

## 2. Existing Bicycle Facilities and Programs

### 2.1 Setting and Land Use

The City of Bakersfield, with a population of 347,000, is one of the largest cities in California. It is located near the southern end of the San Joaquin Valley, south of Fresno and northwest of the Los Angeles metropolitan area. Bakersfield is the largest city in and government seat of Kern County.

The City is comprised of residential neighborhoods and commercial centers concentrated in the Downtown, Valley Plaza Mall, and the Northwest Promenade. Figure 2-1 presents Bakersfield's land use map. Single- and multi-family residential homes account for approximately 25 percent of the City's land area, while commercial designations account for approximately 3 percent of the City. Industrial property makes up about 7 percent of the City's land.<sup>1</sup> Bakersfield is a place where people can both live and work and establishes the City as an important employment and retail center in the southern San Joaquin Valley.

Population growth in Kern County has been rapid since the 1970's and is expected to continue to grow at a steady rate. The California Department of Finance estimates the County will grow from 841,100 (2010) to 1,057,400 (2020) and to 1,341,300 (2030).<sup>2</sup>

The City of Bakersfield is accessible by highways and both regional and local transit. State Highway 99 (north-south) connects the City with other San Joaquin Valley cities, Sacramento, and Los Angeles. State Highway 58 runs east-west and connects Bakersfield with the Mojave Valley. Interstate 5 runs parallel to State Highway 99 and connects Southern California to Northern California and the Bay Area.

Approximately 1.2 percent of Bakersfield residents use public transit.<sup>3</sup> Three public transit agencies operate within the City: Golden Empire Transit (GET), Kern Regional Transit, and Amtrak. GET has annual boardings of 7.2 million passengers.<sup>4</sup> GET operates bus routes throughout the City and provides front-loading bicycle racks. Kern Regional Transit serves Bakersfield with nine of its twelve routes, all of which have front-loading bicycle racks.



*Riverwalk*

<sup>1</sup> Metropolitan Bakersfield General Plan, 2000.

<sup>2</sup> California Population Projections, California Department of Finance, 2013.

<sup>3</sup> American Community Survey, United States Census, 2007-2011.

<sup>4</sup> [www.getbus.org/about/](http://www.getbus.org/about/)

# City of Bakersfield | Bicycle Transportation Plan

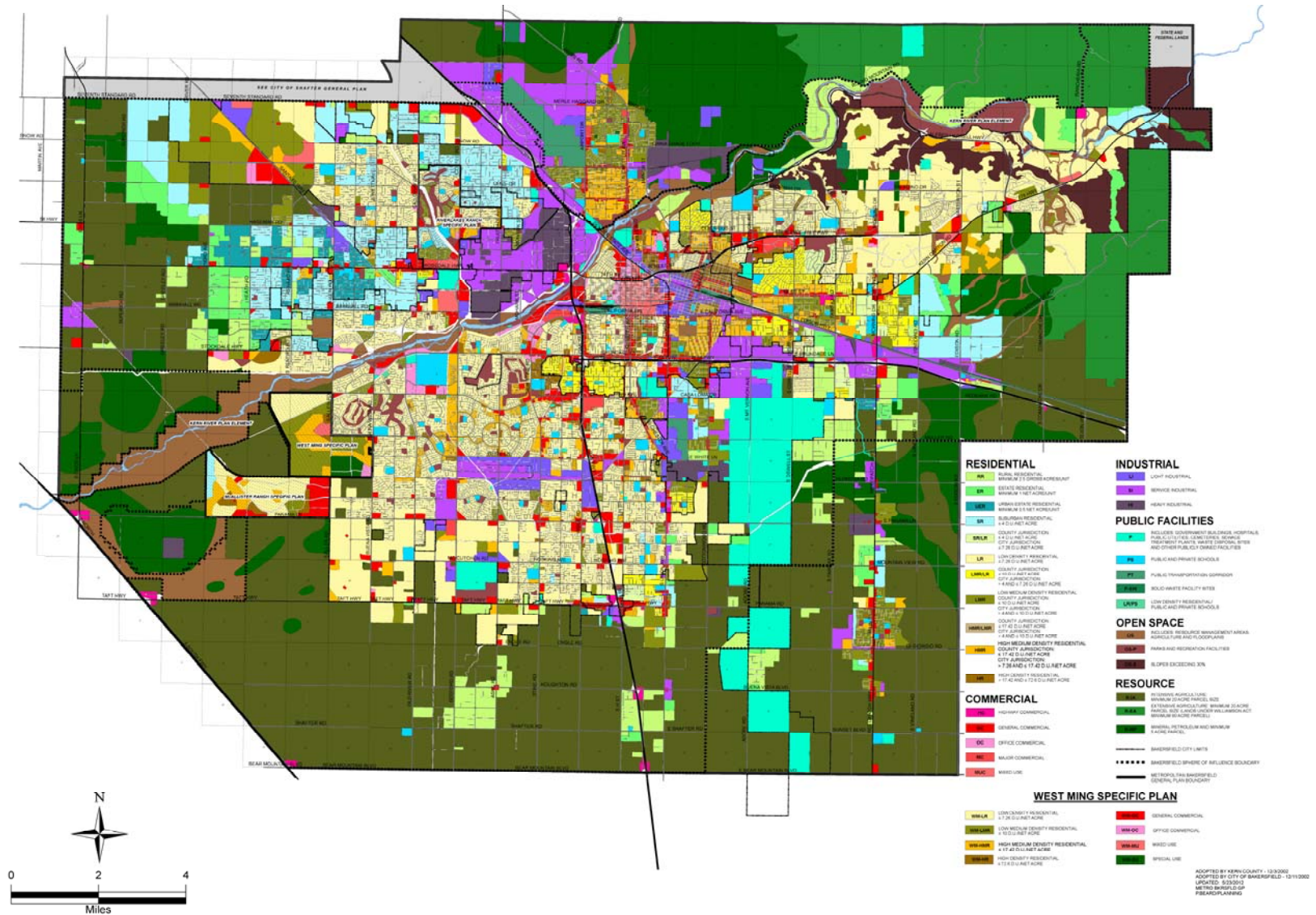
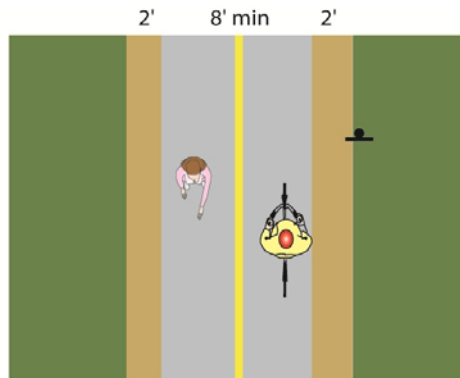
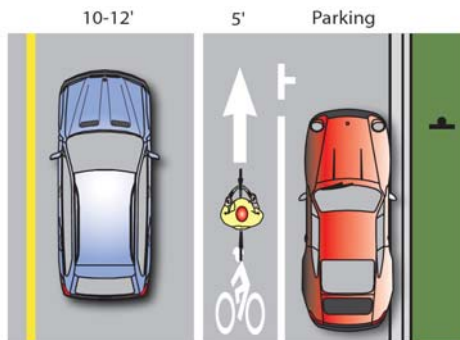


Figure 2-1: Metropolitan Bakersfield Land Use Map

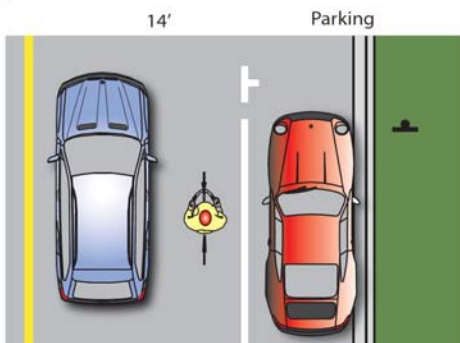
## 2.2 The Five E's and Bikeway Classifications



*Class I bikeways are separated from the roadway.*



*Class II bike lanes provide a striped travel lane on roadways for bicyclists.*



*Class III bicycle routes are signed roadways indicating a preferred bicycle route.*

As defined by the League of American Bicyclists, bicycle-friendly cities demonstrate achievements in each of five categories, often referred to as the Five E's of bicycle planning. The Five Es are:

- **Engineering** includes on-street bicycle facilities and bicycle parking as well as signage and maintenance.

Aside from physical infrastructure, the other 4 E's are programmatic in nature. Programs are a great way to maximize use of bicycle facilities and include:

- **Encouragement** programs such as bike maps and events such as Bike to Work Day which reward existing bicyclists and motivate more people to ride bicycles.
- **Education** programs improve safety and awareness. These may be delivered in schools as bicycle skills programs, or provided at low or no cost to adults through non-profit organizations.
- **Enforcement** programs that reinforce legal and respectful driving and bicycling make novice bicyclist feel more secure.
- **Evaluation** programs provide a method for monitoring improvements and informing future investments.

The analysis of Bakersfield's existing facilities and programs within the framework of the Five Es is one way to assess the City's bicycle-friendly status.

The City of Bakersfield has a growing network of Class I, II and III facilities throughout the City. The City has also implemented several programs to support bicycling. This chapter presents existing facilities and programs in order to help identify where new facilities are needed and what programs will better support bicycling in Bakersfield.

Figure 2-2: Caltrans Bikeway Classifications

This Plan refers to standard bikeway definitions identified by Caltrans in Chapter 1000 of the 2012 Highway Design Manual, shown above in Figure 2-2.



## 2.3 Engineering

### 2.3.1 Existing Bikeways

The City has installed 143 miles of bikeways, as summarized in Table 2-1. A complete breakdown of bicycle facilities and respective lengths can be found in Table 2-2. The longest bikeway is the Kern River Bike Path, which attracts users from the City and region. The Kern River Parkway includes approximately 32 miles of pathways, and all but three miles of the paths are within City limits. Figure 2-5 maps Bakersfield’s existing bikeways. These figures exclude bikeways in Kern County.

Table 2-1: Existing Bikeways Summary

<b>Class</b>	<b>Mileage</b>
Class I: Shared-Use Path	27.9
Class II: Bike Lanes	114.38
Class III: Bike Route	0.73
<b>Total Mileage</b>	<b>143.01</b>

Over the past ten years, beginning with fiscal year 2003/2004, the City of Bakersfield has invested over \$10M in bicycle facilities. Of this sum, 90% is attributed to bike lane maintenance on arterial and collector roads performed as part of wider maintenance and rehabilitation activities. Bicycle-specific investments totaled about \$1M and principally consisted of bicycle lane planning and design, although some bicycle parking and road crossing beacons were also included. A breakdown of the investments is presented in Appendix D.



