scheduled from the Navarre Beach Causeway east on US 98. It is less than eight feet, but still offers a 1.6' (20") buffer with 5' of bike lane. FDOT will be reducing the travel lane to 11' wide to accommodate the buffer and shoulder. Audible edge marking is part of this project as well.

PENSACOLA BAY BRIDGE

The Pensacola Bay Bridge is programmed in the FDOT Five-Year Work Program to be replaced. The replacement bridge will include separated bicycle-pedestrian facilities on each side. The City of Gulf Breeze is coordinating with FDOT to tie the bicycle-pedestrian facilities into their existing and planned network.

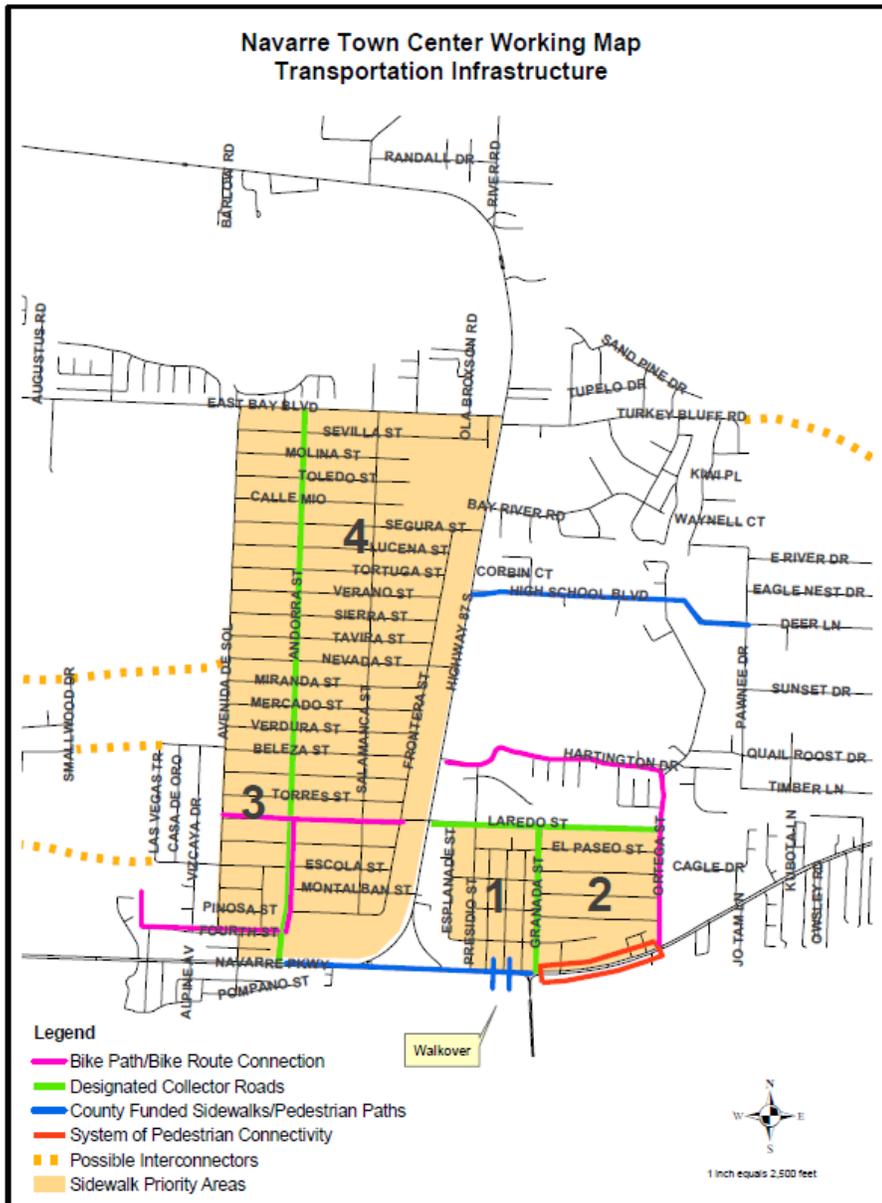
“By adding safer bike paths people might be more likely to run errands on their bikes. I would love to ride my bike up to the store, but there is no way I would ever ride a bike out on 98 - as it is right now.”

CITY OF GULF BREEZE BIKE/PED ROUTES

The City of Gulf Breeze has a recently adopted master plan that includes alternate bike/ped routes to US 98. All proposed projects adjacent to the City of Gulf Breeze will be coordinated with the city and their adopted master plan. Additionally, in the adopted project priorities for the Florida-Alabama Transportation Planning Organization (TPO), alternative routes on both sides of US 98 — consisting of approximately three miles of paved shoulders with signage for bicycles around the western end — in Gulf Breeze are the number nine and 10 bicycle and pedestrian priorities. The priorities were adopted September 10, 2014 and will be used by FDOT to develop their five-year work program.

NAVARRE PROJECTS

The Navarre Pedestrian Overpass is also in the FDOT Five-Year Work Program. The overpass will provide pedestrians a safe alternative to cross US 98 near the Navarre Visitors Center.



Santa Rosa County applied for a Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) grant to fund a feasibility study for a Navarre community access road parallel to US 98 from Edgewood Drive to Whispering Pines Boulevard east of SR 87. The PD&E study for this project is planned for years 2017 and 2018 in FDOT's FY 2016-2020 Work Program.

NAVARRE TOWN CENTER PLAN

The Navarre Town Center Plan was completed in October 2004. The plan recommended creating two districts in the Navarre area where stricter land use and development requirements would need to be met, including bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure along certain routes.

Analysis of proposed and planned projects

A list of more than 100 projects was developed through citizen participation. Three focus group meetings were held early in the plan development process in Gulf Breeze, Tiger Point, and

Navarre at various times. Each meeting began with

a presentation by the Santa Rosa County project manager explaining the purpose of the plan and the existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities throughout the study area. The participants were then asked to mark up maps of the study area that only showed a street layer and existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities. During this map marking exercise, participants were heavily engaged in the process of showing areas for improvement and in showing areas they commonly use to get around by bike or foot. The citizen-drawn maps, survey comments and social media posts (Appendix B), project Facebook page messages and emails received helped develop the list of Citizen-Generated Projects (see Citizen-Generated Projects Map and Final Ranking Table). The public exercises resulted in citizens identifying projects such as new bicycle routes connecting existing routes, more separated facilities on selected roads, more sidewalks in neighborhoods and more sidewalk connections, safer facilities on US 98, and a few rest stop accommodations on some of the longer routes among other projects.

PROJECT RANKING MATRIX

The Project Ranking Matrix was developed to score the citizen-generated projects (see Matrix on next page). This matrix was development for the most part on the citizen survey. This scoring enables a prioritization of projects with highest scoring projects making the cut and being mapped on the Highest Scoring Projects Map (see included map). Criterion 1.1 is related to how physically feasible the project is to implement. Santa Rosa County staff looked at land use and parcel information to determine any obstacles for every proposed project. Criterion 1.2 looks at whether or not the proposed project is located on the proposed loop identified in this plan. Since people identified separation from traffic as one of their highest priorities, Criterion 1.3 gives more points to projects that are located on higher volume roadways. Tier 2 Criteria are directly derived from the goals developed in Task 2 selected by more than 50 percent of survey respondents. Tier 2 Criteria are divided by transportation mode (bicycle or Pedestrian) as determined by the survey results. Projects that accommodate both modes such as multi use paths were scored using both sets of criteria.



*“Start with sidewalks in three-mile circles around each school.
Get the kids riding to and from school off the roads.”*

Pedestrian Facilities Criteria	Points Available	Points Awarded
Tier One – Feasibility and Overall Mobility/Recreation		
1.1 Project is physically feasible	50	
1.2 Project is on Identified loop or grid	50	
1.3 Traffic volume on street (high volume = 20 pts, medium volume = 10 pts, low volume = 0 pts)	20	
Tier Two - Project Provides Safer Bicycle or Pedestrian Facilities		
2.1 Project is a physically separated facility i.e. multi use path, trail or sidewalk	50	
2.2 Project provides connections between existing sidewalks/multi use paths/crossings	40	
2.3 Project provides linkages between neighborhoods and other generators such as the Navarre YMCA, tourism attractions, existing routes/facilities and schools	30	
2.4 Project provides improved street crossings	20	
2.5 Project helps complete a minimum grid	10	

Bicycle Facilities Criteria	Points Available	Points Awarded
Tier One – Feasibility and Overall Mobility/Recreation		
1.1 Project is physically feasible	50	
1.2 Project is on Identified loop or grid	50	
1.3 Traffic volume on street (high volume = 20 pts, medium volume = 10 pts, low volume = 0 pts)	20	
Tier Two - Project Provides Safer Bicycle or Pedestrian Facilities		
2.1 Project provides improved buffers between bicyclists and vehicles, i.e. separated facilities, paths, trails	50	
2.2 Project provides an alternate transportation choice to US 98	40	
2.3 Project provides connections between existing sidewalks/multi use paths/crossings	30	
2.4 Project provides connections between neighborhoods and other generators such as the Navarre YMCA, tourism attractions, existing routes/facilities and schools	20	
2.5 Project helps complete a minimum grid	10	

RESULTS

Santa Rosa County staff scored all projects relating to each criterion. The projects supporting the goals identified by the public scored the highest. A map of the highest scoring projects with a score of 200 points or more are in bold on the Table and can also be seen in the Highest Scoring Projects Map. The highest scoring projects should be looked at first when pursuing funding and implementation opportunities.

“I think tourists would be attracted to a more eco-friendly place with bicycle riding, walking paths, etc. and this would also be a boon to the health of our people and our environment.”

TASK FOUR: BICYCLE LOOP OR CORRIDOR IDENTIFICATION

US 98 corridor and associated traffic and safety issues

Given the geography of the south Santa Rosa County area, US 98 is the main corridor of traffic for everyone traveling within and through the area. Additionally, some of the region's biggest attractions are located just outside of the study area. US 98 through the city of Gulf Breeze and across the Pensacola Bay Bridge connects right to the heart of downtown Pensacola. Traveling south from Gulf Breeze across the Bob Sikes Bridge one will arrive at Pensacola Beach and its many restaurants, shops, and world famous beaches. A major employment center for the region, Hurlburt Field Air Force installation is located only six miles into Okaloosa County along US 98 to the east of the study area. Crash data for vehicle crashes involving bicycles or pedestrians was collected for the study area to better understand the associated traffic and safety issues. Crash data was collected from January 1, 2006 through October 30, 2014 from Signal Four Analytics developed by the GeoPlan Center at the University of Florida funded by the state of Florida through the Traffic Records Coordinating Committee. As expected, most crashes occurred along US 98 compared to the local neighborhood roads. Clusters can also be seen along US 98 near the intersections of College Parkway, SR 87 and the Navarre Beach Causeway. A GIS map of all the vehicle crashes involving bicycles or pedestrians can be seen on the map below. There were a total of 110 crashes with 18 resulting in fatalities.

South Santa Rosa County Vehicle Crashes Involving Bicycles or Pedestrians
January 1, 2006 - October 30, 2014





EAST BAY BOULEVARD MULTI-USE TRAIL

Throughout the development of this plan, the public reported several times that the East Bay Blvd. (CR 399) multi-use trail was not being used by road cyclists because of the dangers with other users of the facilities plus all the driveway and roadway cuts. The crash data along this roadway was filtered to determine the factors behind the seven reported crashes in the dataset from January 1, 2006 to October 30, 2014. There was one accident at a trail intersection when a car

pulled onto CR 399 and struck a bicyclist; there were three accidents in which cyclists were on the road - not the trail - and were hit by cars; two crashes in which bicyclists were struck crossing the road to access the trail; and one crash in which a pedestrian was hit by an object. The crash data evidence shows that the multi-use trail is not removing cyclists from the road like other multi-use trails have been proven to accomplish. It is important to note trail design and context settings play a major role on how the trail be utilized by the public.

During the first set of focus group meetings, the crash data was presented to each group. This led to lengthy collaborative discussions related to safety. The focus groups discussed topics such as rules of the road for pedestrians, bicyclists and drivers: understandable and noticeable road markings and signage: and educating the public on all aspects of road safety. There was a definite consensus that safety needed to be a top priority within the study area. The focus groups made their recommendations (Citizen-Generated Projects Map) based on the crash data along with their own safety concerns they have individually have noticed.

Analyses of alternatives based on identified goals and objectives

Two additional maps were created from the Citizen-Generated Projects Map - the Highest Scoring Projects Map and the Recreational Loops A and B Map. As discussed in the previous section, to determine which projects would have the most positive impact, they were scored based on the Project Ranking Matrix. The Project Ranking Matrix scored every citizen-generated project for feasibility and in relation to the survey results. Additionally a map of the highest scoring projects (those scoring 200 points or more) was created (Highest Scoring Projects Map), as well as a map of the proposed bicycle loops (Recreational Loops A and B Map).

