

EXISTING BIKE SYSTEM

CHAPTER 4



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4.1 Existing Bikeways / Overview

The City of Merced has the most comprehensive bikeway system in the county. The Merced urbanized area has an extensive system of bicycle paths, lanes, and routes. Much of the area alongside the creeks has been developed as linear parks, with bike paths leading to residential and recreational areas, schools, and some commercial centers. Such environments are particularly ideal for the commuting and recreational aspects of bicycling. In addition to general use of streets and sidewalks, Merced's bikeway system consists of improved bike paths, lanes, and routes.

4.1.1 Class I Bike Paths

Class I bicycle paths are located along Bear Creek, Black Rascal Creek, Cottonwood Creek, and Fahrens Creek, with an intent in keeping the creek side environments as natural as possible, while still being user-friendly.

4.1.2 Class II Bike Lanes

Existing Class II bicycle lanes include many of the arterial streets within the City, including major sections of G Street, M Street, Yosemite Avenue, and McKee Road. Several other streets have shorter sections with designated bicycle lanes. These include R Street, V Street, West Avenue, Main Street, 18th Street, and 21st Street. Like the Class I path system discussed above, many sections of Class II lanes have been added as more parts of the City have been developed, further increasing and improving the City's overall bikeway connectivity.

4.1.3 Class III Bike Routes

Class III bicycle routes are located on sections of additional collectors and arterials including V Street, 26th Street, Glen Avenue, and Childs Avenue. The City of Merced has designated bicycle routes wherever bikeway connections are necessary, but no opportunity for lanes or paths exist. While bike routes are not the ideal, bike route signs remind drivers and cyclists to share the road.

4.1.4 Bike Riding on Sidewalks

SIDEWALK USE BY BICYCLISTS

While bicyclists are not encouraged to ride on facilities that are not designed to accommodate bicycle travel, there are instances where the City has placed signage to direct bicyclists onto sidewalks. These sites occur along Olive Avenue, between G Street and R Street; and along M Street near the Bear Creek Bridge. These areas have high traffic volumes, speeds, and narrow roads.

SIDEWALK BIKEWAY CRITERIA

In general, the designated use of sidewalks for bicycle travel is unsatisfactory. Sidewalk bikeways should be considered only under special circumstances. These circumstances are described in Section 3.3 (Bike Facility Descriptions) of this plan.

RIDING ON SIDEWALKS PROHIBITED IN SPECIFIC LOCATIONS

The California Vehicle Code [Local Regulations of Bicycles on Sidewalks & Public Property (21100)] allows bikes on sidewalks, but gives local jurisdictions control over where they specifically cannot ride, with proper signs. Cyclists in the City of Merced are allowed to ride on all sidewalks, except that they can't ride on the sidewalks of the specifically listed road segments, when signs are displayed.

The City of Merced Municipal Code, section 10.44.040 states: "When issued, bicycle licenses shall entitle the licensee to operate such bicycle for which the license has been issued upon all the streets, public highways and designated bicycle trails of the city. Bicycles may also be operated on all the sidewalks of the city except the following, when appropriate signs are displayed thereon:

- Main Street from G to V Street,
- 18th Street from Martin Luther King, Jr. Way to N Street,
- I Street from 16th to 18th Street,
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Way from 16th to 18th Street,
- K Street from 16th to 18th Street,
- L Street from 16th to 18th Street,
- M Street from 16th to 20th Street and N Street from 16th to 18th Street.

4.1.5 Existing Bikeway Maps

Existing bike paths, lanes, and routes are shown in Appendix C. These maps reflect, to the best of the City's knowledge the current locations of these bikeways.

4.2 Existing Bikeways / Detailed Description

4.2.1 Bear Creek Class I Bike Path

The Bear Creek Path was constructed in the mid 1970's in three phases originating from the western end near Snelling Highway (Highway 59). Phase I construction of this path consisted of approximately 2.25 miles between Applegate Park and "G" Street, including underpasses at "G" Street and "M" Street. Phase II extended the project up to the McKee Road bridge (city limits); County participation extended the bike path beyond City Limits. Phase II constructed three miles of bike path with about 50% having completely separate paths for east and west directions. Phase III is 1-¾ miles. The Bear Creek path travels in an east/west direction, providing access to Downtown and shopping areas, Applegate Park, hospitals, and medical clinics. It provides further connections with Class II bikeways on arterial and collector streets.

