

# San Francisco Bay Trail Project

## Board of Directors

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October 27, 2023

Agenda Item 7.a.

### Bay Trail Equity Strategy and Bay Trail Gap Closure Implementation Plan

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#### Subject:

Report on the Bay Trail Equity Strategy and the Bay Trail Gap Closure Implementation Plan

#### Background:

##### The Bay Trail Equity Strategy

In 2019, under the leadership of then MTC Executive Director Therese McMillan, MTC/ABAG launched the [Equity Platform](#). The Equity Platform is a process and a practice to advance equity throughout all the agency's investments and policies to support historically underserved and systemically marginalized groups, including people with low incomes and communities of color. The [Bay Trail Equity Strategy](#) was created to operationalize the Equity Platform in The [Bay Trail](#) program. The Bay Trail Equity Strategy is a multi-phase effort to look at how to develop a Bay Trail that is accessible and welcoming to all people in the Bay Area.

At the October 27, 2022 Bay Trail Board of Directors meeting, Lily Brown, Associate Active Transportation Planner, presented Phase I. Phase I, a [History and Existing Conditions Study](#), was completed in January 2023. This study is intended to help Bay Trail decision-makers understand and address historic and present-day inequities and avoiding repeating the mistakes of the past. The study team reviewed historic literature, analyzed socio-demographic data, and interviewed community leaders and organizers.

Phase II is a partnership with Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition, San Francisco Bicycle Coalition with SF Parks Alliance, and Bike East Bay with BORP to host events to learn more about Equity Priority Communities' and those with marginalized identities experience of access and belonging at the Bay Trail. Phase II kicked-off in Spring of 2023 and will be completed by October 30, 2023. The Bicycle Coalition and CBO partners have hosted bike rides, fix-it clinics, walk and roll audits, pop-ups at community events, BBQs, listening sessions and distributed surveys to learn about people's experience with the Bay Trail and ideas on how to improve access and belonging. Each partner is submitting a report that summarizes their engagement activities, what they heard, their reactions to Phase I, and suggestions for Phase III.

##### The Bay Trail Gap Closure Implementation Plan

In July 2022, staff initiated the Bay Trail Gap Closure Implementation Plan with the consultant team, Alta Planning + Design. The intent of the project is to identify and evaluate existing missing segments of the San Francisco Bay Trail (i.e., trail gaps) to prioritize their design and construction. This effort builds upon the Bay Trail Project Gap Analysis Study which was last conducted in 2005 and is now outdated. The Bay Trail Gap Closure Implementation Plan is anticipated to be completed in a two-year timeframe by June 2024.

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At the October 27, 2022 Bay Trail Board of Directors meeting, Joel Shaffer, former Project Manager, presented on the Bay Trail Gap Closure Implementation Plan procurement process, a project overview, the engagement plan and the existing conditions data and document review.

On November 29, 2022, the project team convened a Working Group to provide a project overview, learn about implementing agencies barriers to closing gaps, and receive input on preferred prioritization criteria. There were 98 participants with representation from all 9 Bay Area Counties by staff from cities, counties, state, federal, transit, and advocacy organizations. After the convening we received 96 comments from members about Bay Trail alignment, connector trails, our prioritization methods and criteria and base map issues.

In the Spring and Summer of 2023, the project team worked with our seven Community Based Organization (CBO) partners to do community engagement. Nine (9) events were held throughout the region with over 200 participants. Two events were held in Spanish and Spanish translation was available at all events. The engagement events were held in many formats including bike rides, tabling at existing community events, zoom meetings, farm gatherings, dinners and picnics. Participants shared their experiences and desires on how to improve the Bay Trail through closing gaps and through increased maintenance, amenities, and programming.

During the Spring and Summer of 2023, the project team also worked on a Field Survey to identify segments of the Bay Trail that are misclassified, unbuilt, or otherwise unrideable gaps, or are substandard, per the [San Francisco Bay Trail Design Guidelines](#). The Field Survey included riding all built miles of the Bay Trail and collecting data via a custom app and photo imagery.

In 2023, the project team also developed the prioritization criteria and prioritized project list. The prioritization criteria were based on feedback from the Working Group members and the CBOs and community they engaged. The prioritization criteria are:

- Improved Access to Key Destinations and Demand
  - Access to Jobs & Housing (15%)
  - Access to Parks (15%)
  - Access to Transit Rich & Connected Communities (15%)
- Safety/Comfort
  - Collision Proximity (5%)
  - Gap Closure (25%)
- Equity (25%)

A map with results of the prioritization process can be accessed here:

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/47e62355599c4154b5edf44acee64f0a/>

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On September 26, 2023, the project team convened the Working Group again and shared project updates, including engagement summary, the field survey, and the prioritization methods and results. There were 71 participants with representation from all 9 Bay Area Counties.

In 2024 the project team will be working on updating the cost estimator tool and finalizing the plan document with completion expected by June 2024.

#### Issues:

None

#### Recommended Action:

Information

#### Attachments:

- A. Presentation Bay Trail Equity Strategy and Bay Trail Gap Closure Implementation Plan

#### Reviewed:



Andrew Freimer