HIGHEST SCORING PROJECTS MAP

The Highest Scoring Projects Map was created by ranking each citizen-generated project based on the criteria developed through the survey results. Bicycle and pedestrian improvements along the entire stretch of US 98 ranked high and are currently underway. Many east-west roads, including Water St., Manatee St., Sandstone St., Leisure St., Montalban St. and Hartington Dr. - all within the Navarre Community Access Road Study Area scored high - showing the importance of the study. The Sound Loop through the Tiger Point area provides linkages for surrounding neighborhoods on the south side of US 98. In fact, the area from Gulf Breeze city limits to Oak Dr. has the greatest potential as an alternate route to US 98 for pedestrians and cyclists. Improvements along Hickory Shores Blvd. continue the linkages on the north side for an alternate route extending westward. Edgewood Dr. provides one of the best north-south routes connecting US 98 to East Bay Blvd. Sunrise Dr./Valley Rd./PGA Blvd. is another north-south route for the west Navarre area. Sidewalks near schools also scored high providing needed safety improvements for users.

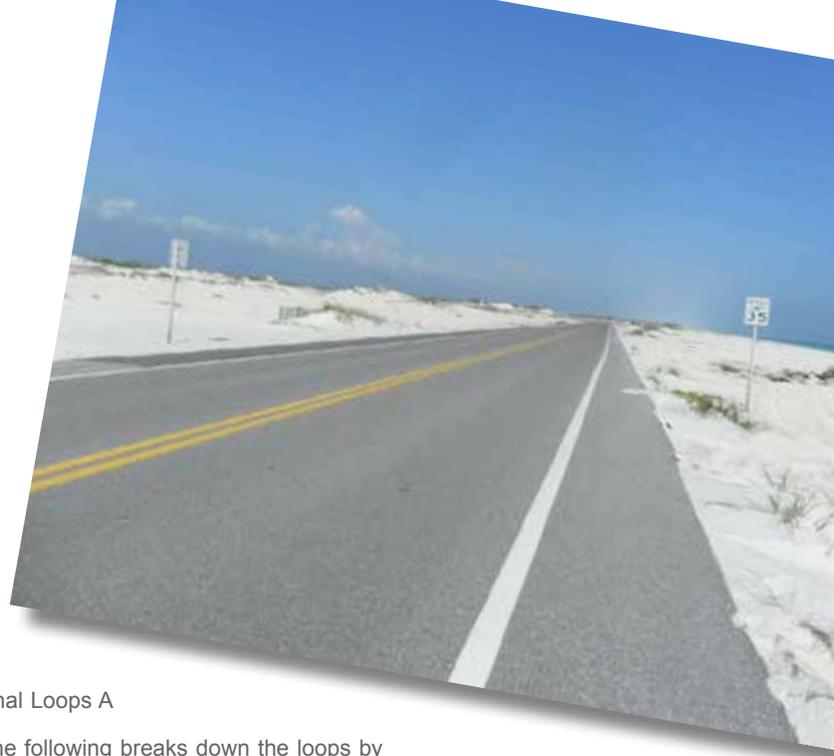
RECREATIONAL LOOPS A AND B MAP

Two loops were identified based on the citizen-generated projects, existing facilities, and connecting the missing links. Both loops use the Navarre Beach Causeway/Gulf Blvd. along the beach all the way west to Pensacola Beach, turn north across the Bob Sikes Bridge and west along the Gulf Islands National Seashore Naval Live Oaks multi-use trail. The loops turn go south through the Villa Venyce neighborhood the east on Bay St. and north on Bayview Ln. to the Sound Loop in Tiger Point. The Sound Loop continues east onto Soundside Dr. until Woodlawn Beach Rd.. Segments such as Soundside Dr., which were not identified by the focus groups, was identified by county staff and reaffirmed at the second round of public meetings to be included in the proposed recreational loops. The loops would need to use US 98 for a short distance to access the planned multi-use path on East Bay Blvd.. The intersections of US 98 with Woodlawn Beach Rd. and East Bay Blvd. need further study to determine the safest way for pedestrians and bicyclists to cross US 98. The loops utilize the planned extension of the East Bay Blvd. multi-use path to Edgewood Dr. where the loops separate. Loop A continues on East Bay Blvd. to Andorra St. Even though SR 87 has designated bicycle lanes, the public expressed safety concerns for pedestrians and bicyclists on high volume, high speed roadways. Loop B will utilize the proposed Navarre Community Access Road. Because it is only in the Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) phase, the exact route location has not been determined and is indicated on the map as a large blue shaded area.

Both loops join together again on Andorra St. which connects to Frontera St. behind Publix. The loops turn east on Laredo St. and cross SR 87. The loops turn south along Alahambra St. or Granada St., depending on which direction one is traveling, on the loops to cross US 98 to access the Navarre Beach Causeway.

The segments of the loops that intersect US 98 and SR 87 will need safety improvements to alert motorists of bicyclists and pedestrians in these areas as well as crossing improvements to allow bicyclists and pedestrians to safely cross these major roadways. The Tiger Point-Soundside Dr. Connection improvement is also needed for the loops. All of the neighborhood streets will require unique approaches for their individual needs because of right-of-way and drainage needs. However, the final design and signage should be consistent throughout.

Preliminary feasibility analysis of recreational loops A and B



A preliminary feasibility analysis of Recreational Loops A and B was completed as part of this plan. The following breaks down the loops by segments beginning at Soundside Park at the intersection of Navarre Beach Causeway and Gulf Blvd. There is a large parking lot located in the area, along with a convenience store, restaurants and the Navarre Beach Pier.

SEGMENT 1 - GULF BOULEVARD

- Santa Rosa County and Navarre Beach are home to Gulf Islands National Seashore, with miles of undeveloped beaches and dunes. Only 10 coastal areas in the country have received this special recognition and protection. For eight pristine miles, the beaches of Gulf Islands National Seashore remain untouched by development. It is home to towering dunes, nesting sea turtles, migratory birds and other wildlife, the park provides an opportunity to see the Florida coast at its best.
- Existing multi-use trail from Soundside Park to the Gulf Islands National Seashore Entrance. Cyclists have identified the need for on-street bicycle lanes.
- Existing wide shoulders through the Gulf Islands National Seashore. Maintenance of shoulders and possible maintenance on the road itself (tractor marks) is needed. Study signage and road marking alternatives to increase safety. This segment is identified as a Florida National Scenic Trail corridor or route.

SEGMENT 2 - ESCAMBIA COUNTY/SANTA ROSA ISLAND AUTHORITY

- Loop continues through Pensacola Beach, riders have the option of extending the ride through the Gulf Island National Seashore/Fort Pickens State Park. This segment is identified as a Florida National Scenic Trail corridor or route.
- Loop takes Pensacola Beach Blvd. across the Bob Sikes Bridge to Gulf Breeze.

