

## BPAC Chair Report, 2008-2009

In May 2008, I was elected Chair of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee ("the Committee"), and Midori Tabata was elected Vice Chair. The twelve meetings we facilitated dealt with a broad range of topics relating to bicycle, pedestrian, and transit issues.

The Committee successfully advocated for new, more bike-friendly policies in Oakland, met regional bike/ped/transit advocates and staff, and provided input on major city and private-sector projects.

The Committee began its term with a presentation of data on bicycle and pedestrian activity in Oakland. While there is a general sense that bicycling and walking have increased as modes of transportation, there was little data to support it. At the May meeting, Jason Patton shared updated US Census data on commuting, showing that single-car commuting in Oakland had decreased, and in June he provided updated bicycle trip counts at key intersections such as 27th and Telegraph, showing a substantial increase in bicycling. At the June meeting, the UC Berkeley Traffic Safety Center explained their pedestrian counting devices placed throughout Alameda County, and shared preliminary data showing the pedestrians outnumber cars at 12th and Broadway, a conclusion that apparently took CalTrans by surprise. Updated and more-complete data on bicycling and walking should allow bike/ped advocates to better argue for friendlier streets and transit improvements.

In December 2008 the Committee hosted a lengthy meeting on the transportation aspects of the very large Kaiser Hospital rebuilding plan, the result of a year of impassioned advocacy by concerned neighbors of the hospital. While the new median along W MacArthur Blvd remains a barrier to bike/ped access to Mosswood Park, the Committee helped establish its credibility as a forum for discussing transportation impacts in a respectful environment, and the Committee anticipates more opportunities to provide advice on major planning and development projects in the future. Without a formal role in transportation decision-making, the Committee must rely on advocacy for the opportunity to provide input on many projects.

The BPAC received updates and opportunities for comment on several important Oakland transportation projects. These included: Lakeshore/MacArthur pedestrian improvements, in May and November; 40th Street/Bay Bridge bikeway connector, in July; Fruitvale Avenue bikeway, in July and November; E 12th St bikeway feasibility, in September; the 10th St Bridge / Measure DD in December; 27th St-Broadway-Grand improvements, in January; and the Bike/Ped Program's one-year plan, in February. All agendas and minutes are available online at [OaklandBikes.info](http://OaklandBikes.info). The BPAC also addressed several on-going and new projects in the last year.

The BPAC's institutional memory was aided by the continuing presence of former Chairs Mark Dieter and Heath Maddox at many meetings, as well as good and growing attendance at meetings. The BPAC was able to continue many ongoing projects to a varying degree of success. In August Oakland hosted the Tri-City BPAC meeting, organized by Vice Chair Midori Tabata, allowing bike/ped advocates from local cities to meet and share their projects and cross-border priorities. To some

extent, the successful joint Oakland-Berkeley effort to defeat Berkeley's Measure KK in November, which would have hampered the development of Bus Rapid Transit, was the result of greater cross-city contacts made at the Tri-City BPAC meeting.

Little progress was made on the effort to create a BPAC charter by City Council ordinance. Oakland's unwieldy system of Boards and Commissions precluded bureaucratic support for a new charter, forcing the Committee to seek political support from a City Councilmember. That effort will continue this year.

Bicycle parking continues to be a key challenge for bicyclists in Oakland, but the last twelve months saw the expansion of the city's CityRacks program to provide additional parking infrastructure in key districts. The Bicycle Parking Ordinance passed in July 2008. (To date only one Oakland building has been constructed to its specifications.) Bike advocates look forward to expanding compliance as the economy recovers.

Several new projects received the Committee's attention as well. The Committee, working closely with staff, developed a substantial change in Oakland's allocation of Alameda County Measure B monies, shifting more funds to bicycling (from sidewalks) and paving the way for a full-time bike-lane engineer. Pedestrian advocates, including myself, supported the change and successfully advocated for it in front of a skeptical City Council.

The Oakland BPAC hosted three large public meetings in the last twelve months, helping to establish the Committee as a key forum for discussing bicycle, pedestrian, and transit issues. The aforementioned Tri-City BPAC meeting was considered very successful, as was October's Oakland-Alameda Estuary Crossing Study presentation, and the Kaiser Hospital discussion was productive despite the relocation of meeting due to a small fire in City Hall.

The Committee's meetings in the last year have been productive and engaging, and attracted new members. I am honored to be elected to continue as Chair for the next year. In the last twelve months, the Committee was introduced to new Oakland bike/ped program employees Bruce Williams and Iris Starr, and we look forward to working with them as well as with Jason Patton and Jennifer Stanley, staff to the Committee. The Committee's relationship with city staff is extraordinarily respectful and collaborative, and the Committee itself accommodates a wide variety of viewpoints while reaching consensus, making decisions, and finishing meetings on time. As Chair, I aim to ensure these traits continue for the next twelve months in partnership with new Vice-Chair Chris Hwang.

Jonathan Bair  
Chair, Oakland Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee