

2019 Project Application Form

\$350,000 RSTPX available countywide to non-city, non-County, non-METRO entities

| A. Application Summary | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--------------------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|----------------|------|-------------------|---|----------------|---|-------------|---|
| 1. Project Title: | Bike Challenge + - a gateway to increased bike commuting | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Applicant/ Implementing Entity: | Ecology Action | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3. Brief project description: | The Bike Challenge + is an evolution of the Bike to Work is Every Day pilot program which catalyzed and propelled an increase in frequent bike commuting throughout Santa Cruz County. Based on the pilot success and lessons learned, version 2.0 will utilize an online tracking and encouragement platform (either Love to Ride or Ride Amigos) that leverages regular participant rewards, friendly competition and team support/encouragement. The twice-a-year Monthly Bike Challenge and year-round encouragement tools will target all commuters in Santa Cruz County. The Challenge + also includes bike commuter workshops, a Rail Trail Ride, marketing campaign, incentives and data/survey collection all geared toward increasing daily bike commuting. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. Summary of Project Purpose, Need, Benefits: | The Bike Challenge + is designed to shift more people to choose the bike for transportation and to increase the frequency of those who currently bike commute. As local jurisdictions build more and better bike infrastructure—such as the Rail—there is a need to create the bike social infrastructure of support and encouragement to get more people on bikes for every day transportation. Benefits include reduced commute and regular drive alone car trips therefore reducing VMT, GHG emissions & other tailpipe pollution, safer, less congested and more livable streets. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5. Funds requested: | \$200,000 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6. Matching Funds: <i>(source & amount)</i> | \$161,914 total. (donations, sponsorship, TDA & City of Santa Cruz Downtown parking funds) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7. Schedule Summary: <i>(Month/year to month/year)</i> | January, 2020 through December, 2021. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8. Priority # | Project is priority # 1 of 2 applications submitted | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9. Est. # of daily users <i>(of facility, program, or service)</i> | 1,685 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 10. Project Cost by Mode: | <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 75%;"><i>List the approximate percentage of <u>total</u> project costs related to different transportation modes in the chart below.</i></th> <th style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">% of Total Cost by Mode</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Pavement Preservation (rehab, overlay, etc.)</td> <td style="text-align: center;">%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Road –Auto Serving</td> <td style="text-align: center;">%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bicycle</td> <td style="text-align: center;">100%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pedestrian</td> <td style="text-align: center;">%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Transit</td> <td style="text-align: center;">%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TSM*</td> <td style="text-align: center;">%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | <i>List the approximate percentage of <u>total</u> project costs related to different transportation modes in the chart below.</i> | % of Total Cost by Mode | Pavement Preservation (rehab, overlay, etc.) | % | Road –Auto Serving | % | Bicycle | 100% | Pedestrian | % | Transit | % | TSM* | % |
| <i>List the approximate percentage of <u>total</u> project costs related to different transportation modes in the chart below.</i> | % of Total Cost by Mode | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Pavement Preservation (rehab, overlay, etc.) | % | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Road –Auto Serving | % | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bicycle | 100% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Pedestrian | % | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Transit | % | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| TSM* | % | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | |
|---|---|------|
| | TDM* | % |
| | Planning | % |
| | TOTAL | 100% |
| <i>*TSM=Transportation System Management (ex. ITS, signal synchronization); *TDM=Transportation Demand Management (ex. rideshare programs)</i> | | |
| 11. Implementing Agency Contact | Name: Ecology Action Telephone Number: 831-515-1327 E-mail: pcanin@ecoact.org | |
| 12. Public Agency Sponsor | Does this project have a sponsoring Public Agency that has Master Agreement with Caltrans? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes. Public Agency Sponsor: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No. We request that RTC consider serving as sponsor. | |

B. Detailed Project Description/Scope of Work

Attach 2-10 pages, as needed to provide the following information:

- **Detailed description of project**
- **Public Outreach:** Describe any past and planned public outreach on project (e.g., describe how stakeholders were/will be engaged in the development of the project, intended outreach methods, activities (e.g., pop-up planning events; planning activities at community events; community workshops; design charrettes; online and social media, etc.; describe how you intend to keep the community and stakeholders updated during implementation)
- **Project location and maps, if applicable**
- **Any other supporting information about proposal**

Ecology Action (EA) is proposing the Bike Challenge + a gateway to increased bike commuting—based on the success and lessons learned from the pilot project, Every Day is Bike to Work Day—that will increase year-round bike transportation throughout Santa Cruz County by directly engaging commuters and residents. The Challenge+ will implement two month-long Bike Challenges coupled with year-round participant support and encouragement through worksite and direct participant outreach to increase regular bike commuting. EA will enhance this campaign with worksite and community Bike Commuter/Safety Workshops, a Rail Trail Bike Ride, a targeted marketing, and incentives. We’ll track increased ridership through participant baseline and follow-up surveys.

