

Hello Mr. Ng:

After the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee (BPAC) meeting held on Friday, December 21 you mentioned that you will contact the City Attorney's office about the feasibility of some of the ideas I mentioned to you in order to increase funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects. As you may recall, during discussion of Agenda Items for Future Meetings at that BPAC meeting, the committee voted in favor of investigating new ways to increase funding for bicycle and pedestrian improvement projects.

My ideas and questions are:

1. Can the City raise taxes to fund bicycle and pedestrian improvement projects? Because the City of Santa Clara is a charter city, can the City raise taxes independently, without intervention by other levels of government. In other words, can those taxes be raised and used independently of other sources of funding and oversight (Federal, State and County)?
2. What type of taxes (sales, property, business, gas, etc.) can be raised by the City to fund bicycle and pedestrian improvement projects?
3. Do new taxes require voter approval (is there a threshold?) and, if so, what type of approval is necessary (majority, 2/3, etc.) and when can this be accomplished? How much does it cost to put a measure on a ballot?
4. Can City funds be used to purchase and install improvements on private property? For instance, can City funds be used to purchase and install bicycle racks on private property? I'm particularly interested in installing racks on *existing* private commercial and business properties. I'm also interested in providing bicycle racks or boxes on *existing* residential properties if there is a need. This program could also be extended to new developments, possibly based on financial need, if the City does not already have a program or development requirements in place.
5. Are there any other sources of funding that can be used for funding bicycle and pedestrian projects, beyond raising taxes or beyond existing County, State, and Federal sources?
6. Are there other incentives or regulations that the City can offer or adopt in order to increase bicycle and pedestrian improvement projects on new and existing industrial, commercial, business and residential properties?

It would be nice if you provided the BPAC with a list and short description of current sources of funding (County, State and Federal programs) and their requirements prior to the BPAC meeting wherein new sources of funding will be considered. It would be nice to provide this information periodically to new and current BPAC members so that members have a better understanding of funding sources.

Thank you for looking into these ideas and questions.

Ken Kratz
Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee member
City of Santa Clara