



# STAFF REPORT

## SAUSALITO CITY COUNCIL

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### AGENDA TITLE:

2009 Season Wrap-Up for the Rental Bike Parking Pilot Plan

### RECOMMENDED MOTION:

Authorize the bicycle parking plan to continue in 2010 based on the successes of the Pilot Plan this year. Continue to enhance bike direction signage, parking locations, and education for compliance to bike safety laws and coordination in Sausalito.

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### SUMMARY

The peak season of bike rentals has come to an end for 2009. The Bike Rental Parking Pilot Plan has been a great success this year in addressing bike coordination, ferry boat services, bike safety, and bike parking issues that were experienced in 2008. The Pilot Plan greatly improved and controlled rental bicycles' path of travel, compliance to rules of the road, and parking direction and access. Additional bike parking racks, bike parking areas, and instructions to bicyclists were added in the form of signage along Bridgeway. New signs replaced unneeded and outdated signs. Other new signs were affixed to trash containers.

The Police Department's enforcement of bike safety laws more than doubled from 2008 to 2009. 205 citations have been issued from January thru September of this year vs. 84 citations during the same period last year. Two bike checkpoints and two crosswalk enforcement projects were completed in 2009 to further enhance compliance, prevention, and education of bike safety laws. Reported bike collisions have been reduced for the first time in 4 years during this same 9 month comparison, 14 collisions in 2009 vs. 17 in 2008.

Bike rack loops were removed in front of Yee Tock Chee Park to help eliminate bike parking in the park. The rental bike companies and ferry boat companies worked in partnership with City officials to address all the safety and public concerns raised in 2008. The bike companies also provided instructional information about obeying the rules of the road and where to park bikes in Sausalito to their customers.

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Ferry boat companies added service and modified schedules to reduce wait times and overcrowding. A Ferry Boat/Bike Coordinator position was sponsored by the 5 involved companies. The Coordinator position was able to better communicate issues between ferry and bike companies, as they occurred, for quick solutions at the site of the ferry landing. This led to improved customer service for ferry and rental bike customers while contributing to the overall success of the Pilot Plan.

The Marin County Bicycle Coalition is working on an insert brochure for the bike rental companies to provide their customers with instructions for safety and legal riding when they ride to Marin County. All the bike racks in front of the Bank of America building will be removed until the Spring of 2010. Planter boxes have been installed in this public space. A few of the bike racks near the ferry landing and Parking Lot #1 will also be reduced until the Spring of 2010.

## **BACKGROUND**

In 2008, the steady increase of rental bikes traveling from San Francisco to Sausalito started to overwhelm the City of Sausalito's capacity to control bike safety standards and the parking of bikes in an organized manner. Sport/Street bike cycling's popularity and volume also continued to increase. Visitors renting bikes and sport bike riders see cycling as a healthy and green mode of travel and exercise. The three main bike rental companies operating in San Francisco (Blazing Saddles, Bike and Roll, Bay City Bike) all reported doubling or tripling their bike rentals from 2006 to 2008. Bike counts conducted in 2008 estimated over 2,500 bikes traveled through our town in one day on the weekends. The Blazing Saddles Company alone rented 1,000 bikes a day traveling to Sausalito on summer weekends. In 2008 the Police and Department of Public Works experimented with changes to address the bike parking issues. The Blazing Saddles Company donated the original six bike racks for the downtown area in 2008. A few additional signs were installed to better direct bike riders.

Before the 2009 biking season started, Council Member Herb Weiner and Police Chief Scott Paulin met several times with the bike rental and ferry boat company representatives to develop plans that would address the negative issues with bikes that were experienced in 2008. The increased popularity of all types of bicycling along with increasing amounts of visitors and tourism led the City of Sausalito to improve the coordination of this growing cycling trend in the form of a "Rental Bike Parking Pilot Plan".

This plan was presented and approved by the City Council in April 2009. A progress report on the plan was presented to the City Council in June 2009. Public feedback about the Pilot Plan has been overwhelmingly positive. There was a concern raised about the use of public spaces for bike racks next to the ferry boat landing and in front of Bank of America. Using auto parking spaces inside Parking Lot #1 for bike parking has been raised as an alternative to the use of the other public spaces.

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## ISSUES

**Summary of issues reported in 2008:** Bikes were parked on many poles, in store fronts, in parks, and on sidewalks. This led to increased safety hazards, congestion, and was unsightly in the downtown area. There was little signage to provide direction to rental or sport bike riders. Ferry services were hampered by time delays due to bike loading and lack of coordination.

Our City lacked the capacity to park all the bikes coming to town due to the increases in the bike rental business. Community members complained about Yee Tock Chee Park, Horizons Pier, and downtown sidewalks being over-run with bikes and blocking access. Bike collisions peaked at a ten year high. Traffic law violations and complaints involving bikes increased.

The 2009 Rental Bike Parking Pilot Plan has either addressed or improved the identified concerns from the public and Staff in 2008.

## FISCAL IMPACT

1. Additional signage costs are estimated at \$400.


## STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Continue the Rental Bike Parking Plan in 2010 while being open to continual improvements and listening to public input for modifications.

## ATTACHMENTS

None.

PREPARED:

  
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Chief of Police

REVIEWED BY:

  
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City Manager

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