We will leverage our Bike to Work, Transportation Membership Service, and established working relationships with large employers and other bike program participants. We’ll continue to work closely and coordinate with the RTC’s my.cruz511.org RideAmigos TDM launch, the City of Santa Cruz’s Go Santa Cruz TDM effort, and other public agency sustainable transportation efforts. This proposal will target potential bike commuters throughout the county, including the cities and unincorporated areas, through direct outreach to communities and employers. We forecast directly serving 1,900 local commuters (number of individuals who participate in the Challenge online platform throughout the year), and 3,500 indirectly, with this targeted effort to increase bike commuting.

Program details:

- **Two Month-long Bike Challenges:** EA will conduct high visibility month-long Bike Challenges in May and September. We will utilize an online platform that engages, motivates, tracks and rewards bike commuter and transportation trips. We will engage at least 1,300 participants from 80 work sites throughout the county. We will target large employers and communities from a variety of locations, from south to north county.

- **12-month Targeted Encouragement:** This new approach capitalizes on the momentum of the Challenge momentum through ongoing engagement and encouragement. We will use a variety of direct channels – including commuter workshops, bike rides and direct one-on-one outreach -- to motivate at least 1,900 Challenge participants to keep bike commuting year-round. This number is higher than the Monthly Challenges as many individuals sign up and participant outside of the 2 Monthly Challenges. We will deploy a targeted marketing campaign of content rich emails, videos, and photos with a focus on new and intermediate riders. We will provide demographically specific, bike commuter essentials tool kits to prepare participants for commuting throughout the year.
- **Ten bike commuter/safety workshops (five per year):** These direct to commuter workshops focus on safety, commuter gear/resources, bike routes and other essential information to give participants the information, skills and confidence to bike in traffic. Our League of American Bicyclists certified instructors utilize video, slides, and interactive presentations to educate participants. We teach best practice skills for operating ebikes, JUMP bikes and for sharing and using the Rail Trail. We'll target new and intermediate cyclists to teach them how to safely and confidentially navigate busy roads and paved trails.

These workshops are split between community events at high-profile sites (i.e. Westside at the Wrigley Building) and large employers (i.e. Dignity Health & Driscoll's). We will host lunch time and evening workshops at geographically diverse locations across the County.

- **Host Rail Trail Ride (one in 2021):** We will implement a community bike ride and pop-up event on the Westside of Santa Cruz to directly promote and engage the community in making the best use of the newly opened section of the Rail Trail. We will work with Westside businesses and community groups to make this a neighborhood event to celebrate the new Rail Trail.
- **Survey and Data collection (one baseline and least one follow up survey for each participant):** We will collect both baseline and follow-up survey data to measure the impact of the Challenge + and evaluate the impact of new bike infrastructure such as the Westside Rail Trail. We will work with RTC staff to design survey questions, analysis and timeline.
- **Incentives:** We will reward randomly selected Challenge participants with a significant cash prize as we have done in past challenges. We will offer large, attention getting cash prizes to new and infrequent bike commuters, so that they adopt biking commuting as a regular habit These cash incentives will be used to motivate the greatest number of riders throughout the year.
- **Marketing Plan:** We will design and implement a marketing campaign based on a needs assessment of new and intermediate riders. The campaign will use a variety of media channels such as social media, original content, photographs and videos, digital graphics/art, monthly e-newsletters, ads, news stories, and on street promo. This campaign will increase awareness and engagement to maximize the number of Challenge participants and move them to adopting bike commuting as a daily habit.

Ecology Action staff will incorporate these main program elements into a comprehensive bike commuting campaign that will motivate, inform, track and convert more car commuters to biking for transportation.

EA has implemented three month-long Bike Challenges—September 2018, May 2019 and September 2019—that have generated a high level of participation from novice, intermediate and experienced bike riders that we had not previously seen in our county. The participants reduced car trips and switched to a healthier and more rewarding commute while being part of a positive and beneficial team and community campaign. The Love to Ride online platform hosted the Challenges and participants recorded and tracked their bike trips. The Challenge incorporates friendly competition, social encouragement, camaraderie, and gamification that instills a sense of accomplishment, contribution, and community while allowing participants to bike for rewards.