*Kern River Bike Path*

Table 2-2: Existing Bikeways Detail

Name	Start	End	Distance (miles)
<b>Class I Shared-Use Paths</b>			
Access Path - Oak Street	Oak Street	Kern River Parkway	0.02
Alfred Harrell Path	City Limit	Old Alfred Harrell Hwy	0.32
CSU Path	Stockdale Highway	Camino Media	0.88
Kern River Parkway	Enos Lane	China Grade Loop	21.84
Kern River Parkway Spur	Kern River Parkway	Coffee Road	0.02
Kern River Parkway Spur	Kern River Parkway	Coffee Road	0.02
Morning Drive Bike Path	Paladino Drive Bike Path	City Limits	1.62
Paladino Drive Path	Royal Coach Circle	Morning Drive	1.83
Park at Riverwalk	Kern River Parkway	Kern River Parkway	0.85
Reina Class I Path	Jewetta Avenue	Verdugo Ln	0.50
<b>Class I Total</b>			<b>27.90</b>
<b>Class II Bike Lanes</b>			
21st Street	Union Avenue	King Street	0.66
21st Street	Oak Street	Union Avenue	2.02
30th Street	Chester Avenue	Union Avenue	0.87
4th Street	P Street	Union Avenue	0.50
Akers Street	Ming Avenue	Wilson Avenue	0.50
Allen Road	Stockdale Highway	Ming Avenue	0.99
Alta Vista Drive	Bernard Street	Niles Street	0.45
Ashe Road	Stockdale Highway	Panama Lane	4.02
Auburn Street	Columbus Street	Fairfax Road	1.33
Belle Terrace	City Limit	New Stine Road	0.72
Bernard Street	Mount Vernon Avenue	Oswell Street	1.03
Brimhall Road	Allen Road	Coffee Road	3.01
Buena Vista Road	Stockdale Highway	White Lane	1.63
Buena Vista Road	White Lane	Panama Lane	2.00
California Avenue	Marella Way	Stockdale Highway	0.74
Calloway Drive	Old River Road	Brimhall Road	1.19
Calloway Drive	Hageman Road	Norris Road	2.51
Camino Media	Old River Road	Gosford Road	1.31
Chester Avenue	Columbus Street	Garces Circle	5.12
City Hills Drive	Vineland Road	Panorama Drive	0.86
Clay Patrick Farr Way	Granite Falls Drive	Rosedale Highway	0.23
Coffee Road	Norris Road	Stockdale Highway	4.54
Columbus Street	River Boulevard	Panorama Drive	2.77
Fairfax Road	Alfred Harrell Highway	Start of Class 3	2.96
Gosford Road	Stockdale Highway	Harris Road	3.51
Hageman Road	Knudsen Drive	Mohawk Street	0.49
Hageman Road	Old Farm Road	Mohawk Street	4.08
Haley Drive	Truxtun Avenue	California Avenue	0.34
Haley Street	Columbus Street	Highway 178	0.41
Haley Street	Flower Street	Kentucky Street	0.48
Jewetta Avenue	Brimhall Road	Stockdale Highway	1.27
Jewetta Avenue	Snow Road	Hageman Road	2.00
Manor Street	Kern River Parkway	Union Avenue	0.38
Ming Avenue	S. Allen Road	Buena Vista Road	0.99
Ming Avenue	Buena Vista Road	New Stine Road	3.91
Miramonte Drive	Alfred Harrell Highway	Highway 178	1.06
Mohawk Street	City Limit	California Avenue	1.68
Monitor Street	White Lane	Hosking Avenue	2.50

Name	Start	End	Distance (miles)
N. Laurelglen Boulevard	Gosford Road	Wilford Court	0.59
New Stine Road	Stockdale Highway	Hahn Avenue	4.06
Norris Road	Lavender Gate Drive	Calloway Drive	0.09
Oak Street	Kern River Parkway	Brundage Lane	1.96
Old River Road	Stockdale Highway	Panama Lane	3.49
Olive Drive	Allen Road	Coffee Road	3.17
Panama Lane	Colony Street	S. H Street	0.34
Panama Lane	Dennen Street	Gosford Road	3.34
Panorama Drive	Vineland Road	Masterson Street	1.04
Panorama Drive	Union Avenue	Fairfax Road	5.53
Planz Road	Wilson Road	S. Chester Avenue	3.54
Royal Coach Circle	Fairfax Road	Paladino Drive Path	0.07
s. Laurelglen Boulevard	Wildford Court	Gosford Road	0.56
S. P Street	California Avenue	Brundage Lane	1.95
Scarlet Oak Boulevard	Camino Media	Ming Avenue	0.22
Snow Road	Verdugo Lane	Calloway Drive	0.49
Stockdale Highway	Renfro Rd	Oak Street	6.24
Union Avenue	Columbus Street	Panorama Drive	0.25
University Avenue	Haley Street	Columbus Street	1.50
Vineland Road	Paladino Drive	City Hills Drive	0.76
W. Columbus Street	Chester Avenue	Union Avenue	0.91
White Lane	S. Allen Road	Buena Vista Road	1.00
White Lane	H Street	Union Street	1.03
White Lane	Buena Vista Drive	Dovewood Street	4.51
Wible Road	Oak Street	Cty Limit	0.39
Wible Road	City Limit	Planz Road	1.27
Willson Road	Planz Road	White Lane	0.53
Watts Drive	Union Avenue	Madison Street	0.49
<b>Class II Total</b>			<b>114.38</b>
<b>Class III Bike Routes</b>			
Norris Road	Snow Road	Lavender Gate Drive	0.73
<b>Class III Total</b>			<b>0.73</b>
<b>Bikeways Total</b>			<b>143.01</b>

### 2.3.2 Signing

The California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD) outlines the requirements for bikeway signage.

