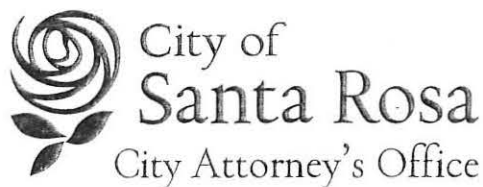


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Attachment 1

November 1, 2012

Suzanne Smith, Executive Director
Sonoma County Transportation Authority
490 Mendocino Avenue, Suite 206
Santa Rosa, CA 95401

Re: Complete Streets Act of 2008

The purpose of this letter is demonstrate City of Santa Rosa General Plan 2035 compliance with the Complete Streets Act of 2008, codified at California Government Code Section 65302(b)(2)(A) and (B). I refer to the attached memorandum containing thorough analysis of the applicable provisions in Santa Rosa General Plan 2035 in relation to the complete street requirements for multimodal transportation planning.

Based on our review of the applicable law and the analysis of the City's General Plan 2035 contained in the attached memorandum, it the legal opinion of this office that the City's 2035 General Plan meets the requirements and intent of Section 65302(b)(2)(A) and (B).

Please feel free to contact this office should you have questions regarding the content of this letter.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Molly L. Dillon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

MOLLY L. DILLON
Assistant City Attorney

MLD:trk
Enclosure



MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 1, 2012

TO: MOLLY DILLON, ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY

FROM: LISA KRANZ, SUPERVISING PLANNER

COPY: CAROLINE FOWLER, CITY ATTORNEY
CHUCK REGALIA, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: GENERAL PLAN COMPLIANCE WITH COMPLETE STREETS ACT OF 2008

Background

In 2008, the California Complete Streets Act (SB 1358) was passed and signed by the governor. The act states: "In order to fulfill the commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, make the most efficient use of urban land and transportation infrastructure, and improve public health by encouraging physical activity, transportation planners must find innovative ways to reduce vehicle miles traveled and to shift from short trips in the automobile to biking, walking and use of public transit."

The legislation impacts local general plans by adding the following language to Government Code Section 65302(b)(2)(A) and (B):

- (A) Commencing January 1, 2011, upon any substantial revision of the circulation element, the legislative body shall modify the circulation element to plan for a balanced, multimodal transportation network that meets the needs of all users of the streets, roads, and highways for safe and convenient travel in a manner that is suitable to the rural, suburban, or urban context of the general plan.
- (B) For the purposes of this paragraph, "users of streets, roads, and highways" means bicyclists, children, persons with disabilities, motorists, movers of commercial goods, pedestrians, users of public transportation, and seniors.

Through its preparation of the Sustainable Communities Strategy consistent with SB 375, the Association of Bay Area Governments and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission have proposed to place many programs under the umbrella of One Bay Area, which addresses housing, transportation, and land use. The One Bay Area Grant Program (OBAG) is a new funding approach which links transportation-related grant funding to land use and housing policies. Criteria to be eligible for this funding is to have a general plan which complies with the Complete Streets Act or to have a "complete streets" resolution adopted by the legislative body. Recently, it has been noted by staff at the Sonoma County Transportation Authority that if an amendment has not specifically been adopted addressing complete streets that a memo from the jurisdiction's legal counsel affirming that the general plan complies with the Complete Streets Act would be accepted with applications for grant funding.

The city has not processed a general plan amendment specific to complete streets, but staff finds the general plan is consistent with its provisions. The purpose of this memo is to outline how the City of Santa Rosa's General Plan 2035 Transportation Element complies with the Complete Streets Act in order to ensure eligibility for One Bay Area Grant Funding.

The Governor's Office of Planning and Research has amended its General Plan Guidelines on preparation of circulation elements to include complete streets. That document has been consulted in preparation of this memo.

Analysis

In the Transportation Element's narrative regarding the roadway classification system (page 5-2), it states, "...providing equality among all modes of transportation – particularly pedestrians and bicyclists – is reflected in the classification system as well as the importance of the streetscape to the character and quality of the public realm that leads to Complete Streets. Complete Streets provide a safe network of transportation options. Complete Streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities are able to safely move along and across a complete street."

For **motor vehicle travel on streets and highways**, the General Plan Guidelines suggest possible policy areas to be included such as: a mix of transportation modes and connectivity of the transportation network; consideration of street patterns; street and intersection design, including consideration of sidewalks, bicycle lanes and transit accessibility along with streetscape; traffic calming; accessibility of bicycles and pedestrians; consideration of level of service standards for bicycle and pedestrian modes; transit priority considerations.

There are numerous general plan policies which address these topics.

- T-A-7 Expand non-motorized and bus infrastructure throughout the city such that greater amenities exist for cyclists, pedestrians and transit users in order to promote a healthy, sustainable city and further reduce GHG emissions.
- T-B-4 Promote the use of roundabouts in lieu of stop/signal controlled intersections to improve safety, reduce delay and idling time, and lower vehicle emissions at new/existing intersections.
- UD-D-5 Provide planting strips with large canopy trees between the road and sidewalk to buffer pedestrians from traffic, and help define the street space along commercial streets. Install pedestrian amenities in the planting strip such as: street lighting; seating; bus stop shelters; bicycle racks; and mail boxes.
- UD-D-4 Provide continuous sidewalks and bicycle lanes on both sides of major regional/arterial streets.
- T-C-2 Encourage grid street patterns in new residential areas to disperse local neighborhood traffic, thereby limiting volumes on any one street.
- T-C-3 Implement traffic calming techniques on streets subject to high speed and/or cut-through traffic, in order to improve neighborhood livability. Techniques include: Narrow streets; on-street parking; chokers and diverters; speed bumps; rough paved crosswalks; rumble strips; and planted islands.
- T-J-2 Provide street lighting that is attractive, functional, and appropriate to the character and scale of the neighborhood or district, and that contributes to vehicular and pedestrian safety.
- T-L-5 Consider bicycle operating characteristics and safety needs in the design for roadways, intersections, and traffic control systems.