Follow-up survey from 2019 show that local riders are taking more bike transportation trips and also encouraging their co-workers and friends to ride more. We received 101 completed surveys from September Bike Challenge participants. We asked, “Which of the following are you doing more often as a result of participating in the Bike Challenge?” 1. Biking to work more often – 41%. 2. Biking for Errands – 29%. 3. Biking for recreation 32% 4. Encouraging others to ride more often – 49%.

The online Bike Challenge is an effective vehicle for catalyzing sustainable transportation change. The interactive tool uses the latest engagement strategies and it captures quantifiable transportation data. The online platform, Love to Ride, provides a common space where cyclists of all backgrounds, with access to internet, can come and record their rides, sets personal goals, encourage their peers and be encouraged by their peers, gain insight into their own riding habits as well as their company and see the community wide impact, and compete locally and nationally for various recognition (i.e. most commutes or most people encouraged).

EA will continue the twice-a-year Challenges in May and September that align with national competitions. We’ll use a variety of outreach techniques to generate new registrants to grow the pool of Challenge participants as the buzz and momentum from the last few Challenges spreads throughout the community. A major accelerant has been the grand cash prize of \$7,500 that EA secured by engaging an anonymous individual donor. This donor saw the platform as a powerful tool for behavior change and was willing to experiment to see if a large cash prize would tip the scales and get people who might not otherwise bike to do so. Our survey results indicated a majority of respondents (69%) were motivated by the cash prize.

The other half of the cash incentive, also \$7,500, was used to engage employers and employees across Santa Cruz County in a workplace prize. Employers were given extra incentive to rally their employees to ride at least five times over the course of the month. In total, 26 additional Santa Cruz County residents were awarded employer cash prizes relative to the number of participating employees at their worksite. In total, 29 people were awarded prizes for participating in the Bike Month Challenge. The idea with an employer prize is to help demonstrate how anyone could be a winner and provide motivation at each worksite. With this proposal we commit to continuing to secure private funding to continue both cash prize elements.

With over 1,500 commuters signed up for the first three Challenges, we will reach more commuters through leveraging the networks of the already engaged participants through social media.. We have seen that when more people ride in a given company it normalizes the practice and more folks give bike commuting a try. With the growth of the participants we’ll be able to better keep them riding for 12 months as we’ll harness the influence of emails and social media posts for all levels of riders giving them the support, resources and encouragement that fits their level of riding experience and needs.

We will deploy a worksite outreach approach based on several companies who fully embraced the Challenge and amplified our engagement to sign up large number of their employees. One case study is the Seaside Company who had 24% of their staff participate in the past Cycle September Challenge with 31 new riders out of a total of 74 riders. Seaside employees recorded 7,227 miles biked for the month of September for an average of 97 miles biked for each employee who participated in the Challenge. The Boardwalk Amusement Park caught the bike bug because of one motivated employee who inspired his co-workers to engage in a friendly but fierce competition with Santa Cruz Bicycles. We will employ a variety of tools to replicate such high level of worksite engagement to expand the impact of the Bike Challenge.

The Love to Ride platform allows EA to quantify the Challenge impact—coupled with participant surveys—of the first 3 local Challenges. There were 1,532 participants who recorded 15,943 bike transportation trips resulting in 74,799 transportation miles biked. These trips resulted in 65,823 reduced GHG emissions from cars locally. Also 176 people identified as non-cyclists and who logged a total of 19,094 miles. The smartphone tracking apps connected to Love to Ride require users to take an extra step to mark a bike trip as non-recreational, and thus we believe transportation trips were under-recorded. For future Challenges, we deploy tools, incentives and education campaigns to participants so they accurately record their transportation trips.

We also collected participant feedback which was overwhelmingly positive. Here are two examples of participants who were motivated to bike more because of the Challenge.

“I now bike to work more than half of the work weekdays, which is quite monumental for me and it is all thanks to Cycle September”

“I was inspired to ride my bike almost daily during the month and have continued riding after the challenge.”

This effort will dovetail well with the City of Santa Cruz’s new Go Santa Cruz effort aimed at downtown employees who register and record sustainable transportation trips on the new Cruz511 online platform (run by the RideAmigos app). Downtown employees receive rewards for ongoing alternative transportation trips including bike trips. The Cruz511 system will be linked to the Bike Challenge either directly through RideAmigos or with Love to Ride integration into RideAmigos. The Challenge + will help generate more user for Cruz511 which will help make this system more effective as the RTC adds more capacity to this multi-modal sustainable transportation platform. EA will continue to work in coordination with City and RTC TDM staff to assure the Challenge + is integrated with Cruz511 leveraging promotion, rewards and information.

