

WE OAKLAND

Bi-annual newsletter reporting progress implementing Oakland's Bicycle Plan from the City of Oakland, Department of Transportation



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Signaling Change

In September 2023, the Park Blvd Crossing to Safety Project introduced a new feature to Oakland for helping bicyclists navigate traffic signals. The project made major changes to the complex intersection of Park Blvd/Excelsior Ave/Grosvenor Pl/Alma Pl. The changes include closing the eastern leg of Excelsior Ave to vehicles, constructing a sidewalk-level plaza that maintains two-way bike access to Excelsior Ave, and modifying the traffic signal to provide clear direction for cyclists continuing from the plaza through the now-simpler intersection.

Like many traffic signals around Oakland, this traffic signal is designed to detect drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists who are waiting for their turns. By detecting where people are waiting, the traffic signal can respond dynamically to serve that movement and reduce the overall time people wait. But unlike other traffic signals, this one includes a new feature for Oakland: bicyclists waiting in the new Excelsior Ave plaza will now see a blue light turn on when they have been detected by the traffic signal. This simple blue light provides feedback to cyclists on where to wait and confirms the detection is working (helping avoid the frustration of waiting through a full signal cycle only to discover one hasn't been detected). Based on feedback from this pilot, OakDOT intends to install more bike detection indicator lights with future projects, focusing on intersections with bicyclist-only approaches or unusual geometry.



1. A bicyclist waits to cross the Park Blvd/Excelsior Ave intersection in the north/west direction. New bike signals tell the bicyclist when to cross.



2. The detector light illuminates when a bicyclist waits at the intersection.



3. The bike signal turns green when it is the bicyclist's turn to cross the street.

The project improves access for bicyclists traveling west on Excelsior Ave and connecting to Park Blvd or Grosvenor Pl. The intersection is part of the MacArthur Blvd Bikeway, a continuous bikeway from Lake Merritt to Mills College. The Crossing to Safety project was developed to improve safety for students walking and biking to Edna Brewer Middle School. Beyond the improvements discussed above, the project simplified the intersections of Park Blvd at 13th Ave, E 38th St, Park Blvd Wy, and Greenwood Ave with expanded sidewalks and a new traffic signal at 13th Ave. For additional details, visit the project website at oaklandca.gov/projects/crossing-to-safety-project.

Farewell from OakDOT Director Fred Kelley

I'm writing to share the bittersweet news that I will be transitioning out of my role as Director of OakDOT in March 2024. Over the past three years, I have had the honor of leading the incredibly passionate and dedicated OakDOT team working to deliver for Oaklanders, particularly for our historically underserved neighborhoods. Looking back, I'm blown away by what we've accomplished in a short amount of time—from breaking ground on the 14th Street Safety Project that will transform the heart of the Town to reducing speeds in our Business Activity Districts and schools and so much more! I hope you all will join us as we celebrate several other projects nearing completion this Spring/Summer, including the 8th Street West Oakland Traffic Calming, Park Boulevard Crossing to Safety, and Telegraph Avenue Complete Streets projects.

Fortunately, I will not be going far! Starting in March, I will be serving Oakland in a different capacity as Director for the Oakland Department of Parks, Recreation & Youth Development (OPRYD), where I will shepherd the development of a new capital plan for OPRYD; support succession planning for staff; and build out OPRYD's service delivery to Oakland's most underserved communities. This change continues the growing stability of the City's leadership team, building on recent leadership hires for the Fire, Citywide Communications, Violence Prevention, Housing and Community Development, and Human Resources Management departments, as well as the hire of a permanent Deputy City Administrator.

I am grateful to Assistant Director Megan Wier for stepping up to serve as Acting Director while the City Administrator's Office initiates a search for a permanent replacement. As I transition out of OakDOT, I leave with the message about the work done day in and day out: Speaking up for those that have historically had no voice and championing for those who have for so long, been waiting for a champion. In the immortal words of the late Eddie Dillard who became a friend before passing this year, "Do the right thing, because it's always the right thing to do."



-Fred Kelley
OakDOT Director



BART Boosts Bikes

Oakland's BART stations currently have a large number and variety of bike parking options including 991 bike racks, 400 BikeLink eLockers, and three Bike Stations. Now BART has brought a new high-security self-parking option to the 12th Street and MacArthur stations: a set of "smart" bike racks from Bikeeep. The racks were initially tested out at select San Francisco stations starting in 2017 and are free to use. After the required one-time pre-[registration](#), a Clipper card will lock and unlock the dock. The locking arm secures the bicycle frame and front wheel, and it is recommended to use a personal lock to secure the rear wheel.