The Bike Lane Sign (R81) is required at the beginning of each designated bike lane and at each major decision point. The Bike Route Sign (D11-1) is required on Class III facilities. Shared-use paths require additional standardized signs to help manage different user groups. The City has installed CA MUTCD standard signs along its bikeways.



Figure 2-3: Caltrans Bikeway Signs

### 2.3.3 Bicycle Signal Detection

Where traffic signals are not operated on fixed timing but instead activated by detection, bicycle detection is important because it reduces bicyclist delay and discourages red light running. The City has various means of bicycle detection employed on a case-by-case basis, including video and electromagnetic loop detection. The City has typically used Type C or Type E loops but now uses Type D loops, shown in Figure 2-4. The City is currently in the process of including bicycle detection at all new and retrofitted signals.

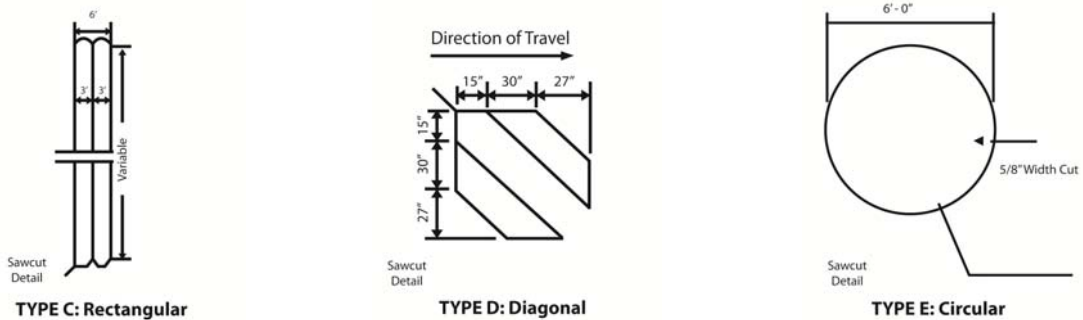


Figure 2-4: Loop detectors in use in Bakersfield

### 2.3.4 Bicycle Parking and End of Trip Facilities

Bicycle parking can range from a simple and convenient bicycle rack to storage in a bicycle locker or room that protects against weather, vandalism and theft. For those who dress more formally, travel longer distances, or bicycle in hot weather, the ability to shower and change can be as important as bicycle parking. Generally, public bicycle parking is located in downtown Bakersfield. Known bicycle parking locations include those listed below and are shown on Figure 2-5:

- City Hall (parking and shower facilities for employees)
- Bakersfield Community Development Building (parking and shower facilities for employees)
- Bike Bakersfield
- Dagny's Coffee Company
- Bakersfield Sports Village