Our proven Bike Commuter/Safety Workshops will teach the skills and convey the knowledge to make riders more confident, safer and respectful road users. This is particularly necessary as JUMP electric bikes are becoming more popular in the City of Santa Cruz, will expand to UCSC and there is a planned bike share expansion to Live Oak and Capitola. These workshops will also teach path sharing etiquette to help alleviate user conflicts on the soon-to-be completed section of the Rail Trail. The social infrastructure can be implemented immediately and has the benefit of increasing bike trips and growing community support for critical infrastructure project approvals

The Bike Challenge + will also further the goals of state, regional, and local bike and climate action plans to increase bike ridership. Biking is already a popular means of local transportation, and it has the potential to increase, especially now that local jurisdictions have improved their bike infrastructure. The

City of Santa Cruz has added green bike lanes, bike boxes, contra-flow bike lanes, new bike bridges, and underpasses in an assertive effort to bolster biking and increase safety. The City of Watsonville and County of Santa Cruz have also made bike infrastructure improvements such as green lanes and bike paths. By the end of 2020, the first section of the Rail Trail will be completed, providing a safe, car-free connection for residents to worksites. This program will complement and support these improvements by getting more commuters biking regularly and doing so safely. We will highlight the various new and soon-to-be completed bike improvements throughout the county.

The Challenge + is also a means to further promote and distribute RTC bike resources such as the popular county bike maps, bike hazard reporting forms, and other sustainable transportation options and resources through Cruz511.

Ecology Action staff will also continue to consult local jurisdiction and RTC staff to plan, implement, and evaluate this initiative. The Bike Challenge + will be a focused, collaborative effort to establish a replicable program that will increase regular bike commuting in Santa Cruz County. EA will leverage existing programs, employer relationships, experience, partnerships, and new technologies to plan, implement and evaluate this ever-increasing program.

- **Project Schedule (see below for sample)**

Project Schedule (Enter the proposed schedule or actual completion of various project milestones. Complete either section **a** or **b**, as appropriate.)

a. Non-Infrastructure Projects/Programs:

| Activity Schedule (For non-capital projects, summarize work/activities to be completed - ex. preliminary planning, project implementation, public outreach project completion and timeline for each. Add additional lines if needed to reflect all tasks.) | Start Activities (month/year) | End Activities (month/year) |
|---|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Activity | Month/year | Month/year |
| Program Planning | <u>1/15/2020</u> | <u>3/15/2020</u> |
| Program Implementation | <u>3/16/2020</u> | <u>10/30/2021</u> |
| Program Evaluation first year | <u>6/1/2020</u> | <u>10/30/2020</u> |
| Program Refinements first year | <u>8/1/2020</u> | <u>9/30/2020</u> |
| Program Evaluation second year | <u>6/15/2021</u> | <u>7/15/2020</u> |
| Program Refinement second year | <u>8/1/2021</u> | <u>9/30/2021</u> |

C. Project Benefits Information

Given the large backlog of transportation needs in the region and the extremely limited amount of funding available, it is important to ensure that funds are used cost effectively to maximize benefits to the transportation system. Additionally, funding source rules require consideration of how projects will contribute towards implementation of the long-range transportation plan (*Regional Transportation Plan*), the achievement of one or more transportation goals, and implementation of state and federal goals and policies.

1. Generally, what are the benefits of this project? (ex. goal/purpose/benefit of project; problem to be addressed; importance to the community)

The purpose of the Bike Challenge + is to increase the number and frequency of people bike commuting, through a targeted bicycle education and encouragement campaign using a variety of tools. There are numerous individual and community benefits to having more people biking for transportation. The Bike Challenge initiative will further several RTC RTP goals including reduced vehicle-miles traveled (VMT), greater use of bicycling for transportation, and reduced air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

The biggest benefit of this effort will be the increase of regular bike commuters on the streets of Santa Cruz County. These frequent bike-to-workers will leave their cars at home, engage in a healthy activity in a safe manner, and be a positive presence on the road. Having 1,900 people biking to work regularly on local streets will create a domino effect. These cyclists will be role models and catalysts for their co-workers, family members, neighbors, friends, and associates. Numerous studies show that the most effective behavior change mechanism is having someone in our circle of influence adopt a positive behavior, such as installing solar panels on their roof, buying a hybrid or electric car, or recycling. When we see this shift, we become more familiar with such behaviors and more likely to adopt them ourselves.

The Challenge + will also connects more people to ebikes – go further and faster than a regular bike – and JUMP bikeshare – no need to own a bike or worry about bike theft. These new technologies are continuing to get more folks on bikes and riding further for every day transportation.

