



NEWS

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Air District to lead pioneering bike-sharing program

SAN FRANCISCO – The Bay Area Air Quality Management District will lead a first of its kind regional pilot bike-sharing program following yesterday's approval of a \$4.29 million grant by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission.

"Bike sharing is an innovative way to improve our community's health and air quality by replacing short car trips with zero-emission bikes," said Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the Air District. "The Air District is pleased that MTC has funded this project as it further enhances this region's position as a national leader in sustainable transportation."

This project will deploy approximately 1,000 bicycles at up to 100 kiosk stations along the Peninsula transportation corridor in locations of up to five cities including San Francisco, Redwood City, Mountain View, Palo Alto and San Jose.

MTC approved this project through its Climate Initiatives Competitive Grant Program, which supports innovative projects with the greatest potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and which can be replicated around the region.

Bike sharing is similar to car sharing and involves an organized system of short-term, collective bicycle rental for purposes of transportation in an urban environment. It's a subscription-based service that employs radio-frequency identification smartcards and wireless, internet and GPS technologies to track bicycles and their users.

The project is a partnership among local government agencies including the Air District, San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency, Sam-Trans, the County of San Mateo, the City of Redwood City and the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority. The total project cost is approximately \$7 million with \$1.4 million in funding provided by the Air District and \$1.3 million in funding from the other partners matching MTC's \$4.29 million investment.

"VTA is committed to smart, sustainable strategies that invest in the urban cores and transit corridors that promote walking, bicycling and transit," said VTA Board Chair, San Jose City Council member and bike-enthusiast Sam Liccardo. "The pilot bike-share program will make the commute for Santa Clara County residents greener and more affordable."

The project will pilot and test bike-sharing strategically in downtown urban centers of varying sizes and population densities in close proximity to transit centers. This will demonstrate bike sharing's potential to effectively reduce vehicle traffic and improve local air quality by offering a first- and last-mile transportation alternative to polluting single occupancy vehicles.

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Continued... Air District to fund pioneering bike-sharing program...

“The bike-share program is part of a continuing effort by the San Mateo County Transit District to provide a full spectrum of services for cyclists and those who wish to use bicycles as a transportation alternative. As the managing partner of Caltrain, the District already is among the nation’s leaders in providing progressive service to bicycles. This is another big step,” said Michael J. Scanlon, General Manager/CEO of San Mateo County Transit District and Caltrain.

In the Bay Area, the transportation sector accounts for more than 50 percent of air pollution. Significant emission reductions from the transportation sector will help the Bay Area attain and maintain state and national air quality standards and reduce greenhouse gases.

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District is the regional agency chartered with protecting air quality in the nine-county Bay Area. For more information, visit www.baaqmd.gov.

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