*A bicycle rack in Downtown Bakersfield*



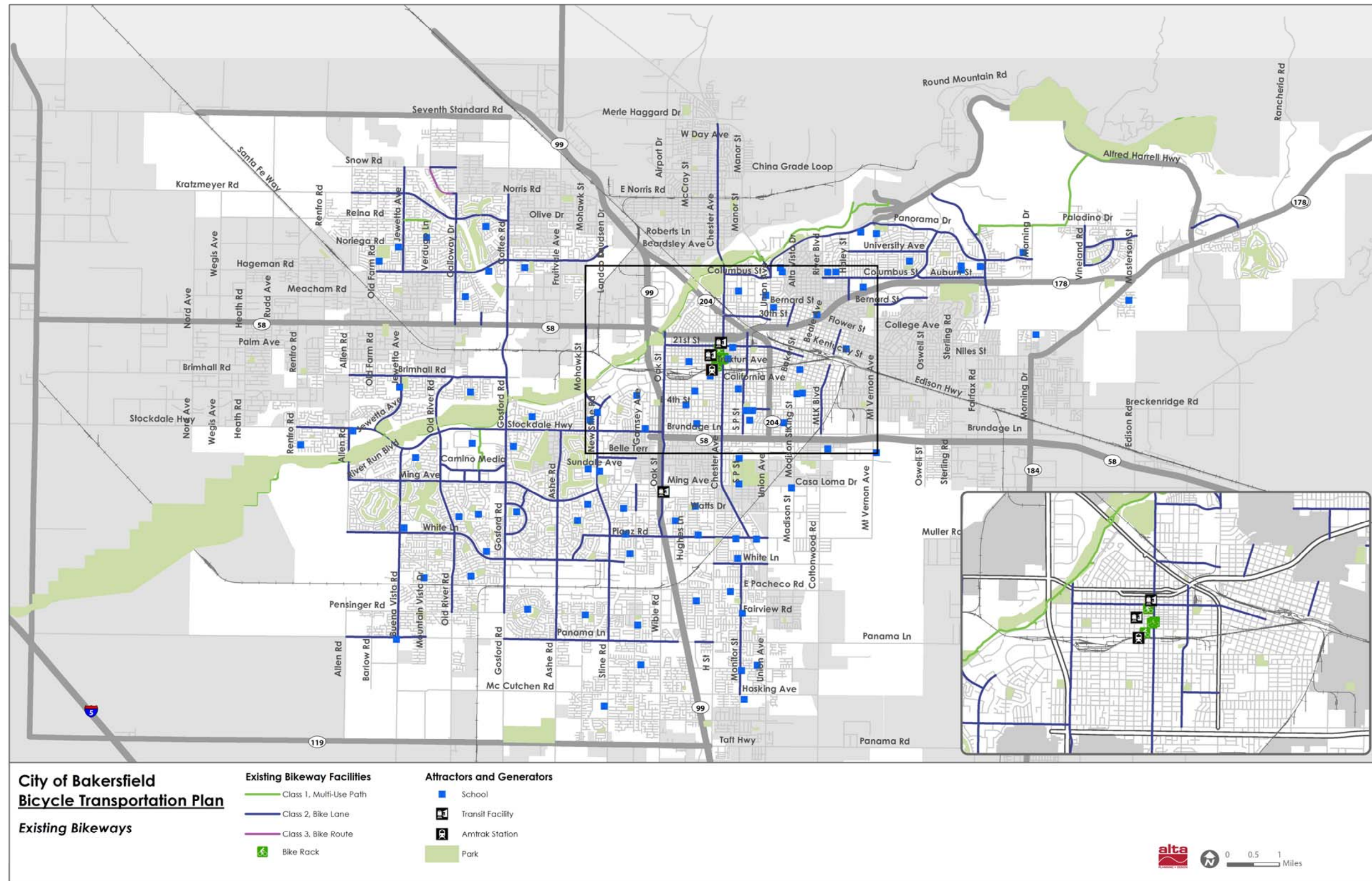


Figure 2-5: Bakersfield Existing Bikeway Network

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### 2.3.5 Maintenance

#### Street and Bike Path Sweeping

Street sweeping clears the road of debris that would otherwise make bicycling difficult. Streets are the primary focus of the City's street sweeping program; however, Class II and III bike facilities are typically covered by this work. The Bakersfield Public Works Department has a rotating street sweeping schedule for residential roadways, which are swept monthly.

#### Roadway Maintenance

Potholes are a hazard to bicyclists that can cause crashes and/or damage to bicycles. Residents may report potholes to the Public Works Department using a 24 hour pothole hotline: (661) 326-ROAD. Residents may request other repairs, including those on bike paths, either by filling out a Citizen Job Request Form on the City's website or calling (661) 326-3111.

## 2.4 Encouragement Programs

The following describes encouragement related programs hosted by the City of Bakersfield and groups within the City.

### 2.4.1 Bike to Work Day

Bike to Work Day is an event promoting bicycling to work and is typically held the third Friday in May. The City of Bakersfield encourages City staff to participate in Bike to Work Day with a group ride and raffle prizes. Bike Bakersfield typically hosts events during the month and commuter stands the week of Bike to Work Day.