Secure Bikeeep bike racks at 12th Street BART station

Instead of parking at a station, many people like to bring their bikes along, which can involve a lot of lifting and maneuvering to get to the train platform. Stair channels are mini-ramps beneath the handrail that allow a person to roll their bicycle as they walk up or down staircases. The 19th Street, Lake Merritt, and Coliseum stations have the channels; the new ones are an improved design which is grooved for better grip and wider for fat tire bikes. So as not to conflict with existing lift chairs, channels may only be present on one side of the stairs.

Even less effort is now needed to take a bike on the train – beginning this year, bikes will be allowed on most of the escalators throughout the BART system. Bikes will remain banned from BART's ten narrow escalators, some of which are found at the 19th Street and Oakland Airport Connector Stations. Check out how to safely bring your bike on an escalator in [this video](#).

Taking a bike on an escalator still requires a level of effort; another option is the elevator. Because bikes are getting bigger and longer and may not fit everywhere, BART has published an elevator [dimensions guide](#).

RESOURCES

Suggest a Bike Rack Location

- Go to oaklandbikes.info/bikerack to review guidelines and request a rack.

Key Online Maps

- Bike Plan Implementation Status: arcg.is/GGSPX
- Five-Year Paving Plan: www.oaklandca.gov/projects/20225yp

Oakland's Bicyclist & Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC)

- Public meetings are held on 3rd Thursdays, more info at oaklandbikes.info/bpac.

OAK311 Call Center

Call 311 (510-615-5566 outside Oakland)

Please report:

- ▶ Debris blocking the roadway
- ▶ Traffic signals malfunctioning
- ▶ Abandoned bicycles needing removal
- ▶ Storm drain grates missing or loose

Non-emergency traffic safety requests and routine maintenance issues may be reported at 311.oaklandca.gov or with Oak311 mobile app.

OakDOT Bicycle & Pedestrian Program

- Jason Cook, Transportation Engineer
- Pierre Gerard, Transportation Planner
- David Lok, Data Analyst
- Jason Patton, Program Supervisor
- Patrick Phelan, Transportation Planner
- David Pené, Transportation Engineer
- Noel Pond-Danchik, Transportation Planner
- Stephen Tu, Transportation Planner
- Angie Chen, Intern
- Betty Choy, Intern
- Jenny Nguyen, Intern

The projects described herein are funded partially or wholly by Oakland's share of voter-approved countywide transportation sales taxes. 8% of Measure BB funds are dedicated to bicycle/pedestrian projects and programs throughout the county. For more information, see oaklandca.gov/topics/measure-b-bb-and-vehicle-registration-funds.



Bay Trail, Bit by Bit

Another Oakland section of the San Francisco Bay Trail is open to the public. In January 2024, the Fruitvale Land Crossing Bay Trail project finished the last segment of multi-use path between the Park Street Bridge and Fruitvale Ave. Though the western portions of this section were completed earlier as part of apartment and townhouse developments, the block between Lancaster St and Fruitvale Ave remained closed.

Like many parts of the Bay Trail, this new segment is built on private property, which adds to the challenges of planning and construction. A spur rail line owned by Union Pacific Railroad held up the project for years. Once the railroad sold their property, City staff negotiated with the property owner and paid for an easement which allowed construction to move forward. Big thanks to the Oakland Public Works Project and Grant Management Division for completing this tricky but important gap closure and to the Watershed Division for overseeing all the Measure DD Bond-funded projects.



The new Bay Trail path segment between the Park Street Bridge and Fruitvale Ave

Bicyclist and pedestrian access will be even better when the [Fruitvale Alive!](#) project completes intersection and crosswalk work. Heading southeast, bicyclists and pedestrians will have an improved crossing of Fruitvale Ave that connects to the existing multi-use path to High St.

Doolittle Drive Bay Trail Gap

In early 2023, the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) completed a new half-mile section of Bay Trail along Doolittle Drive from Swan Way to the Doolittle Staging Area parking lot. *Editor's Note: See the [Summer 2023](#) issue of this newsletter for coverage of the new EBRPD path.*

This leaves a roughly half-mile gap in the trail before connecting to existing paths in Alameda. The MTC [Bay Trail Gap Closure Implementation Plan](#) highlighted the importance of this segment with a high-ranking score in the recently finished prioritization schema.

Doolittle Dr (State Highway 61) is adjacent to EBRPD shoreline parks, has a limited width right-of-way, and has low elevation spots vulnerable to sea level rise. Because of the complicated factors for building bicycle and pedestrian access, OakDOT staff responded to a call for interest from the MTC Active Transportation Technical Assistance Program, and MTC recommended \$40,000 in funding for design assistance. Main goals of the technical assistance project are to coordinate the various stakeholders and develop short-term improvement options for bicyclists and pedestrians.



The remaining Bay Trail gap along Doolittle Drive (in yellow)

Check for Bikes Signs

In August 2023, four-year old Maia Correia and her father were bicycling on Lakeshore Ave when a driver opening their door into the bike lane caused them to crash. Maia suffered a head injury and in the following days succumbed to that injury.

In immediate response to this tragedy, OakDOT developed and installed signs reminding motorists to “check for bikes” before opening car doors per California Vehicle Code 22517. The new signs are along Lakeshore Ave between E 18th St and Boden Way and were implemented by OakDOT’s Rapid Response Program that investigates all traffic crashes fatal to pedestrians and bicyclists and seeks near-term design solutions.



Check For Bikes sign being installed on Lakeshore Ave by the Traffic Maintenance team of OakDOT's Safe Streets Division

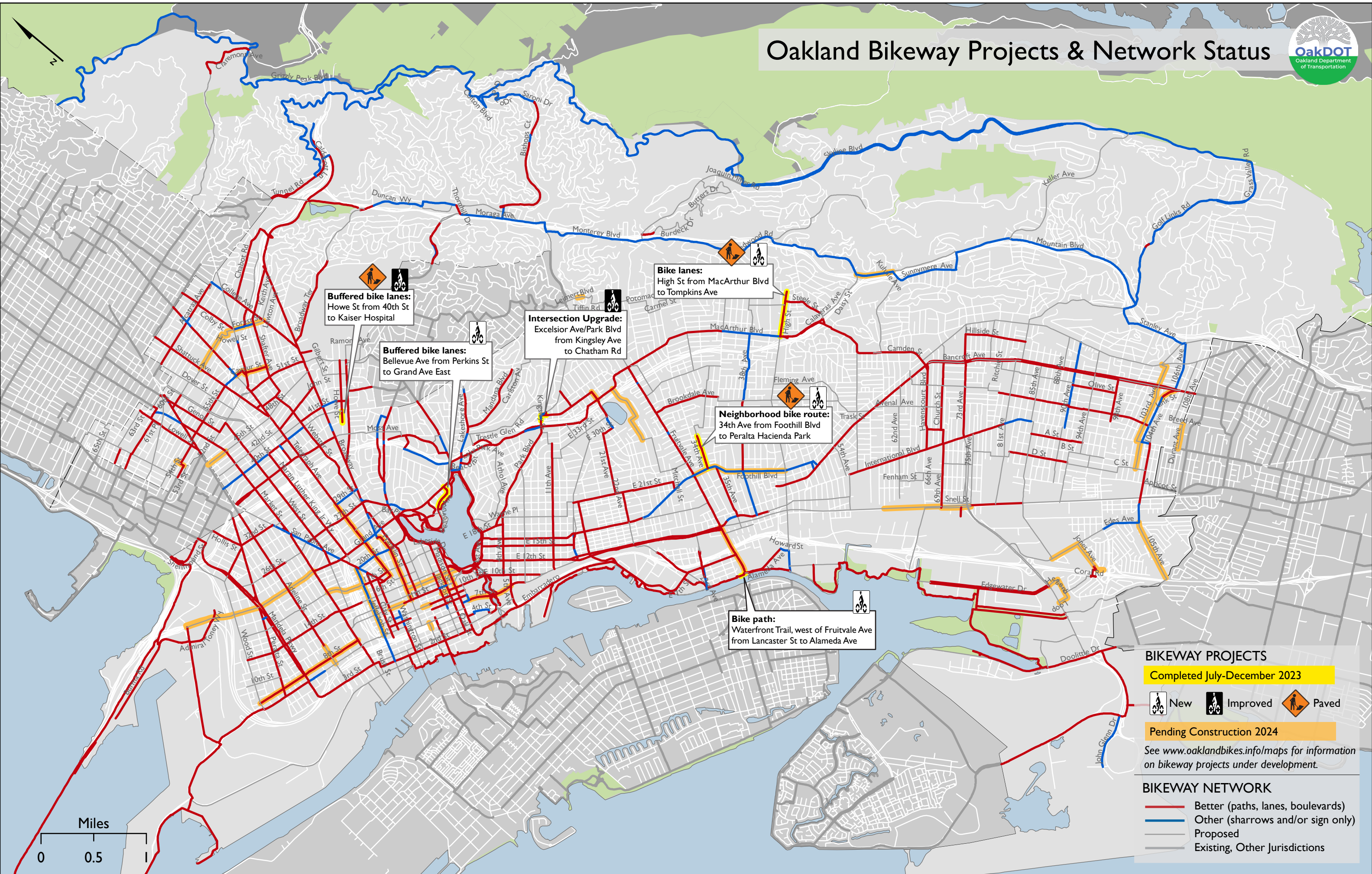
“Dooring” poses a serious risk to bicyclists. As drivers and passengers, always check for bicyclists before opening a car door. Get in the habit of opening driver-side doors with your right hand. This will help you look over your left shoulder for oncoming bicyclists. As a bicyclist, always ride outside of the “door zone” – the area next to parked cars into which doors swing open.