4.2.2 Black Rascal Creek Class I Bike Path

The Black Rascal path was constructed in the late 1970's originating at Snelling Highway (Highway 59) and extends east towards McKee Road. This section, built in two phases, is about 2-5/8 miles. The bike path is eight feet wide, with a three-inch thick asphalt layer and parallels the creek. Phase III, an extension from McKee Road to Lake Road that would have completely connected the Black Rascal Class I bike path system with the County's UC Merced/Lake Road Class I path, is now partially constructed, with only a small portion unfinished. West of G Street, the path runs along many residential areas and Merced High School, providing bikeway access to many commuters and a direct route to schools and medical offices. Further west, Black Rascal Creek path eventually is joined by the Fahrens Creek system.

4.2.3 Cottonwood Creek Class I Bike Path

The Cottonwood Creek Class I bike path, in its long-range conceptual form, would follow the natural course of the creek's path from its split at the fork of Fahrens Creek easterly up to the UC Campus connection at Lake Road. Currently, the completed section of this path runs easterly from Fahrens Creek to Gardner Road. The path provides easy access from residences to shopping, schools, medical and other offices, and a hospital.

4.2.4 Fahrens Creek Class I Bike Path

The Fahrens Creek Class I bike path system is approximately halfway completed, with finished sections running northward from the merging point of Black Rascal Creek and Fahrens Creek just east of Highway 59 at Buena Vista Drive to the area just north of Cardella Road. The remaining uninstalled section will continue the path northward to Bellevue Road, and then will continue in a northeast trend along Fahrens Creek to G Street. The remaining uninstalled portions north of Bellevue Road would be built as land is developed in those areas, which likely will not occur for many years to come.

4.2.5 Lake Road Class I Bike Path

As aforementioned, another bicycle Class I path runs northward alongside Lake Road between Yosemite Avenue and Lake Yosemite, outside of the city limits. This path was recently upgraded by the County and will most likely connect with both the Cottonwood and Black Rascal Creek bike path systems to the south, at some future point in time.

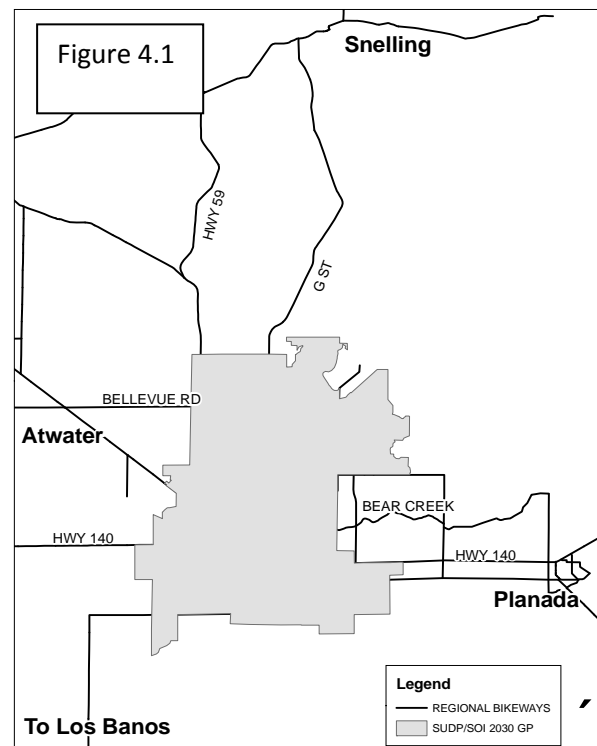
4.2.6 Regional Bikeways

EXISTING REGIONAL BIKEWAY PROJECTS OUTSIDE THE CITY'S SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

The 2008 Merced County Regional Bicycle Transportation Plan includes many proposed bikeways within and adjacent to the City of Merced. Figure 4.1 depicts the regional bikeways located outside the City's Sphere of Influence (SOI). Regional bikeways that connect with the City's Sphere of Influence (SOI) include:

- G Street
- Highway 59
- Bellevue Road
- Yosemite Avenue
- Kibby Lane
- Bear Creek
- Highway 140 (east and west)
- Childs Avenue
- Santa Fe
- Dickenson Ferry Road

The populations that are served by these external regional routes were established by Merced County; the responsibility of providing regional bikeway infrastructure located outside the City's SOI is with Merced County. To date, few regional projects outside the Merced city limits and Sphere of Influence (SOI) have been constructed, however.



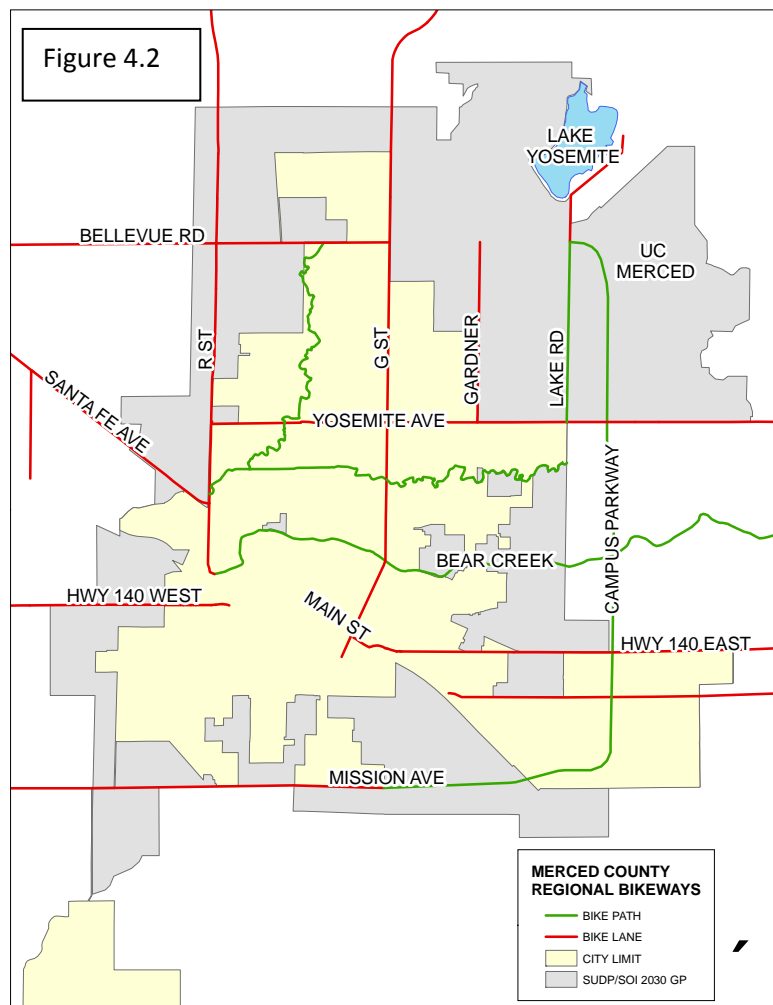
EXISTING REGIONAL BIKEWAY PROJECTS INSIDE THE CITY'S SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

The City of Merced BTP seeks to provide City bikeway connections to the regional bikeways that intersect with the City limit and SOI. It is important that bikeways within the City provide for a continuation of bicycle travel along these regional routes. Figure 4.2 depicts Merced County Regional Bikeways within the City's SOI that exist or are proposed for future development. The City should pursue partnerships with Merced County and others when developing bikeways that align with the regional bikeway network. An example of such partnerships is providing bicycle transportation improvements between the City of Merced and UC Merced and other high-demand routes between housing and employment or education centers. Recently, the Class I bike path along Lake Road from Yosemite Avenue to the UC Merced Campus was rehabilitated. Bike lanes were installed along Bellevue Road from Lake Road, (west of UC Merced) to G Street.