SEGMENT 3 - NAVAL LIVE OAKS NATURE PRESERVE

- Existing multi-use trail through Gulf Breeze to Gondolier Blvd. that connects the loop to the Naval Live Oaks National Park and its trail systems, historical features and Soundside Beach area.

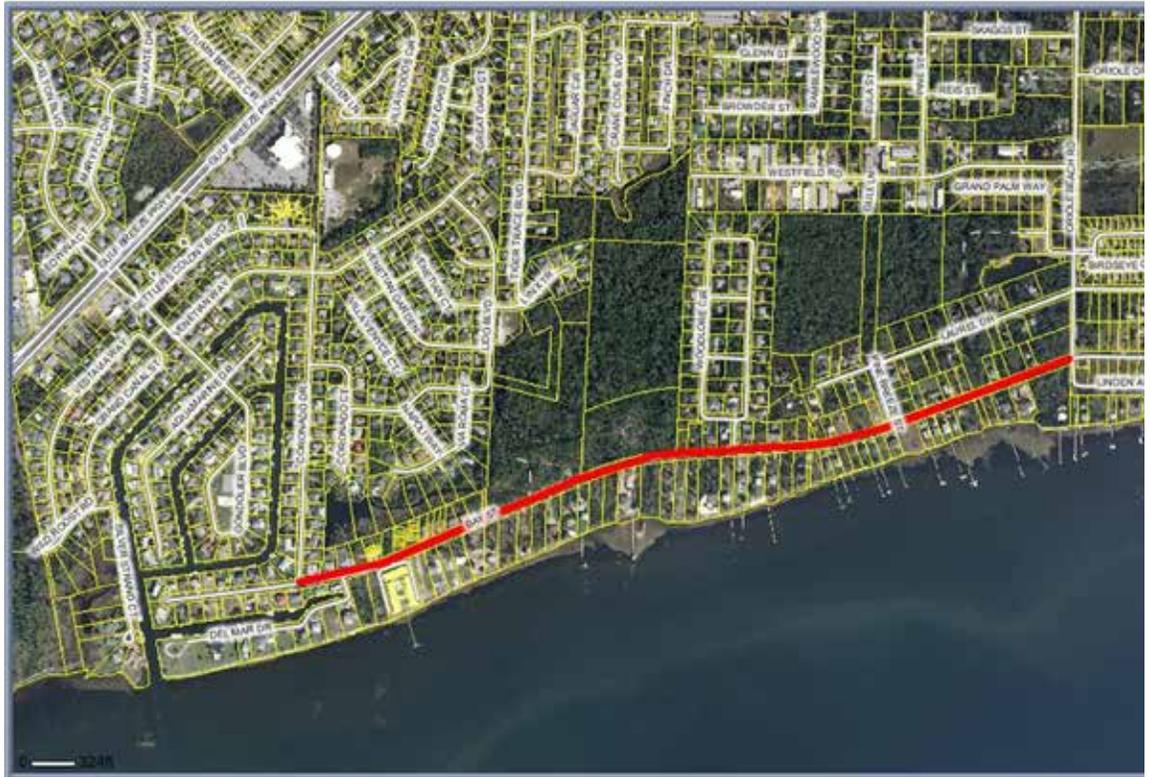
SEGMENT 4 - GONDOLIER BOULEVARD/VENETIAN WAY/CORONADO DRIVE

- Unimproved neighborhood streets.
- Recommended Project: sharrows

SEGMENT 5 – CR 191A (BAY STREET)

- Recommended Project: Possible consideration of revised design with buffered green lane to accommodate bicycles and pedestrians.
- Preliminary engineering study has been done for wide shoulders:

Bay Street Paved Shoulders (from Coronado Street to Oriole Beach Road)



- Recommended Project: 5 ft. wide paved bicycle lanes on both sides of Bay St. (6,800 LF).

Bay Street Paved Shoulders (Oriole Beach Road to Circle Lane)



- Project Description: 5 ft. wide paved bicycle lanes on both sides of Bay St. (6,750 LF).
- Estimated Project Cost: \$1,032,664.

SEGMENT 6 - LAUREL DRIVE/CIRCLE DRIVE/BAYVIEW LANE/SANTA ROSA DRIVE

- Recommended Project: Sharrows.

SEGMENT 7 – TIBET DRIVE/TIGER POINT BOULEVARD/MADURA ROAD

- Recommended Project: Sharrows.

SEGMENT 8 – SOUNDSIDE DRIVE

- 66 ft. ROW
- Existing partial wide shoulder on north side of road
- Recommended Project: Continuance of wide shoulder on north side of the road. Study feasibility of both sides.
- Godwin Connector – April Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grant application. Feasibility study underway.

SEGMENT 9 – WOODLAWN BEACH ROAD

- Recommended Project: Safe Routes to School grant application for bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

SEGMENT 10 – US 98

- Buffered bicycle lane with audible markers are planned to be implemented in the planned 8 ft. shoulders.
- Recommended Project: Intersection improvements for Woodlawn Beach Rd. and East Bay Blvd.

SEGMENT 11 – CR 399 - EAST BAY BOULEVARD

- Multi-use path on the north side of road with many road and driveway cuts.
- Recommended Project: Complete missing link across bridge. Study underway for full cost estimate.
- Recommended Project: Bicycle lanes with buffer. Existing road ROW is 100 feet.

SEGMENT 12 – LOOP B EDGEWOOD DRIVE

- Recommended Project: Alternatives such as buffered lanes or multi-use path.

SEGMENT 13 – LOOP B COMMUNITY ACCESS ROAD

- Feasibility study is programmed for fiscal year 2016.
- Recommended Project: Ensuring multi-modal facility design - complete street.

SEGMENT 14 – ANDORRA STREET

- Recommended Project: Bicycle lanes and sidewalks. Identified as collector road in Navarre Town Center Plan.

SEGMENT 15 – FRONTERRA STREET

- Recommended Project: Bicycle lanes or sharrows.

SEGMENT 16 – LAREDO STREET

- Recommended Project: Bicycle lanes and sidewalks. Identified as collector road in Navarre Town Center Plan.

SEGMENT 17 – GRANADA STREET

- Recommended Project: Bicycle lanes and sidewalks. Identified as collector road in Navarre Town Center Plan.

SEGMENT 18 – NAVARRE BEACH CAUSEWAY

- Currently not multi-modal, new design would require this.