Check For Bikes sign

The tragic traffic fatality has created an urgency to advance the City’s 2019 Bicycle Plan recommendation for separated bike lanes along Lakeshore Ave. The proposed separated bike lanes will provide new space for bicyclists, reducing conflicts with drivers in the street and with pedestrians in the park. Find more information at the [project website](#).

Oakland Bikeway Projects & Network Status



Buffered bike lanes:
Howe St from 40th St to Kaiser Hospital

Buffered bike lanes:
Bellevue Ave from Perkins St to Grand Ave East

Intersection Upgrade:
Excelsior Ave/Park Blvd from Kingsley Ave to Chatham Rd

Bike lanes:
High St from MacArthur Blvd to Tompkins Ave

Neighborhood bike route:
34th Ave from Foothill Blvd to Peralta Hacienda Park

Bike path:
Waterfront Trail, west of Fruitvale Ave from Lancaster St to Alameda Ave

BIKEWAY PROJECTS

Completed July-December 2023

- New
- Improved
- Paved

Pending Construction 2024

See www.oaklandbikes.info/maps for information on bikeway projects under development.

BIKEWAY NETWORK

- Better (paths, lanes, boulevards)
- Other (sharrows and/or sign only)
- Proposed
- Existing, Other Jurisdictions



Bicycling, briefly . . .

2023 Roundup by Dianne Yee, 2023 BPAC Chair

2023 was the year where things went “back to normal” or toward a “new normal.” The COVID-19 emergency was lifted and Bicyclist and Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC) meetings returned in-person at City Hall. It was great to see familiar and new faces, but at the same time participation levels dropped as Zoom had lowered the barriers to attending meetings.

The trend of reckless driving that arose during the pandemic continued, and many Oaklander lives were lost on the streets. BPAC calls on OakDOT to better coordinate with other departments for quick-build design and implementation to prevent high-injury crashes, to expand the network of protected bike lanes, to coordinate with external agencies to provide safe connections, and to continue efforts to connect East Oakland to the shoreline. BPAC also supports streamlining the City hiring process, to quickly fill vacancies needed to implement the 5-Year Paving Plan and many street safety projects. We look forward to OakDOT making progress on these goals in 2024.

BPAC at OPD Community Events

BPAC Commissioner Phoenix Mangrum engaged with community members about the BPAC and bicycling resources at two annual events: the 5th Annual Halloween “Trunk or Treat”, and the Christmas “Toys for the Town” hosted by the Oakland Police Department. BPAC Commissioners are participating in OPD events to develop positive relationships with the Police Department and officers and to counter racial profiling of bicyclists.



Map Oakland. Check the status of the bikeway network, bike parking, bike signage, and bike projects on the Bike Facilities Map at arcg.is/GGSPX. This map is updated twice yearly (January & July).

Bike Repair and Education in The Town.

OakDOT’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Program supported a total of 30 bike-related events from July to December 2023 in partnership with the Oakland Public Library (OPL) and Bike East Bay.

OPL and Bike East Bay co-hosted a bike rodeo at the 81st Ave Library Branch, for children between ages 5 and 12 to fit helmets, ride in a straight line, stop at intersections, and learn to check their ABCs (Air, Brakes, Chain).