Only portions of the regional bikeway network located within the City's SOI have been constructed, and include segments along (See Existing Bikeways, Appendix C):

- Bellevue Road
- G Street
- Yosemite Avenue
- Highway 140 (east)

The remaining unconstructed segments of the regional bikeway are included in the Comprehensive list of all Proposed Bicycle Facility Projects (Appendix E), denoted by the letter R.



4.2.7 North-South Bicycle Transportation Corridor

In January 2012, the Merced City Council established a goal to designate a north/south street as a bicycle transportation corridor. In November 2012, a two-pronged evaluation of six north/south oriented streets (V St., R St., M St., G St., Parsons Ave., and McKee Rd.) were initiated by City Planning Staff. The evaluation determined whether a bikeway was present, and if so, whether or not it complied with commonly used standards for bicycle lanes and bicycle routes.

For the first question, the field survey was enough to determine the existence of bikeways. Any non-existent bikeways were removed from the Official Bike Map of Existing Bikeways (see Appendix C). For the second question, standards were gathered from various documents that describe standards that provide a safe and adequate bicycle travel. These documents include: 1) the City Design Standards Manual; 2) the 2008 BTP; 3) the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD); and, 4) Chapter 1000 of the Highway Design Manual. From these standards, a threshold was established and used in the field to determine the quality of the bike routes and bike lanes.

Bike Routes were removed from the *Official Bike Map of Existing Bikeways* if: 1) the route was positioned on an arterial street, or in an area of critical width impairment; or, 2) signs were not present.

Bike Lanes were removed from the *Official Bike Map of Existing Bikeways* if they did not meet any of the following standards:

- A minimum 5 ft. wide bike lane where parking stalls are marked and 6-inch-wide continuous striping delineated bike lane.
- A minimum 12 ft. wide bike lane where parking is permitted, but parking stalls are not marked and 6-inch-wide continuous striping delineated bike lane.
- A minimum 5 ft. wide bike lanes where parking is prohibited and 6-inch-wide continuous striping delineated bike lane.

