



PRESS RELEASE

May 6, 2010

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Planning Division, City of East Palo Alto

CITY OF EAST PALO ALTO MOVES AHEAD WITH A HEALTHLY COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE ON BIKE TO WORK DAY

In recognition of Bike to Work Day, Thursday, May 13, 2010, the City of East Palo Planning Division is “biking to work,” and also considering a new Health Star program to recognize those businesses, commercial establishments or schools that are doing more than their share to improve local community health.

According to Planning Manager Brent Butler, “with 48 percent of students in grades 5-7 overweight or obese, there is a sense of urgency to make improvements now to ensure that future generations of kids grow up healthy, and learn the importance of getting around by walking and riding. We’re **BIKING TO WORK** to encourage others to do the same. Other initiatives include reviewing sidewalk, road and public infrastructure plans, and existing developments to gather ideas from the stakeholders, businesses and their users, to ensure that all the ‘best practices’ that encourage non-motorized mobility are incorporated.”

Santa Clara VTA’s Bicycle Guidelines

In April, the Public Works and Transportation Commission unanimously approved the forwarding of a recommendation to adopt the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority’s Bicycle Technical Guidelines and to lower the thresholds of significance for transportation projects so that, among other things, bicycle mobility inside the City’s boundaries increases and that the health impacts of new projects are known in advance. On May 18, 2010, the East Palo Alto City Council is slated to review the Public Works and Transportation Commission recommendations to adopt these initiatives.

Health Star

As part of the Health Star initiative that’s being considered by the Planning Division, local establishments that incorporate the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority’s Bicycle Technical Guidelines would get a star, or some other special recognition, which could be posted on their door, on the City’s website, and disseminated to the public. Those businesses that incorporate more significant non motorized improvements that share community values will receive a highly coveted award, yet to be determined. Regarding aging-in-place, Senior Planner Brad Tarr said that “it’s not only important for youth to be fit and active, when you’re in middle-age it’s important to ensure a high quality lifestyle as you age.”

If you want to become one of the City’s health partners, or have ideas, feel free to contact the East Palo Alto Planning Division, bbutler@cityofepa.org