For **transit and railroads**, the General Plan Guidelines suggest policy related to the improvement of transit and paratransit services.

The following general plan policies address transit and railroads.

- T-H Expand the existing transit network to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to provide convenient and efficient public transportation to workplaces, shopping, SMART stations, and other destinations
- T-H-6 Provide full access to transit services for all persons, including children, the elderly, and those with disabilities.
- T-H-8 Improve transit service along corridors where increased densities are planned.
- T-I Support implementation of rail service along the Northwest Pacific Railroad
- T-I-1 Support efforts to implement rail service along the NWPRR.

Transportation Element narrative notes that the city contracts for curb-to-curb transportation for eligible elderly and disabled persons who cannot use fixed route bus services.

For **pedestrian and bicycle routes**, the General Plan Guidelines suggest policies related to development of a pedestrian and bicycle plan, connectivity of pedestrian and bicycle routes, amenities for pedestrians and bicyclists, development of a Safe Routes to Schools program, and marketing programs to promote walking and bicycling.

General plan policies which address these issues include the following:

- T-J Provide attractive and safe streets for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- T-J-1 Pursue implementation of walking and bicycling facilities as envisioned in the city's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.
- T-L-9 Maintain and update, as appropriate, the city's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.
- T-J-2 Provide street lighting that is attractive, functional, and appropriate to the character and scale of the neighborhood or district, and that contributes to vehicular and pedestrian safety.
- T-J-5 Support Safe Routes to School by pursuing available grants for this program and ensuring that approaches to schools are safe for cyclists and pedestrians by providing needed amenities such as sidewalks, crosswalks, bike lanes, and traffic calming on streets near schools.
- T-K Develop a safe, convenient, and continuous network of pedestrian sidewalks and pathways that link neighborhoods with schools, parks, shopping areas, and employment centers.
- T-K-1 Link the various citywide pedestrian paths, including street sidewalks, downtown walkways, pedestrian areas in shopping centers and work complexes, park pathways, and other creekside and open space pathways.
- T-K-4 Require construction of attractive pedestrian walkways and areas in new residential, commercial, office, and industrial developments. Provide landscaping or other appropriate buffers between sidewalks and heavily traveled vehicular traffic lanes, as well as through and to parking lots. Include pedestrian amenities to encourage and facilitate walking.
- T-K-5 Ensure provision of safe pedestrian access for students of new and existing school sites throughout the city.
- T-L-2 Provide bicycle lanes on major access routes to all schools and parks.

- T-L-3 Improve bicycle networks by finishing incomplete or disconnected bicycle routes.
- T-A-1 Expand Transportation Systems Management (TSM) programs for employers, and reduce peak hour single-occupancy automobile trips through the following techniques: promotion of transit service; staggering of work shifts; flextime; telecommuting; carpool and vanpool incentives; provision of bicycle facilities; trip reduction incentive programs; parking disincentives for single occupant vehicles; and car sharing programs.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (BPMP), revised and adopted in February 2011, provides more strength to the city's compliance with the Complete Streets Act related to pedestrian and bicycle routes. This document, which is consistent with the general plan, addresses complete streets stating that, "This update to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan incorporates the concepts of Complete Streets when planning for the City's pedestrian and bicycle network." (Page 3-1) In addition, policies of the BPMP address the issue as follows:

- 1.1 Planning for non-automobile modes (pedestrian, bicycle, transit) to receive equal emphasis as planning for motor vehicle transportation.
- 1.2.3 Action Step: Utilize the Regional Complete Streets (Routine Accommodation) Checklist to assure consideration of pedestrian and bicycle facility needs in City transportation projects and roadway improvements.
- 2.6 Ensure that pedestrian and bicycle circulation is an integral part of street design so that lanes and pathways form an integrated network and address the "Complete Streets" concept in transportation planning.
- 7.3 Utilize Complete Street practices to incorporate pedestrian and bicycle facilities into all roadway improvement projects, such as widening, overlays, and restripings, to the extent feasible and not limited to those pedestrian and bikeway improvements recommended in this plan.

Additionally, the city has adopted the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan, the North Santa Rosa Station Area Specific Plan, and corridor plans for parts of Mendocino Avenue, Santa Rosa Avenue, and the length of Sebastopol Road. All of these plans, which are consistent with the general plan, include policy direction to improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities, along with transit, which enhances the city's complete streets compliance.

Based on the Complete Streets Act language to plan for a balanced, multimodal transportation network that meets the needs of all users of the streets, roads, and highways for safe and convenient travel in a manner that is suitable to the rural, suburban, or urban context of the general plan, and the general plan policies noted in this memo, staff concludes that the city's general plan meets the complete streets directive.

(e:/plan/lk/wpfiles/focus/completestreets)