



MARIN COUNTY BICYCLE COALITION

December 12, 2019

Jean Finney, District Deputy Director
Division of Transportation Planning and Local Assistance
California Department of Transportation, District 4
111 Grand Ave, Oakland, CA 94612

Re: Tiburon Boulevard / State Route 131 SHOPP Project

Dear Ms. Finney:

Marin County Bicycle Coalition (MCBC) understands that Caltrans will soon consider a project on Tiburon Boulevard / State Route 131 (EA: 04-1Q230) for programming in the 2020 SHOPP cycle. We would appreciate Caltrans' consideration of several needed bicycle safety improvements as part of this maintenance project.

Tiburon Boulevard / SR-131 serves as the primary route between Mill Valley and Tiburon / Belvedere and connects two of Marin's most popular multi-use pathways, the Mill Valley-Sausalito Pathway and Tiburon Old Rail Trail. The busy roadway and its interchange with US-101 are major barriers to bicycling due to high volume, high speed vehicular traffic and difficult intersections. Between 2006-18, there were 23 reported collisions involving people driving and bicycling on the corridor, nearly all of which occurred in the one-mile stretch between US-101 and Blackfield / Greenwood Cove Drive.¹

We realize the focus of this project is on pavement rehabilitation, curb ramp upgrades, and drainage improvements, but projects of this nature present the best opportunity to implement needed safety improvements in an efficient and cost-effective manner. In keeping with Caltrans' Deputy Directive 64-R2

¹ UC Berkeley SafeTREC Transportation Injury Mapping System / SWITRS Query & Map (Party Type: Driver, Victim Role: Bicyclist)

(Complete Streets) and the vision and goals outlined in *Toward an Active California*, we respectfully request the inclusion of the following improvements:

- 1) Protected bicycle lanes,
- 2) Bicycle improvements to the 131/101 interchange, and
- 3) A two-way protected bicycle/pedestrian facility on the south side of Tiburon Boulevard between E. Strawberry Drive and Greenwood Cove Drive.

Each of these improvements were identified as “Top Tier” projects for Marin County in the *Caltrans District 4 Bike Plan (2018)*.

1) SR-131 Protected Bike Lanes (*Caltrans District 4 Bike Plan ID: Mar-131-C02*)

According to the National Association of City Transportation Officials’ (NACTO) *Designing for All Ages & Abilities* guidelines, roadways like Tiburon Boulevard --with over 6,000 average daily traffic and posted speed limit over 25 MPH--require a protected bicycle lane in order to safely accommodate people of all ages and abilities.

SR-131’s shoulders should be improved to provide separation and physical protection between vehicle traffic and people on bikes using striping and quick-build elements (painted buffers, flexible posts, rumble strips, etc.). Travel lanes should be narrowed where feasible and appropriate to maximize width available for the buffer and bike lanes.

The right-of-way narrows considerably east of Blackie’s Pasture, which may make the improvements outlined above infeasible. MCBC’s highest priority is the stretch west of Blackie’s Pasture, where most collisions have occurred and parallel routes are limited.

2) SR-131 / US-101 Interchange Improvements (*Caltrans District 4 Bike Plan ID: Mar-101,131-X01*)

This interchange is a major barrier for even experienced bicyclists. Of particular concern are conflicts with vehicle traffic that occur at each of the freeway on-ramps, where people bicycling are exposed to high volumes of right-turning traffic.

In addition to installing protected bike lanes across the interchange, we request the installation of signage and dashed green bike lanes to alert all road users to

the presence of these conflict zones, as well as traffic calming elements that slow vehicles as they enter freeway on-ramps.

3) Two-Way Protected Bicycle/Pedestrian Facility on the South Side of SR-131 Between E. Strawberry Drive and Greenwood Cove Drive (Caltrans District 4 Bike Plan ID: Mar-131-C01)

This one-block stretch has long been identified as a priority because it is the only location between Strawberry and Tiburon in which people on foot and bike do not have a parallel alternative to Tiburon Boulevard. A two-way protected facility is needed along the south side of the roadway in order to accommodate people travelling in both directions.

In addition to being identified as a top tier project in the *Caltrans District 4 Bicycle Plan*, this connection was included in the *Marin County Unincorporated Area Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan* (2018) and was studied in the *Town of Tiburon Bay Trail Gap Study* (2012).

Conclusion

Each of the improvements outlined above will advance Caltrans' adopted goals around improving safety and increasing the number of trips made using active transportation.

The *Caltrans District 4 Bike Plan* notes that, as individual SHOPP projects are developed, "there are often opportunities to accomplish additional goals such as improving multimodal mobility and implementing complete streets" (57). We are hopeful that Caltrans will take advantage of this opportunity to implement these three *Caltrans District 4 Bicycle Plan* top tier projects using striping and quick-build strategies.

We appreciate your consideration of the improvements outlined above and would welcome regular project updates and opportunities to provide input.

Respectfully Submitted,



Bjorn Gripenburg
Policy & Planning Director
Marin County Bicycle Coalition

Cc:

Patrick Barnes, Director of Public Works, Town of Tiburon

Peter Bowman, District 3 Representative, County of Marin Bicycle Advisory Group

Town Councilmembers, Town of Tiburon

Dan Dawson, Principal Transportation Planner, County of Marin

Maureen Gaffney, Planner, SF Bay Trail

Anne Richman, Executive Director, Transportation Authority of Marin

Sergio Ruiz, Pedestrian & Bicycle Coordinator / Branch Chief, Caltrans District 4

Kate Sears, District 3 Supervisor, County of Marin

Jean Severinghaus, Marin Member at Large, Caltrans District 4 Bicycle Advisory Committee