OPL hosted 29 Bike Fix events at the 81st Ave and Martin Luther King Jr. Branch Libraries serving 451 participants. The Bike Fix events repaired 207 bikes. Seventy-seven bikes were also given away, including 68 donated from the Bay Area Bike Project and nine bikes taken in as donations that were repaired, cleaned and given away. The outreach events also gave away 70 helmets and 70 locks.

OPL staff brought their Bike Library, a mobile bike resource hub, to 18 outreach events with their East Oakland Engagement Team. The Bike Library works as a library lounge bringing books, resources and programmed activities to residents.

Fabulous Funding

OakDOT received \$30.2 million in grant funding that includes bicyclist and pedestrian safety improvements via a Trade Corridor Enhancement Program (TCEP). In addition to other state funds, this TCEP grant will help deliver the Embarcadero West Rail Safety and Access Improvements, which extend from Market Street to Oak Street. This project will construct a multi-use path, reconstruct eight at-grade crossings, install fencing, and improve seven street segments between Embarcadero West and 2nd Street and one segment between Embarcadero West and 3rd Street.

The at-grade improvements include new railroad and pedestrian crossing arms and equipment, signage, pavement delineation, and intersection lighting. The project will also include installing new traffic signals, improve multi-modal safety and accessibility, and include trees and landscaping.

These improvements will create safer connections for pedestrians and bicyclists along Embarcadero West and to the larger multi-modal network.



Artist rendering of improvements to Embarcadero West

Paving Update

Bellevue Avenue

OakDOT's Complete Streets Paving Program continues to maintain and improve Oakland's extensive roadway network, delivering miles of smooth pavement thanks to the voter approved bond Measures KK and U. Paving work included two recently completed bikeway projects on Bellevue Ave and High St.

In July 2023, Bellevue Ave was repaved from Perkins Ave to Grand Ave. The project converted the second travel lane on this one-way street to a buffered bike lane, extending a bike lane installed in 2016 on Bellevue Ave within Lakeside Park.



Editor's Note: Oakland's very first bike lane was installed on this stretch of Bellevue Ave in 1976. The bike lane mysteriously went missing sometime in the early 2000s. We're glad to bring it back!

High Street

High Street was repaved from MacArthur Blvd to Tompkins Ave in December 2023. The project narrowed the travel lanes, installed bike lanes on the uphill portions of the corridor, and parking edge-lines with sharrows centered in the travel lane on the downhill portions. In the uphill direction, cyclists typically travel slower than motor vehicles and benefit from dedicated space. In the downhill direction, cyclists generally travel faster, prefer to maintain more distance from parked car doors, and can more easily take the lane. This treatment is often referred to as a 'climbing bike lane' and on constrained streets like this it can be a useful tool to improve bicycle access.

Parks Re-Embarks

In November, OakDOT welcomed Jamie Parks as a new Assistant Director filling a position previously held by Ariel Espiritu-Santo. OakDOT has two Assistant Director positions and Jamie will be overseeing the Right-of-Way Division, Major Projects Division, and the department's critically important administrative sections for Human Resources, Fiscal Services, and Capital Funding. Jamie joins OakDOT following eight years with the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) where he served for the past five years as the manager of the Livable Streets Division. He brings a wealth of experience with traffic safety projects and policies, bicyclist and pedestrian design, and in building organizational capacity.

Prior to the City of San Francisco, Jamie worked for the City of Oakland in the early and mid-2010s as Complete Streets Program Manager in the Public Works Department (prior to the creation of OakDOT). For a glimpse of history, see the farewell article for Jamie published in the [Summer 2015](#) edition of this newsletter. We are thrilled to have Jamie back in Oakland with his vision, expertise, and steady hand for getting things done.



City of Oakland, Bicycle & Pedestrian Program, OakDOT, Safe Streets Division
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Si desea un ejemplar del boletín del programa ciclista de la Ciudad de Oakland en español, por favor llame (510) 238-3983 o visite www.oaklandbikes.info/newsletter

如需索取屋崙（奧克蘭）市自行車計劃的中文版新聞快訊，請致電(510) 238-3983 或上網 www.oaklandbikes.info/newsletter 查詢。

Để lấy một tờ bản tin bằng tiếng Việt về chương trình đi xe đạp của Thành Phố Oakland, xin gọi số (510) 238-3983 tới trang mạng hoặc www.oaklandbikes.info/newsletter