TASK FIVE: ADDITIONAL BICYCLE/ PEDESTRIAN STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The South Santa Rosa Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan has been undertaken to accomplish several broad objectives:

1. To encourage alternative transportation options by developing a viable network of connected facilities as an alternate to US 98;
2. To promote recreational and better health opportunities for all users including the various types of cyclists and pedestrians;
3. To promote economic development & tourism; and
4. To integrate bicycle and pedestrian master planning with land use planning and transportation planning.

STRATEGY 1: SIGNAGE

Proper signage is needed for every type of roadway, path and trail. The crash data along East Bay Boulevard indicates trail crossing markings may be needed for people crossing East Bay Boulevard to access the multi-use trail. Signs need to be simple and clear to communicate where bicyclists and pedestrians are expected to be traveling. For roadways where bicyclists are using the roadway and there is not enough lane width for a vehicle to pass with the required 3 feet of clearance from the bicyclist, a “Bikes May Use Full Lane” signs may be used to describe to drivers and bicyclists what they should expect.

The identified Recreational Loops A and B need to be marked with bicycle-friendly, community wayfinding signs. The loops should have distinctive signs showing people the alternative, more bicycle-friendly way to navigate without having to stay on US 98 or SR 87.

STRATEGY 2: ENSURE THAT THE LOOPS ACCOMMODATE ALL USERS

Based on research, we know that a one-size-fits-all approach might not be the right way to encourage more cycling. For instance, higher speed cyclists do not prefer multi-use trails or sidewalks and will instead remain on street riding with traffic. More cautious, slower speed, recreational riders will prefer multi-use trails and even sidewalks. For these users, conflicts with pedestrians, curb cuts or other obstacles are not as much of a hazard. Bicycle commuters on the other hand may prefer the shortest route and may use US 98 for that very reason.

From the public meetings and our survey we found that South Santa Rosa has a mix of bike facility users. Forty-one percent surveyed identified themselves as the “interested but concerned” level of bicycling comfort and experience. Even with 19 percent identifying themselves as “strong and fearless” only three percent of survey respondents are comfortable bicycling on higher traffic speed and volume roadways and 15 percent are comfortable with riding on the shoulder of a roadway. The other types of facilities bicyclists surveyed are comfortable with varied, including paths and trails, separated paths along roadways, sidewalks, bicycle lanes and on the road, on low traffic roadways. This variation is important to note, as people of different skill and experience levels prefer and feel comfortable with different types of facilities.



What are separated bike lanes?



What exactly is a “separated bike lane” or “protected bike lane?” In simple terms, it’s like a sidewalk for bikes, with planters, curbs, parked cars or posts separating bike and auto traffic on busy streets. Protected lanes are essential to building a full network of bike-friendly routes, making riding a bike a pleasant and practical way for people of all ages and athletic ability to make trips of a mile or two.

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)’s guide outlines planning considerations and design options for this innovative bicycle facility. It provides information on one and two-way facilities, outlines different options for providing separation, and highlights midblock design considerations including driveways, transit stops, accessibility, and loading zones. Intersection design is also taken into consideration, including the related operations, signalization, signage, and on-road marking concerns.

The guide’s chapter on determining the best physical locations for separated bike paths will be of significance for planning in south Santa Rosa County and include the following sections:

- Identifying a Successful Location
- Consider: Users of Separated Bike Lanes
- Consider: Connections with Separated Bike Lanes
- Consider: Context of Separated Bike Lanes
- Opportunities for Separated Bike Lane Installation

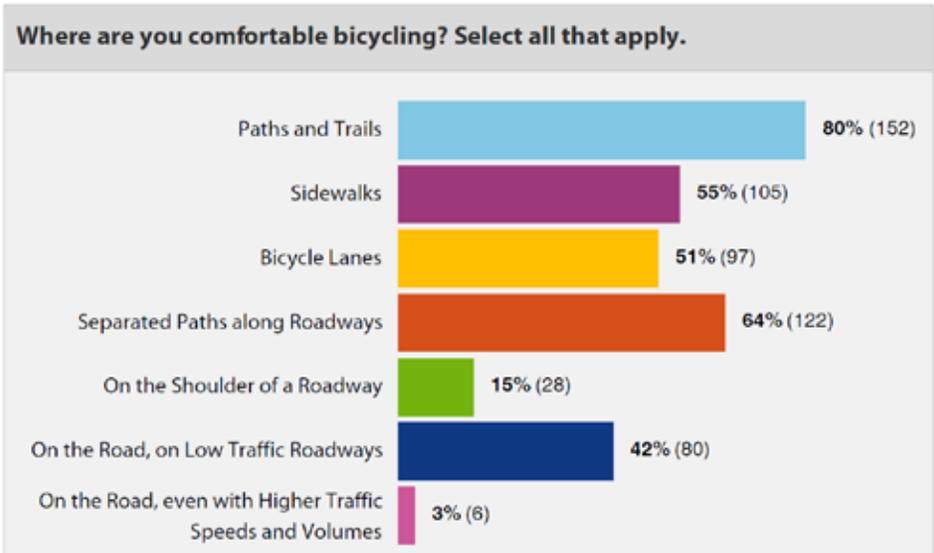
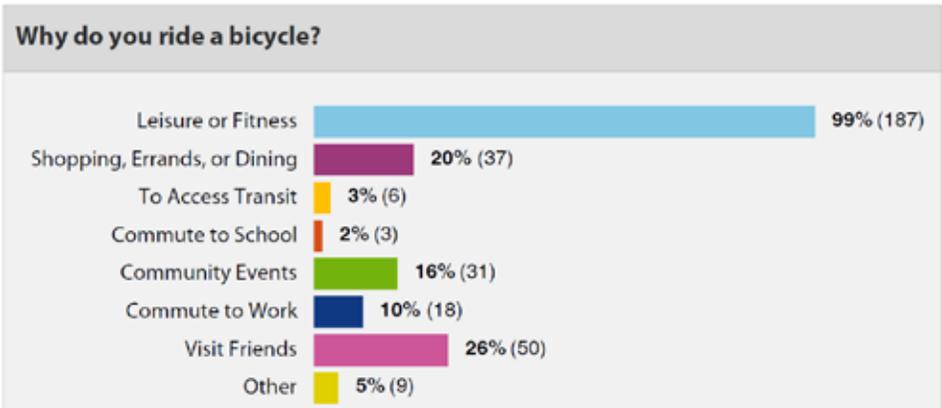
For more information, see the FHWA’s Separated Bike Lane Planning and Design Guide:

www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/publications/separated_bikelane_pdg/separatedbikelane_pdg.pdf





The recommended projects in the previous section demonstrate how this can be accomplished on the Recreational Loops A and B by identifying where sharrows, bicycle lanes, and multi-use paths are most appropriate. The surveys indicate a preference for physical separation between vehicles and all other users. The surveys also indicated a preference for signage and markings for sharrows when there are constraints not allowing for a separate facility.



STRATEGY 3: MAINTENANCE

Maintenance is very important for bicycle and pedestrian paths. A small piece of debris on a sidewalk or bicycle lane can cause people to swerve out of the way and potentially into a vehicular travel lane. Being a coastal community, sand is also an issue, especially along the beach on Gulf Boulevard and Gulf Islands National Seashore and Naval Live Oaks.

STRATEGY 4: BICYCLE COUNTERS

Bicycle counters can determine how many bicyclists are using the facilities each day and prove the need for the facilities.

STRATEGY 5: MARKETING FOR TOURISM AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Bike-friendly towns, separated paths, and scenic bike loops and/or grids aren't just good for residents – they also attract tourists, who are an important part of south Santa Rosa's local economy. Residents and visitors appreciate the opportunity to tour the Gulf Islands National Seashore at a leisurely stroll or from the seat of a bicycle – rather than through the window of a car. Streets and roads where it feels comfortable to ride a bike are good for residents, visitors, the quality of life and the economy. Santa Rosa County will need to promote the completed recreational loop, the types of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and existing recreational facilities and tourism attractions. A bicycle route map or web-based routes could be developed to direct users to facilities, show what facilities are available, and how routes connect to points of interest.

STRATEGY 6: LINKING THE BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN MASTER PLAN TO THE COUNTY'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE

Through the integration of this plan into the county's Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code, the county can ensure that future developments and future road projects are consistent with and further the goals and objectives contained herein.

Chapter 163.3177, F.S. each local government's transportation element must address traffic circulation, including the types, locations, and extent of existing and proposed major thoroughfares and transportation routes, including bicycle and pedestrian ways. Additionally, Section 163.3177(b)2a, F.S. requires that the County's Comprehensive Plan address all modes of travel including bicycle and pedestrian travel. The South Santa Rosa Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan establishes base line data and project priorities based on citizen input. This plan will serve as support documentation to county's Comprehensive Plan Capital Improvements Program and policies related to bicycle and pedestrian facilities within the southern portion of the county.

This plan also may be integrated into the county's Land Development Code so that, as land development projects come online in the future they can be reviewed for consistency and furtherance of this plan. Land Development Code requirements can be implemented which require connectivity to the bicycle and pedestrian facilities identified in the plan mitigation for impacts to roadways designated for bicycle and pedestrian uses.

STRATEGY 7: EDUCATION AND SAFETY PROGRAMS

Education will play a vital role during the implementation of this plan. While the design of every facility should be intuitive, a learning curve is to be expected for all users to understand how and where to navigate properly. Programs and campaigns for educating drivers, pedestrians and cyclists alike should be investigated.

STRATEGY 8: STATE AND FEDERAL ALIGNMENT

The recreational loops contained herein have been designed to implement state and federal trail priorities in the South End of the County, making connections, superseding and completing these trail systems. The mission of the Florida Greenways and Trails System is to create a network of greenways and trails throughout Florida, connecting one end of the state to the other, from Key West to Pensacola. The Florida National Scenic Trail begins on the edge of the everglades ecosystem in Big Cypress National Preserve. Over a thousand miles farther north, its end point lies in the white sands of Gulf Islands National Seashore at historic Fort Pickens. The Florida Trail is one of 11 National Scenic Trails and offers many experiences that hikers cannot have on any other trail in the world. The County should work with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the National Seashore, and the USDA Forest Service to merge the South Santa Rosa Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan with these state and federal trail systems.

TASK SIX: FUNDING SOURCES

Federal Funding Sources

Bicycle and pedestrian projects are broadly eligible for funding from almost all the major federal-aid highway, transit, safety, and other programs. Specific program requirements must be met, and eligibility must be determined, on a case-by-case basis. For example: transit funds must provide access to transit; Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) must benefit air quality; Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) projects must be consistent with the State Strategic Highway Safety Plan and address a highway safety problem; NHPP must benefit National Highway System (NHS) corridors; Recreation Trails Program (RTP) must benefit trails; the Federal Lands and Tribal Transportation Programs (FLTTP) must provide access to or within federal or tribal lands.

Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) was signed into law July 6, 2012. MAP-21 authorizes the federal surface transportation programs for highways, highway safety, and transit. It replaces SAFTEA-LU, its legislative predecessor. MAP-21 authorized the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), which replaced the funding from pre-MAP-21 programs including the Transportation Enhancement Activities, Recreational Trails Program, and Safe Routes to School Program (SRTS). The Florida-Alabama Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) has requested local governments submit bicycle and pedestrian projects for their Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) applications. Applicants for TAP projects must be Local Agency Program (LAP) certified, in the process of becoming LAP certified or have a sponsor that is LAP certified. The Recreational Trails Program and Safe Routes to School Program projects are included in the TAP as set aside programs.

The county will monitor developments regarding the next surface transportation authorization bill to confirm continuations of many of these programs and potential new funding sources for bicycle and pedestrian projects.

FEDERAL-AID HIGHWAY PROGRAM

National Highway System funds may be used to construct bicycle transportation facilities and pedestrian walkways on land adjacent to any highway on the National Highway System, including Interstate highways.

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM (STP) funds may be used for the construction of bicycle transportation facilities and pedestrian walkways, as well as many other related facilities (bicycle parking, bike-transit interface, etc.). Other non-construction projects related to safe bicycle use and walking such as maps, brochures, and public service announcements are eligible for STP funds. Modifications of public sidewalks to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act are also covered.

HIGHWAY BRIDGE REPLACEMENT AND REHABILITATION (HBRRP) funds are available for pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities on highway bridges. If a highway bridge deck is replaced or rehabilitated, and bicycles are permitted at each end, then the bridge project must include safe bicycle accommodations (within reasonable cost).

The TAP combines what were previously the Transportation Enhancement, Recreational Trails, and Safe Routes to Schools

programs into one larger program. The TAP provides funding for projects that further develop transportation infrastructure for non-auto modes of transportation, including on-and-off road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, bicycle/pedestrian connections to transit facilities, community improvement activities, environmental mitigation activities, recreational trail program projects, safe routes to school projects, and various other projects. The Florida-Alabama TPO is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Pensacola urbanized area which is responsible for carrying out a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process. The TPO approves the prioritization criteria and final ranking of all TAP projects, based on such factors as connectivity, safety, and destination intensity.

RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM funds may be used for all kinds of trail projects. Examples of trail uses include hiking, bicycling, in-line skating, equestrian use, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, off-road motorcycling, all-terrain vehicle riding, four-wheel driving, or using other off-road motorized vehicles.