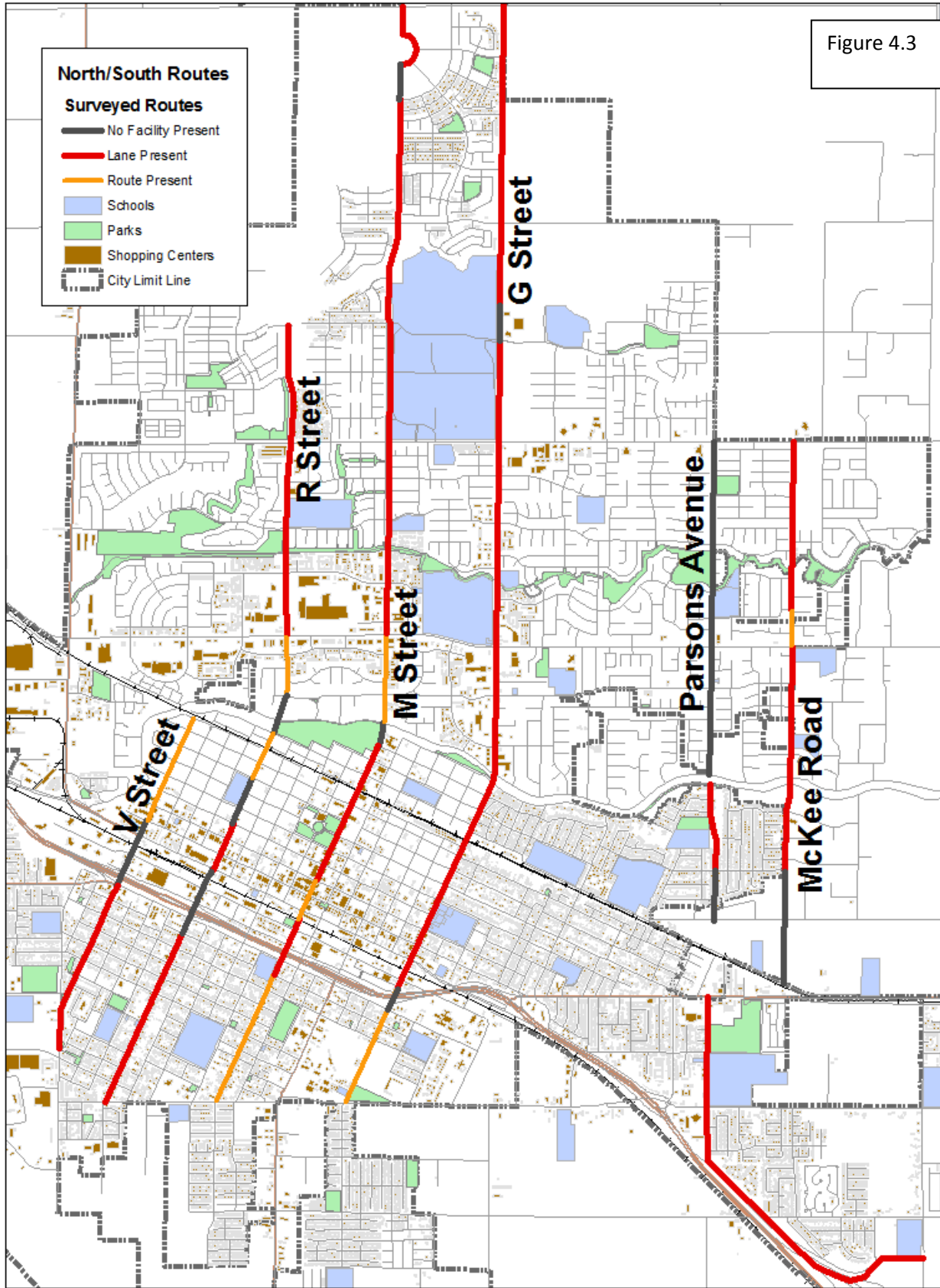
***Note:** *Whether posted signage and floor markings per standards were present or not, did not affect the removal of the facility from the Official Bike Map of Existing Bikeways.*

NORTH-SOUTH BIKEWAY SURVEY FINDINGS

All north/south streets evaluated were found to have deficiencies along its route, whether incomplete segments, sub-standard improvements, or missing pavement or posted signs. Figure 4.3 shows the north-south street corridors that were included in the survey, along with their bikeway types and identification of any missing segments. Details of the survey are provided in Appendix D.

Summary Findings of the Survey:

- Three north/south streets were determined to have significant barriers to bicycle transportation (V Street, R Street, and McKee Rd.);
- Two streets were determined to be generally suitable for bicycle transportation in the near-term (M Street and G Street), though improvements can be made; and,
- Parsons Avenue was a difficult road to classify as it only provides bikeways in two segments and does not provide a complete north/south connection at this time. Parsons Avenue has several positive aspects, and with future improvements, could be a good north/south alternate in the future.