### 2.4.2 Full Moon Ride

The Full Moon Ride is a monthly ride along the Kern River Bike Path. This event is sponsored by non-profit organization Bike Bakersfield and is advertised by the City. The ride is slow paced and appropriate for bicyclists of all skill levels and ages. Approximately 100-175 riders participate each month.

### 2.4.3 Sunday City Bike Ride

Also promoted by Bike Bakersfield, this monthly group ride was first held on December 16, 2012. It is modeled on the Full Moon Ride but on city streets instead of the Parkway.

### 2.4.4 Free Bike Valet at major events

Bike Bakersfield organizes a free bike valet at concerts, festivals, and other large events around the City



*Bike Bakersfield hosts numerous group rides  
(photo courtesy of Bike Bakersfield)*



## 2.5 Education Programs

Education programs typically consist of bicycle traffic skills and/or maintenance training, public service messages in traditional and online media, and handouts distributed at events. The educational programs in Bakersfield are summarized in the following sections.

### 2.5.1 Build-A-Bike

The City of Bakersfield’s Parks and Recreation Department provides a Build-A-Bike program for children ages nine through 13 several days per week at the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center. The program offers a hands-on learning environment where the children are taught how to build their own bikes, as well as the fundamentals of bicycle repair, maintenance, and safety. To operate the program, the Bakersfield police department donates unclaimed stolen bicycles, Snider’s Cyclery provides discounted parts and materials, and Bike Bakersfield provides an instructor.

### 2.5.2 Bicycle Rodeos

The City of Bakersfield and Bike Bakersfield co-sponsor Bicycle Rodeos in the summer for children ages nine through 12. Bicycle rodeos help children develop basic bicycling techniques and safety skills through the use of props to simulate the roadway environment. Children receive instructions on how to maneuver, observe signs, and look for on-coming traffic before proceeding through intersections. The rodeos are free to participants.



*Bicycle Rodeos help children develop basic bicycling skills and knowledge  
(photo courtesy of Bike Bakersfield)*

### 2.5.3 Confident City Cycling Classes

Bike Bakersfield offers this course that teaches state and local laws, on-bike skill development, and other lessons to help cyclists become safer and more confident. The classes are free for Bike Bakersfield members.



### **2.5.4 City Website**

The City posts information about bicycling on its website to educate the community. This information includes bicycle-related violations from the California Vehicle Code and Municipal Code, as well as the location of the central traffic district<sup>5</sup> where bicycling is prohibited on the sidewalk.

The website also provides the following information: “Every year in California over 100 people are killed and thousands more are injured in bicycle collisions. You can make bicycling safer for everyone by obeying the law, keeping your bicycle in good condition and riding carefully. Remember, a bicycle is a vehicle that shares the road with much larger vehicles. Always remain alert and watch for cars and trucks at intersections, driveways, and exits from parking lots.”

## **2.6 Enforcement Programs**

The City of Bakersfield Police Department enforces bicycle-related infractions. Reserve officers can be assigned to the City’s bicycle patrol.<sup>6</sup>

## **2.7 Evaluation Programs**

Evaluation programs measure and evaluate the impact of projects, policies and programs. Typical evaluation programs range from a simple year-after-year comparison of US Census Journey to Work data to bicycle counts and community surveys. Bicycle counts and community surveys act as methods to evaluate the impacts of specific bicycle improvement projects and can also function as way to measure progress towards reaching a City’s sustainability goals.

The City of Bakersfield does not currently have bicycle-related evaluation programs. However, bicycle counts were conducted as part of this planning process, as summarized in section 2.4 of this document. This count effort is intended to become the beginnings of a benchmarking effort, continuing on an annual basis to measure and evaluate projects, policies and programs.

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<sup>5</sup> The central traffic district is defined as all of the area within the boundary of the following streets: from the west line of F Street to the east line of Q Street, from the north line of 25th Street to the north line of 15th Street, except 23rd and 24th Streets

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.bakersfieldcity.us/police/Support\\_Services/Police\\_Reserves/index.html](http://www.bakersfieldcity.us/police/Support_Services/Police_Reserves/index.html)

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