



# City of Capitola Active Transportation Plan Engagement Plan

## Introduction

The City of Capitola is developing its first Active Transportation Plan (ATP). This plan is rooted in the vision of creating a livable city—one where people of all ages and abilities can move safely, conveniently, and enjoyably. Thoughtfully designed active transportation infrastructure not only encourages healthier lifestyles, but also reduces car dependency and greenhouse gas emissions, create vibrant public spaces, and strengthen social connections. This Engagement Plan serves as a dynamic guide for tracking and refining outreach efforts throughout the project. Engagement methods were developed by cross-referencing identified stakeholder groups with appropriate outreach strategies to ensure all identified communities have a clear opportunity to participate.

## Engagement Objectives

This outreach plan is designed to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach to developing the Active Transportation Plan (ATP), emphasizing community awareness, meaningful engagement, inter-agency collaboration, and integration of public feedback into the Final ATP. Engagement Plan objectives include the following:

- Inform residents, visitors, and those who traverse Capitola about the purpose and process of an ATP.
- Engage and build trust with a diverse array of community members to gather input on the plan, on ensuring inclusion of underserved groups including the unhoused population, low-income groups, people with disabilities, youth, and seniors.
- Coordinate with local agencies and organizations to utilize existing meeting times, communication channels, and public events.
- Incorporate community insight and feedback into the final ATP.



## Project Team

**City of Capitola** is the recipient of a California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Sustainable Transportation Planning grant to create their first Active Transportation Plan. The City is responsible for leading the overall implementation of the project and managing their subconsultants: Ecology Action, to assist and lead outreach; and a technical consultant.

**Ecology Action** was a sub applicant alongside the City of Capitola. Ecology Action will leverage existing relationships and community knowledge to support engagement for this project, including hosting the project webpage, coordinating logistics and staffing outreach events, and providing summaries of public input.

A technical consultant will also be selected whose role includes conducting an inventory of existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities, usage data, and developing recommendations based on the engagement findings.

## Project Schedule and Engagement Phases

**Table 1 – Engagement Phases**

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Existing Conditions / Needs Identification	Draft Recommendations and Prioritization	Draft Plan
Spring – Summer 2026	Spring 2027	Fall / Winter 2027

## Engagement Efforts

The following section outlines the planned engagement efforts for the project, including the development and maintenance of a project webpage, facilitation of focus groups, participation at pop-up events and public meetings, and establishment of a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).

Table 2 provides a summary of engagement methods that will be employed throughout the project; additional details are provided in the following sections of this plan.



**Table 2 – Summary of Engagement Methods**

<b>Engagement Method</b>	<b>Duration/Number</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>	<b>Project Phase(s)</b>
Project Webpage	Throughout the project duration	Through Feb 2028	In development, launching in May 2026
Interactive online map	Phase 1 - The online map will be used to collect input on challenges/ barriers to walking and biking.	Spring – Summer 2026	Phase 1
	Phase 2 – The online map will be used to collect input on the draft network/ recommendations.	Spring 2027	Phase 2
Pop-Up Events	Up to 5-6 pop up events	Spring – Summer 2026	Phase 1
Focus Groups	Six to eight virtual or in-person meetings	Spring – Summer 2026	Phase 1
	One to three follow-up meetings for selected focus groups	Spring 2027	Phase 2
Public Meetings	Up to two public meetings	Spring & Fall 2027	Phase 2 + 3
TAC Meetings	At least two TAC meetings	Q2 2026 and Q2 2027	1 per phase



## Webpage

At project initiation, a bilingual (English/Spanish) webpage will be created and will include information on the purpose of ATPs and a summary of the City's past and present efforts. The layout and graphics of the webpage will be designed by Ecology Action's Marketing team to ensure a cohesive, easily readable, and branded look. The webpage will be published before the commencement of engagement events and will include:

- Basic project information.
- Dates and locations of upcoming pop-ups and public meetings for the project.
- A link or embedded map with a survey to receive public input on the project.

## Pop-Up Events (5-6)

Pop-up events are a helpful tool for allowing the project team to connect with community members directly in places that they already go in their regular routine and with people who do not attend traditional public meetings. They also allow for immediate feedback and increase visibility and awareness of the engagement effort.

The project team will maintain and regularly update a shared spreadsheet to compile potential engagement opportunities. This living document will serve as a centralized source for tracking outreach events, community meetings, and other relevant activities, ensuring the team remains informed and coordinated throughout the project.

Pop-ups will take place during Phase 1 of the project to ensure community perspectives are incorporated into the data analysis and recommendations, goals, and priorities of development prior to the release of the public review draft.

During **Phase 1**, the purpose of the pop-ups is to spread awareness about the planning effort to gather input about existing conditions, goals, and priorities. Feedback will be collected directly through conversation and via marking up maps with sticky notes, with the option to provide this information online instead via a project webmap.



**Table 3 – Pop Ups**

Target audience / geography	Pop-up location
General Public and Transit Users	The Capitola Mall at the transit center and/or during public events
General Public	Capitola Village Event (e.g. Art & Wine Festival, Esplanade Park music events)
General Public & Neighborhood families	Food Truck Fridays – (target 1 <sup>st</sup> event in Monterey Park for high attendance)
Youth, Families, and Active Transportation Users	McGregor Drive Skate Park and Pump Track; Public library story time or other parent/child event
General Public	Non-village commercial area, i.e. Gayles, fruit stand, Capitola Library, Bay Ave businesses (*requires owner permission)
Cyclists & Active Transportation Users	Peery Park bridge; Capitola Wharf

### Focus Groups (6)

The project team will convene six virtual & in person focus groups and conduct targeted discussions to understand the concerns of various stakeholders. The project team will maintain and regularly update a shared spreadsheet of potential invitees and partner organizations and agencies that could assist in reaching target populations.

