

Bike+Rail in the Bay Area

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The Last Green Mile
Sustainable ways to complete the rail trip

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Bicycle traffic in the Bay Area is booming



SFMTA intersection counts show **43% increase** in SF bicycle traffic over the past two years (Aug. 2006 - Aug. 2008)

David Binder survey (SFBC, Nov 2007):

- **5%** say the bicycle is their primary method of traveling in San Francisco
- **16%** (approx. 120,000) say they ride a bike in San Francisco at least a couple of times a week

Bicycle integration into Bay Area rail is well-established and successful



BART has allowed bikes onboard without any special permit since 1998

- 2% of boardings bring a bike (peak hour blackout limits capacity)
- 1% of trips arrive by bike and store it at the station

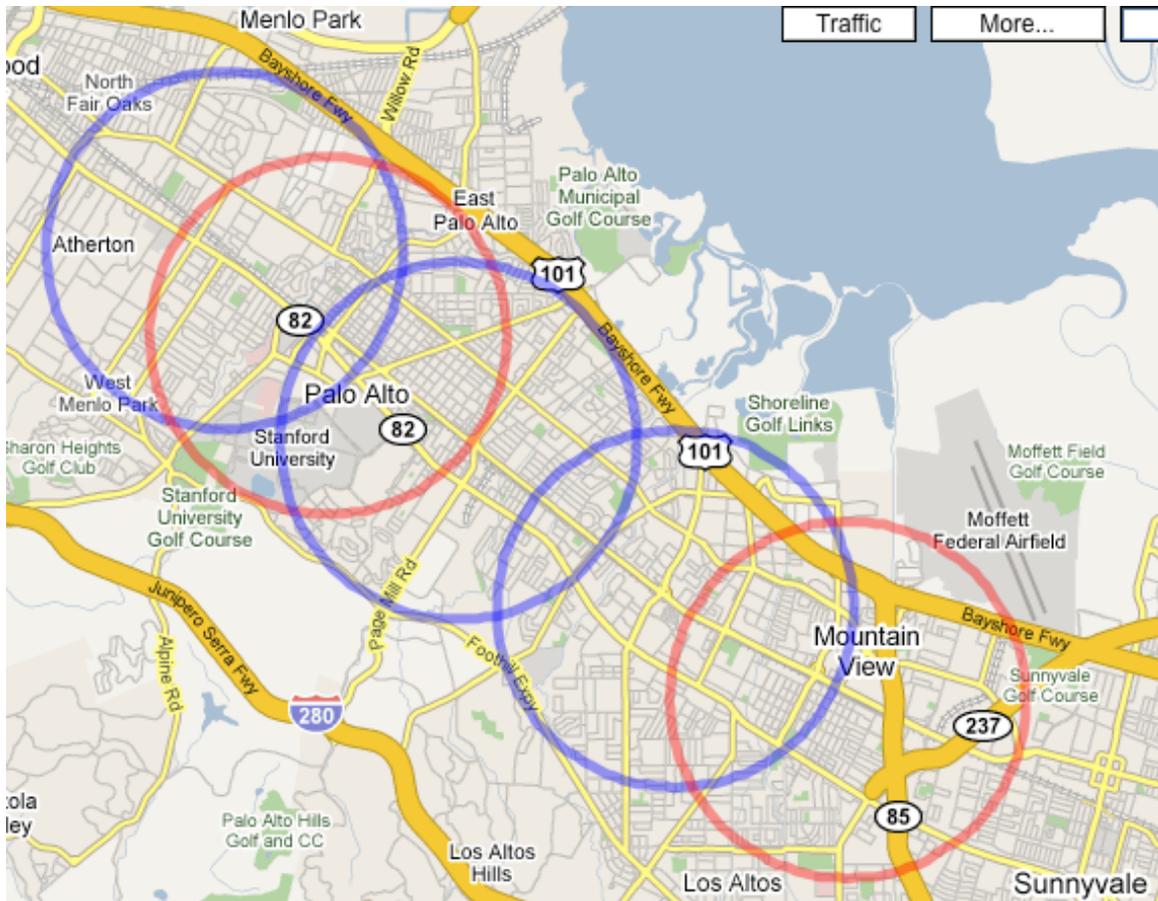
Caltrain has allowed bikes onboard without any special permit since 1992

- each train has space for at least 16 bikes (some have as many as 64 spots)
- 7% of boardings bring a bike (hit capacity ceiling in 2006)
- 1% of trips arrive by bike and store it at the station

Amtrak Capitol Corridor

- 9% of trips involve a bike (don't know onboard/store at station split)

Bike+rail in the Bay Area is practical, attractive, and competitive



Circles represent a radius of about 1.7 miles from Caltrain stations, the distance that an average cyclist can travel in about ten minutes of bicycling (of course, strong cyclists can and do go much further). Mild weather and distributed settlement and employment centers (i.e., sprawl) make bike+rail an attractive and competitive alternative to driving alone.

Bicycle “last mile” trips are cheap, green, and socially coherent, but given the “last regard”



Pleasant Hill BART station

Bike+rail is strikingly efficient and competitive, but trips are mis-valued and de-prioritized



Bike-bearing passengers are regarded as second-class customers, despite their placing a much lower burden on the overall system and serving policy goals more perfectly. “Bumped” enough times, a bike+train customer is likely to return to driving alone the whole way.

Bike+rail service is provided distractedly, without focus or priority



1: Train 134: Sept 22 9:07 AM



2: Train 134: Sept 22 9:07 AM

Caltrain service imbalance – trains leave the station with empty seats while paying passengers (with bicycles) are left standing on the platform.