THE CONGESTION MITIGATION AND AIR QUALITY (CMAQ) IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM, established in 1991 and reauthorized by MAP-21, is intended to realign the focus of transportation planning toward a more inclusive, environmentally-sensitive, and multi-modal approach to addressing transportation problems.

FEDERAL LANDS HIGHWAY PROGRAM (FLHP) funds may be used to construct roads and trails within or adjacent to (or, in some cases, providing access to) federal lands. FLHP funds, which are discretionary, generally total about \$550 million per year. Recreation interests often benefit from FLHP funds.

FEDERAL TRANSIT PROGRAM

Job Access and Reverse Commute Grants are available to support projects, including bicycle related services, designed to transport welfare recipients and eligible low-income individuals to and from employment.

Title 49 USC allows the Urbanized Area Formula Grants, Capital Investment Grants and Loans, and Formula Program for Other Than Urbanized Area transit funds to be used for improving bicycle and pedestrian access to transit facilities and vehicles. Eligible activities include investments in “pedestrian and bicycle access to a mass transportation facility” that establishes or enhances coordination between mass transportation and other transportation.

Mobility Management is an eligible expense under most FTA grant programs. Mobility Management provides technical assistance, develops planning methods and conducts outreach, research, demonstration, and project evaluations that assist local communities in improving regional transportation mobility.

HIGHWAY SAFETY PROGRAMS

Pedestrian and bicyclist safety remain priority areas for State and Community Highway Safety Grants funded by the Federal Section 402 formula grant program. A state is eligible for these grants by submitting a Performance Plan (establishing goals and performance measures for improving highway safety) and a Highway Safety Plan (describing activities to achieve those goals). Research, development, demonstrations, and training to improve highway safety (including bicycle and pedestrian safety) are carried out under the Highway Safety Research and Development (Section 403) Program.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROGRAM (SRTS)

MAP-21 did not provide specific funding for SRTS, but SRTS projects are eligible for TAP funds and for Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds. TAP provisions and requirements apply to projects using TAP funds. The Safe Routes to School

Program is designed to enable and encourage children to walk and bicycle to school, and to “facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of schools.” Safe Routes to school projects include on-street bicycle facilities, off-street bicycle facilities, and secure bicycle parking facilities.

Other Federal Funding

TIGER DISCRETIONARY GRANTS

The TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) discretionary grants are currently in their 7th round of funding. TIGER grants fund capital investments in surface transportation infrastructure and are awarded on a competitive basis to projects that have a significant impact on the nation, a region, or metropolitan area. The grant program focuses on capital projects that generate economic development and improve access to reliable, safe and affordable transportation for disconnected both urban and rural, while emphasizing improved connection to employment, education, services and other opportunities, workforce development, or community revitalization. Funds are available for projects in urban areas costing between \$10 million and \$200 million with a 20percent local match requirement.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND (LWCF) GRANTS

National Park Service Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grants: This federal funding source was established in 1965 to provide “close-to-home” parks and recreation opportunities to residents throughout the United States. Money for the fund comes from the sale or lease of nonrenewable resources, primarily federal offshore oil and gas leases, and surplus federal land sales. LWCF grants can be used by communities to build a variety of parks and recreation facilities, including trails and greenways. LWCF funds are distributed by the National Park Service to the states annually. Communities must match LWCF grants with 50 percent of the local project costs through in-kind services or cash. All projects funded by LWCF grants must be used exclusively for recreation purposes, in perpetuity. Projects must be in accordance with each state’s Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.

COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION GRANT PROGRAM

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Community Transformation Grant Program, funded by the Affordable Care Act’s Prevention and Public Health Fund, helps communities design and carry out local programs that prevent chronic diseases such as cancer, diabetes, and heart disease. The program supports community-level efforts to reduce chronic disease. All awardees are working to improve the health of the nation with strategies that focus on tobacco-free living, active living and healthy eating, and clinical and community preventive services to prevent and control high blood pressure and high cholesterol.

FLORIDA DIVISION OF FORESTRY (URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY GRANT PROGRAM)

As part of the federal government’s Urban and Community Forestry Matching Grant Program, funds will be available to organizations to develop or enhance their urban and community forestry programs. Awards are made as 50-50 matching grants (50 percent federal, 50 percent applicant) to local governments, educational institutions, Native-American tribal governments, and legally organized nonprofit (volunteer) organizations.

www.fl-dof.com/forest_management/cfa_urban_grants.html

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Mission: The mission of the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program (RTCA) is to assist community-led natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation initiatives. RTCA staff provides guidance to communities so they can conserve waterways, preserve open space, and develop trails and greenways.

The project applicant may be a state or local agency, tribe, non-profit organization, or citizens' group. RTCA does not provide financial assistance to support project implementation. Applicants should discuss their project with RTCA staff before applying for assistance. It can be helpful to schedule an advance field visit with staff to best understand how RTCA can be of assistance. Applications are due by August 1st for assistance beginning the following fiscal year (October 1st through September 30th).

www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/apply.htm

State Funding Sources

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

The Florida Coastal Management Program is based on a network of agencies implementing 24 statutes that protect and enhance the state's natural, cultural and economic coastal resources. The goal of the program is to coordinate local, state and federal agency activities using existing laws to ensure that Florida's coast is as valuable to future generations as it is today. Florida's Department of Environmental Protection is responsible for directing the implementation of the state-wide coastal management program.

www.dep.state.fl.us/cmp

Private Funding Sources

Private funding sources can be extremely beneficial to public projects. These funds can leverage federal and state dollars by providing necessary local match contributions creating what is known as public-private partnerships. They also build community involvement and buy in to the project. Private funding opportunities are constantly changing as businesses and organizations change and grow.