The planned focus group categories and the potential engagement strategies for each group are outlined below.



**Table 4 - Focus Groups**

	<b>Group</b>	<b>Number of meetings</b>	<b>Project Phase(s)</b>
1	<b>Youth</b> – New Brighton Middle School Bike Club	1	Phase 1
2	<b>People with Disabilities</b> - Dakota Apartments; Vista Center	1	Phase 1
3	<b>Seniors</b> – Loma Vista Mobile Home Park, Mid County Senior Center, Trade Winds Mobile Home Park, Bay Avenue Senior Apartments	1	Phase 1
4	<b>Pedestrian, transit, and bike advocates</b>	1	Phase 1
5	<b>Business Owners</b> – Chamber of Commerce, The Village	1	Phase 1
6	<b>Low-income households/ Unhoused</b> - Live Oak Resource Center	1	Phase 1
	Total	6	

Based on attendance, interest, and needed follow-up, 1-3 follow-up focus groups may be organized in Phase 2.

### Public Meetings (2)

Two public meetings will be held during the project period to provide updates on the ATP and receive input from community members. The meetings will be held in a convenient, accessible location such as the Capitola Community Center at Jade Street Park, and the Capitola Public Library. Meetings will likely be held in an open house format, with information displayed on boards and staff available for comment, but format may vary depending on venue and information being presented. Feedback from events will be integrated into the draft plan, and Q+As may be published on the project webpage to address common questions heard at events.

#### *Meeting 1: Active Transportation Needs, Barriers, and Recommendations*

The first public meeting will occur during **Phase 2** of the project. The project team will present initial draft recommendations based on the information gathered during community outreach and engagement in Phase 1, including comments from the online



survey tool, pop-up events, and focus group discussions. The team will actively welcome suggestions and recommendations from community members and will document and synthesize all input received.

### *Meeting 2: Community Feedback on Draft ATP Update*

The second public meeting will occur during **Phase 3** of the project. The project team will solicit feedback from community members on a draft version of the ATP. This meeting will serve as an opportunity for community members to comment on the ATP draft before it is finalized. Feedback from community members will be incorporated in the final ATP.

## Technical Advisory Committee (3)

The city and Ecology Action will coordinate a TAC that consists of representatives from a diverse set of partner agencies including the Capitola Public Works and Community Development Departments, Transit District, Santa Cruz County Public Health Department, Caltrans District 5, Soquel Elementary and Soquel High School District, local bicycle and pedestrian advocacy organizations such as Bike Santa Cruz County, Ecology Action, and Community Bridges, the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) and the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG).

One TAC meetings will be held during each phase of the project (three meetings total) and will cover the following topics:

- Goals and Existing Conditions
- Draft Recommendations and Prioritization
- Soliciting input on the Draft ATP

## Engagement Metrics

Ecology Action will record the number of people engaged in their internal tracking system, report out to city staff at regular check in meetings, and report totals in draft report documents.

Outreach strategies may be refined over the course of the project based on participation levels and feedback to address any identified gaps.

## Audience Engagement Strategies

### *Capitola Schools*

Potential engagement strategies for Capitola Schools include:



- The project team will endeavor to facilitate a focus group during standing meetings held by school principals.
  - Ecology Action can leverage existing relationships between the Santa Cruz Safe Routes to School team and local school principals and administrators.
- The project team may conduct targeted student outreach at high schools to solicit input and perspectives from younger community members.

### *Cyclists & Pedestrians*

Potential engagement strategies for cyclists and pedestrians include:

- Ecology Action will coordinate with existing cyclist and pedestrian advisory and advocacy groups to gather feedback about existing conditions for active transportation in Capitola including:
  - The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) [Bicycle Advisory Committee](#)
  - RTC Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee (E&D TAC).
  - [The Santa Cruz County Community Traffic Safety Coalition](#)
  - [Bike Santa Cruz County](#)

### *Neighborhoods*

Livable cities are made up of well connected, flourishing neighborhoods. To create a comprehensive ATP, the project team will engage with individual neighborhoods to better understand their concerns and vision for the future. This neighborhood-based approach is intended to reach residents of multifamily housing, mobile home parks, HOAs, and individual renters who may not otherwise participate in a formal focus group. Neighborhoods within the project area include:

- Castel Mobile Home Park
- Capitola Gardens
- Deanes Lane
- Casa Capitola
- Capitola Shores
- Capitola Villa HOA
- Capitola Knolls HOA

Potential engagement strategies for neighborhoods include:

- Promote events and opportunities to pre-existing neighborhood groups to provide input



- Use localized social media platforms, such as Nextdoor and neighborhood Facebook groups
- Attend existing neighborhood events
- Invite individuals to a focus group if they are within the relevant audience, or offer to meet with a neighborhood group about the project if there is enough interest

### *Businesses*

A key aspect of developing an effective ATP is understanding trip origins and destinations, which are often to/from commercial areas. The project team will seek input from local business owners to gain insights on how increased active transportation impacts their business operations and surrounding community.

Potential engagement strategies for businesses include:

- Coordinating with the Business Improvement Area (BIA) & Chamber of Commerce
- Highlight case studies from other jurisdictions where ATPs have benefited local businesses
- Engaging a diverse range of businesses, such as restaurants, retail, real estate, convenience/grocery, wellness/medical, etc., that serve various segments of the community to ensure broad and inclusive input