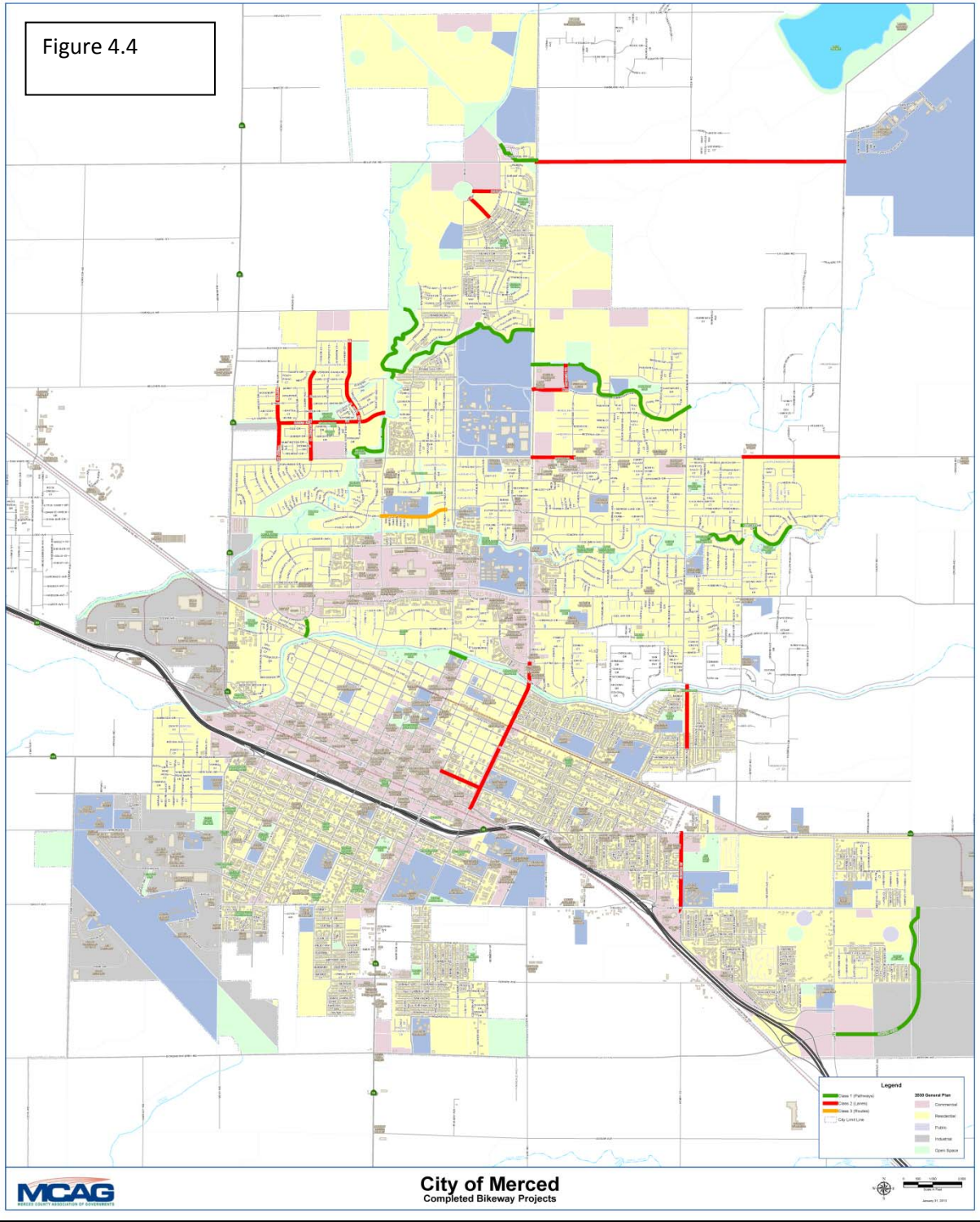
4.2.8 Completed Bicycle Projects

Over the past nine years the City of Merced has been able to receive grants to fund a total of 27 bike-related projects, which are listed (Table 4.1) and mapped (Figure 4.4) below. Those marked with an asterisk (*) were listed in the *2008 City of Merced Bicycle Transportation Plan*.

