



# SOUTH BAY BICYCLE COALITION

December 4, 2009

Jacki Bacharach  
Executive Director  
South Bay Cities Council of Governments  
5033 Rockvalley Road  
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275

Dear Ms. Bacharach:

On behalf of the South Bay Bicycle Coalition, and with the endorsement of community leaders, environmental organizations and health advocates in the southern cities of Los Angeles County, we write you today requesting your approval and active support of our grant proposal to establish a regional, comprehensive South Bay Bicycle Master Plan.

This plan directly and effectively addresses critical health, safety, transportation and environmental issues currently facing our South Bay cities – and it does so at an exceptionally low cost with little risk to participating cities. The conceptual plan would link the South Bay cities creating a progressive bike network that provides a safe, healthy and appealing transportation alternative to the automobile.

Our South Bay beach communities are blessed with the perfect weather and environment to take advantage of the multiple positive opportunities offered through increasing bicycle use for transportation, recreation and exercise needs. There are few better locations anywhere in the world to foster the healthy, active, lifestyle that cities in the greater South Bay can through the use of an alternative transportation network. Our South Bay Bicycle Master Plan envisions a network connecting the neighborhood to the work place, encompassing routes to schools, to shopping centers, parks, community centers, libraries,, retail businesses and professional services throughout the region.

We are at an exciting crossroads in the South Bay where every city in our region is working through its strategic approaches to reducing our greenhouse gas emissions and our overall carbon footprints per our state's AB 32 mandates and Cool Cities agreements. The current traffic congestion overwhelming our local roadways and reducing our productivity is also responsible for unhealthy air quality levels that reduce the life expectancy of our residents. Our South Bay Bicycle Master Plan provides a powerful, quick-acting tool to address each of these concerns. In addition, it also directly impacts one of our nation's major health priorities – obesity and poor fitness.

And in the best news of all, the federal government is currently offering the financial support necessary for us to get started quickly – but only if South Bay cities seize the moment and respond with a sense of urgency.

At this very moment, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) through Los Angeles County Department of Health is seeking applications for eight (8) stimulus grants of \$250,000 each. An RFP was released on November 19<sup>th</sup>, calling for response within three (3) weeks – December 21, 2009. The "South Bay Bicycle Coalition" (SBBC) is already preparing a grant proposal to bring a \$250K grant to benefit the South Bay. We believe that a strong coalition of city and community leaders, combined with the active participation of the bike community will produce a powerfully positive life style change for our region.

Once approved, our grant proposal will become a planning tool for a conceptual bike plan for the South Bay communities' experts to create a Bicycle Master Plan. That master plan would take a regional approach to bicycle-safe routes for children biking to school, adults biking to work and stores, families biking for recreation and exercise, and visitors bringing their bicycles to our bicycle friendly and accessible environment.

The Bicycle Master Plan would also address the urgent need to increase safety for bicyclists. For example, the Manhattan Beach Police Department reports that 66 individuals were struck by automobiles from 2005 to 2008, resulting in four (4) lives being lost. The SBBC is now requesting records from other South Bay cities for a complete compilation of accident data but we have already discovered that the number of accidents is rising steadily.

We are very pleased to report that this grant will fund a bicycle study and its implementation without requiring a single penny out of pocket from any other participating city. Final implementation of any bicycle plans would of course be at the discretion of each city council.

Today, we are approaching cities and entities such as the SBCOG to sign on as partners ahead of the Dec 21 grant deadline. We believe this should be an easy "yes" for the SBCOG and local governments because cities do not need to commit any resources to the grant application. We simply ask you to "raise your hand" as an interested party and join an innovative, doable regional solution to a national problem.

We have an historic opportunity to come together and act to bring these federal funds to the South Bay and put them to great work. Now is the moment and the South Bay is the place to take the leadership role and help move all of LA County to a better place. I know you will consider the lasting legacy of positive change that will highlight your service as an elected representative in the South Bay. Please take the pledge and join us in helping the environment, improving public safety and transportation, fighting obesity, and enhancing our community through thoughtful and strategic bicycle planning.

Sincerely,

Todd Dipaola  
Chair, South Bay Bicycle Coalition