The program will also reduce VMT during commute hours, lessening the greenhouse gas and air-pollution impact of driving. With 1,900 bike commuters foregoing car trips to work, there will be a cumulative reduction of these negative environmental and health impacts on our community. This program will also highlight and draw more commuters to the many new and soon-to-be built bike infrastructure projects throughout the county. Social bike infrastructure is an ideal complement to hardscape improvements. With the soon-to-be completion of sections of the Rail Trail and the Chanticleer Bike Bridge over Highway 1 plus already completed new green bike lanes, bike bridges, paths, and intersections treatments it is an ideal time to invest in education and encouragement efforts to grow biking in our county.

2. How many people will directly use or directly be served by this project per day?

of direct users per day: 1,900

of indirect users: 3,500

Basis for estimates: Our estimate is based on the number of participants from the past three pilot Challenges.

3. Which groups will be the primary users of this facility/project/program?

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commuters | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth | <input type="checkbox"/> College Students |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low income residents | <input type="checkbox"/> Elementary Schools | <input type="checkbox"/> Visitors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seniors | <input type="checkbox"/> Middle Schools | <input type="checkbox"/> Trucks (goods movement) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disabled | <input type="checkbox"/> High Schools | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreational users |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | | |

- a. Briefly describe any indirect or secondary beneficiaries of the project: An indirect benefit is cost savings for new commuters who have more money to spend or save. There is also a benefit to local bike shops as more people purchase bikes and bike equipment and supplies so it could bolster the local economy.

| Benefit Category | How does this project address any of the following? <i>Projects are not expected to address all of these; if not applicable or not a primary purpose, write "N/A".</i> |
|---|---|
| 4. Safety (reduce fatal or injury collisions) | Through bike safety workshops, messaging and education resource information to program participants. |
| 5. System preservation (maintain existing transportation infrastructure/service/program) | N/A? |
| 6. Reduce emissions and/or vehicle miles traveled | Through increased bike transportation trips that replace car trips which are directly measured by our online platform. |
| 7. RTC | |
| 8. Improve travel times or travel time reliability | Bikes travel times are reliable as they don't get stuck in traffic. |
| 9. Improve freight or goods movement efficiency | N/A |
| 10. Serve people who are transportation disadvantaged due to age, income, ability or language or other challenges | Biking is a low-cost activity serving all ages especially with the improvement and increase use of ebikes. Bikes may be the premier social equity mobility solution and they are also available to service workers for whom transit schedules do not always work. |
| 11. Health (improve public health or promote healthy communities, provide outreach to targeted users) | Biking is a healthy and active means of transportation especially when compared to sitting in a car. |

12. Will project result in the elimination or reduction of an existing transportation facility?

- Yes or No. *If yes, please explain why this condition is unavoidable and if bicycle and pedestrian accommodations are provided on an adjacent/parallel street.*

13. Project Background and History. *How was this project identified as a priority? What planning occurred that led to identification of this project? Is it specifically identified in any planning documents? Describe consistency with local, regional and statewide planning, as applicable.*

This program is based on the pilot Every Day is Bike to Work that implemented the first ever local Bike Challenge that documented measurable success in generating new bike commuters and increased bike trips and miles that replace car trips. EA worked with transportation partners to plan, implement and evaluate the Bike Challenge include RTC, City of Santa Cruz and Watsonville, County of Santa Cruz, UCSC and private company staff. The Challenge + is consistent with local, regional and state climate action and active transportation plans that aim to increase bike transportation.

14. Has RTC previously funded this project or another project in this area? If so, what project and what year? The RTC funded the pilot Bike to Work is Every Day in 2018-2019.

15. Is project in Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)?

Yes or No

If yes, RTP Project Number (ID#): _____(see: [RTP Appendix F: Project List](#))

16. Describe project readiness/deliverability and potential risks to project schedule:

Given that Ecology Action has successfully implemented the pilot Bike Challenge we are well prepared and ready to collaboratively plan and then implement the Challenge + in 2020. This work fits well with various other EA bike programs and supports local public agency bike transportation and TDM work so we see no potential risks to our program schedule. We will be working with the RTC, City of Santa Cruz to assure Love to Ride can be integrated into RideAmigos or find another suitable solution. This could impact the roll out schedule by a few months but we have already initiated conversations with Love to Ride and RideAmigos to meet a spring 2020 timeline. We need to cultivate and secure major donor funding for the cash-prize incentive but that is at a low risk and would not delay the project.

17. Describe any potential environmental issues, mitigations, or avoidance: N/A

D. Cost and Funding Plan

- **See attached NI Budget and Task breakdown.**

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