PEOPLEFORBIKES

"The PeopleForBikes Community Grant Program provides funding for important and influential projects that leverage federal funding and build momentum for bicycling in communities across the U.S." Most of the PeopleForBikes grants awarded to government agencies are for trail projects. The program encourages government agencies to team with a local bicycle advocacy group for the application. PeopleForBikes seeks to assist local organizations, agencies, and citizens in developing bicycle facilities projects that will be funded by MAP-21 or its subsequent programs. PeopleForBikes will accept applications for grants of up to \$10,000 each (with potential local matches), and will consider successor grants for continuing projects. Grant applications are accepted twice per year.

www.peopleforbikes.org/pages/community-grants

AMERICORPS' NATIONAL CIVILIAN COMMUNITY CORPS (NCCC)

The AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps is a full-time residential program for men and women, ages 18-24, that strengthens communities while developing leaders through direct, team based national and community service." Local

governments can apply to host an NCCC team. One project that NCCC members work on is the building or improving of trails. Teams have cleared trees and brush, leveled trails to comply with federal guidelines on Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access, implemented erosion control techniques, and created and updated signs. These trails are located in rural, urban, and national parks from California to Maine, and are used by tens of thousands of Americans each year.

www.americorps.gov/for_organizations/apply/nccc.asp

FISH AMERICA FOUNDATION

Fish America Foundation provides funding to public and private organizations for projects that enhance or conserve water and fisheries resources, including community efforts. In the last 18 years, the Foundation has provided over 900 grants totaling more than \$10.6 million to improve the fisheries resource in all 50 states and Canada. The Foundation grant system includes several changing grant categories, each with different application cycles and some of which can include greenways that enhance or conserve water resources.

www.fishamerica.org/grants

AMERICAN HIKING SOCIETY NATIONAL TRAILS FUND

The American Hiking Society's National Trails Fund is the only privately funded national grants program dedicated solely to hiking trails. National Trails Fund grants have been used for land acquisition, constituency building campaigns and traditional trail work projects. Since the late 1990s, the American Hiking Society has granted over \$588,000 to organizations across the US.

www.americanhiking.org/NTF.aspx

THE GLOBAL RELEAF PROGRAM

The Global ReLeaf Forest Program is American Forests' education and action program that helps individuals, organizations, agencies, and corporations improve the local and global environment by planting and caring for trees. The program provides funding for planting tree seedlings on public lands, including trailsides. Emphasis is placed on diversifying species, regenerating the optimal ecosystem for the site and implementing the best forest management practices. This grant is for planting tree seedlings on public lands, including along trail rights-of-way.

www.americanforests.org/our-programs/global-releaf-projects

CONSERVATION ALLIANCE

The Conservation Alliance is a group of outdoor businesses that supports efforts to protect specific wild places for their habitat and recreation values. Before applying for funding, an organization must first be nominated by a member company. Members nominate organizations by completing and submitting a nomination form. Each nominated organization is then sent a request for proposal (RFP) instructing them how to submit a full request. Proposals from organizations that are not first nominated will not be accepted. The Conservation Alliance conducts two funding cycles annually. Grant requests should not exceed \$35,000 annually. Deadlines for those cycles are:

- Summer Cycle: Nominations due May 1
 Proposals due June 1
 Grants announced early October
- Winter Cycle: Nominations due November 1
 Proposals due December 1
 Grants announced early April

www.conservationalliance.com

THE ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation seeks to improve the health and health care of all Americans. One of the primary goals of the Foundation is to “promote healthy communities and lifestyles.” Calls for grant proposals are issued as developed, and multiple communities nationwide have received grants related to promotion of trails and other non-motorized facilities.

www.rwjf.org/grants

GANNETT FOUNDATION

The Gannett Foundation is a corporate foundation sponsored by Gannett Co., Inc. Through its Community Grant Program, Gannett Foundation supports non-profit activities in the communities in which Gannett does business. Through its other programs, the Foundation invests in the future of the media industry, encourages employee giving, reacts to natural and other disasters, and contributes to a variety of charitable causes.

www.gannettfoundation.org

THE WALMART FOUNDATION'S STATE GIVING PROGRAM

The Walmart Foundation's State Giving Program plays an essential role in the Foundation's mission to create opportunities so people can live better. The Program provides grants to 501(c)(3) organizations, ranging from \$25,000 to \$250,000. The Community Engagement Giving grant cycles funding for programs focused on the unmet needs of underserved low-income populations, can apply in cycles 3 and 4 only. Examples of programs in Community Engagement Giving: education, health care access and other human services programs.

foundation.walmart.com/apply-for-grants/state-giving

THE ALLIANCE FOR BIKING AND WALKING

The Alliance for Biking and Walking creates, strengthens, and unites state and local bicycling and walking advocacy organizations. The Alliance along with Advocacy Advance (partnership with League of American Cyclists) offer Rapid Response Grants to advocacy organizations. Rapid Response Grants enable state and local bicycle and pedestrian advocacy organizations to win, increase, and preserve public funding in their communities. The Advocacy Advance team provides necessary resources, technical assistance, coaching, and training to supplement the grants.

www.bikewalkalliance.org/what-we-do/grants-a-scholarships

Local Funding Sources

It is important to mention that while grants and private funding is available, in most cases, the county must have adequate staffing levels and matching funds or the ability to match with in kind services. Sometimes, grants cannot be leveraged due to limits associated with staffing the actual projects or providing a cash or in-kind services match.

Currently Santa Rosa County utilizes six cents per gallon, which is half of its available 12 cents per gallon local option gas tax. This gas tax helps fund local roadway projects throughout the county. A local option sales tax could also be used to fund infrastructure projects. Both of these local option taxes would have to be approved by the residents of the county by vote.

Santa Rosa County is no longer eligible for FDOT's Small County Outreach Program because of the increase in population based on the 2010 Census. This program only required a 25 percent local match. Impact fees are another source of revenue



for transportation projects. Impact fees are paid by developers to add sidewalks and capacity improvements required because of new development to an area. However, the county has suspended impact fees since 2009.

Some local governments have implemented a “payment in lieu of sidewalk” requirement where developers that are required by code to construct sidewalks can make a payment for future sidewalk construction. The Land Development Code, in these communities basically allows for developers to pay a fee in lieu of building sidewalks when projects meet certain criteria. When this occurs the monies paid are set aside in a fund for future sidewalk construction in that neighborhood or planning area. In these communities, sidewalk construction is often prioritized by the sidewalk or bicycle-pedestrian master plan that is linked to the Capital Improvements Program and well-vetted through a public process. This enables developer contribution in a manner that targets fast growing planning areas as well as enables consistency with a prioritization or master planning program by not necessarily requiring the sidewalks to be built in the proposed development.

Another option to finance infrastructure improvements is to develop a Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA). CRAs are designated by a local county or city and directed by a board created by the city or county. A Community Redevelopment Plan then can be created to draft a plan of action to implement projects that are needed.



CONCLUSION

US 98 in South Santa Rosa County is the major east-west corridor for the area. It is characterized by high speeds and high volumes, making it dangerous for bicycling and walking to the many commercial destinations scattered along this corridor. The crash data shows 18 fatalities in the 110 crashes in less than eight years. From the abundant interest from the public throughout the development of this plan, it was clear to see that safety was a major concern. They clearly indicated they want to see more physical separation of vehicles from bicyclists and pedestrians, especially along US 98. With their assistance and knowledge of local roads, a recreational bicycle loop was identified along with over 100 projects for developing or improving new and existing routes. Local, state, federal, and private funding sources were also identified so the county can continue implementing the identified projects and recreational loop.