Bike+rail service and planning is provided distractedly, without focus or priority

Caltrain

- < 1 FTE working on bicycle service planning
- bicycle bring-along customers are turned away because of capacity limits
- service is provided inconsistently and unpredictably (7:30 am train has 32 bike spaces one day, 16 bike spaces the next day)

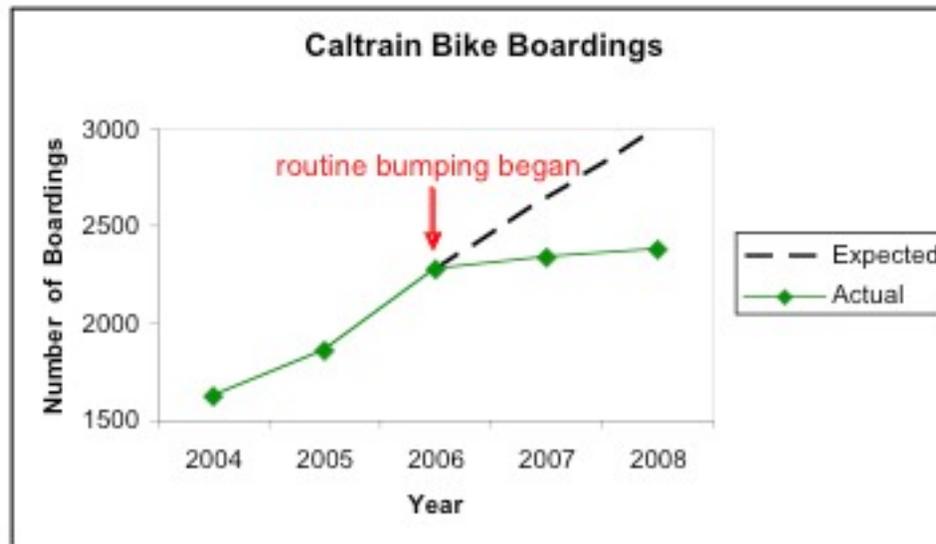
BART

- < 1 FTE working on bicycle service planning
- AM & PM peak “blackout” period excludes bicycle bring-along customers at most needed time of day

MTC (Bay Area MPO)

- < 1 FTE working on bicycle planning and programming
- Regional transportation funding oriented to SOV trips, “whole trip pricing”

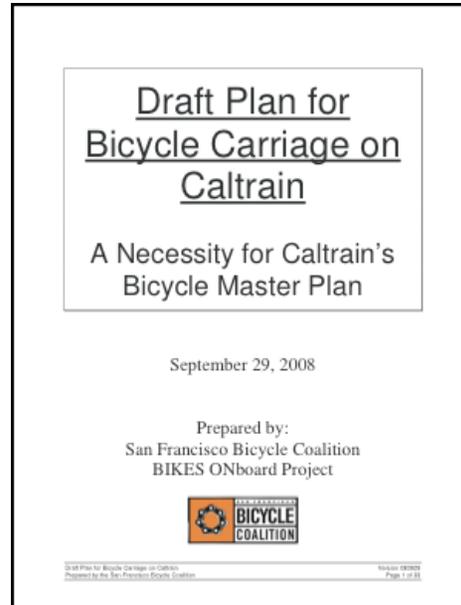
Case in Point: Caltrain Bicycle Master Plan



Caltrain onboard bike capacity reduced in 2004 when Baby Bullet service began, hit ceiling in 2006 – “bumping” problem grows, Caltrain says nothing can be done. Capacity and predictability failures significantly injure utility of bicycle service.

Caltrain sought and won a \$250000 FTA planning grant to conduct a Bicycle Master Plan, commenced a public planning process in February 2007, declared that bike capacity wouldn't be addressed in the planning process (without any substantiation to the assertion that it was impossible to increase capacity). A year and a half into the planning process, Caltrain staff renamed the "Draft Bicycle Master Plan" to "Draft Bicycle Parking and Access Plan".

Case in Point: Caltrain Bicycle Master Plan



Bicyclists formed the **Bikes ONboard** project to fill the void in the Caltrain bicycle service planning effort, developed a *Draft Plan for Bicycle Carriage on Caltrain*, brought 2600 petition signatures to the Caltrain's Board of Directors asking for rationalization of onboard bicycle service, flooded newspapers with letters, won a commitment from Caltrain's Executive Director for a "modest" increase in onboard bike capacity.

sfbike.org/caltrain_bob

Station bicycle parking



Amsterdam CS

Station bicycle parking



metro stop in Chiba, Japan (Tokyo Disneyland)

Station bicycle parking



Warm Planet Bikes at San Francisco Caltrain terminal, Townsend St at Fourth St
130 spaces, attended – open less than a year, already over-capacity

Other strategies include bike lockers, bike sharing systems, encouragement of folding bikes, real-time information sharing (at stations and via internet/wireless)

Recommendations

Prioritize regional perspective for "total trip" cost and benefit – bike+rail probably the most efficient trip type, serving the most policy goals, with a significant potential market share in the region (very competitive with automobility)

Prioritize bicycle bring-along for rail systems as a central, cornerstone regional transit service, rather than a “special interest extra”

Support other facilitation of bicycle “last mile” trips using rail – station area access, bike storage, bike sharing, promotion, etc.

Commit adequate bicycle planning and program resources for agencies (operators and MPO)

CA High Speed Rail: Plan for bikes onboard, as well as station area access, bike storage, bike sharing, promotion, etc.