Table 4.1: Completed Projects from 2004 to 2013

| # | Bikeway Type | Roadway | From | To |
|------|--------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | Class I | Bellevue Road. | G Street | Portico Drive |
| 2 | Class I | Fahrens Creek | Cottonwood Creek | Heitz Way |
| 3 * | Class I | Cottonwood Creek | Fahrens Creek | G Street |
| 4 | Class I | Cottonwood Creek | G Street | Gardner Avenue |
| 5 | Class I | Fahrens Creek | Yosemite Avenue | Pacific Drive |
| 6 | Class I | Black Rascal Creek | Parsons Avenue | McKee Road. |
| 7 | Class I | Black Rascal Creek | McKee Road. | Mariner Way |
| 8 | Class I | Bear Creek | 25 th Street | Devonwood Drive. |
| 9 | Class I | Bear Creek | M Street | Canal Street |
| 10 | Class I | Campus Parkway | Coffee Street | Childs Avenue |
| 11 | Class II | Bellevue Road | G Street | Lake Road. |
| 12 | Class II | Mandeville Lane | M St. Circle | Barclay Way |
| 13 | Class II | Bancroft Drive | M St. Circle | Barclay Way |
| 14 | Class II | San Augustine Drive | Yosemite Avenue | Cassis Drive |
| 15 | Class II | El Redondo Drive | Yosemite Avenue | Cassis Drive |
| 16 | Class II | Horizons Avenue | Pacific Drive. | Monaco Drive |
| 17 | Class II | Pacific Drive | San Augustine Drive | R Street |
| 18 | Class II | Mercy Avenue | G Street | Dominican Drive |
| 19 | Class II | Dominican Drive | Mercy Avenue | Cottonwood Creek |
| 20 * | Class II | Yosemite Avenue | G Street | Mansionette Drive |
| 21 | Class II | Yosemite Avenue | McKee Road.. | Lake Road. |
| 22 | Class II | Parsons Avenue | South Bear Creek | 27 th Street |
| 23 | Class II | Parsons Avenue | Yosemite Pkwy | Childs Avenue |
| 24 | Class II | 18 th Street | MLK Jr. Way | G Street |
| 25 * | Class II | G Street | 16 th Street | Park Avenue |
| 26 | Class III | Buena Vista Drive | R Street | M Street |
| 27* | Support | Traffic Signal | Hwy 59 | Cooper Avenue |

Figure 4.4



4.3 Existing Bike Support Facilities and Programs

4.3.1 Parking

Bicycle racks are the most common types of bicycle parking facility seen in Merced. Due to increasing popularity in bicycle commuting, bike racks are located at many sites throughout Merced including; various locations in the downtown area, the Merced Mall, all of the schools, Mercy Hospital, and several large employers. Bicycle lockers are available at the Merced Transportation Center.

In October 2009, a survey of existing bicycle racks and number of spaces was performed in the City of Merced. The bike parking survey is filed at the City of Merced Planning Division. The survey results are summarized in Table 4.2 below:

| | Bike Racks | Bike Spaces |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Retail | 57 | 168 |
| Office Buildings | 14 | 28 |
| Government Buildings | 9 | 10 |
| Schools | 96 | 1,509 |
| Libraries | 4 | 24 |
| Transit | 118 | 197 |
| Recreation Centers | 5 | 27 |
| Totals | 303 | 1,963 |

To be consistent with the questions posed by the League of American Bicyclists, and to expand the City's knowledge of bike parking, the following bike-parking categories should be utilized in the next round of bike parking surveys:

- Schools
- Libraries
- Transit Stations
- Transit Vehicles (internal and external)
- Parks and Recreation Centers
- Government Buildings
- Office Buildings
- Shops/Retail
- Public Housing

In 2013, a draft parking ordinance was crafted for inclusion into the City's municipal code. If adopted, the City's Official Design Standards would also need to be updated so that the development community can easily install bike parking and storage features that are clearly and conveniently described. The 2013 BTP Draft Bicycle Parking Guidelines and Bicycle Storage Facility Standards can be found at Appendix F. Given the possible adoption of a bike parking code (undergoing development and review process in 2013), and Official Design Standards for bicycle parking and storage, the next update to the City's BTP should reassess the need and purpose of Appendix F.

4.3.2 Showers and Clothing Lockers

Shower facilities for bicycle commuters in Merced are limited. Several schools have showers and lockers that could be used by faculty who choose to bicycle to work. A few businesses in the industrial parks, the hospital and public facilities also have lockers for employees. Both showers and lockers are provided at the Merced City Civic Center. Appendix C includes a map showing shower and clothing lockers for use by bicyclists. A database describing the types of facilities for large employers is kept at the Planning Department.

4.3.3 Bike Lockers / Long-Term Parking

Having safe, long-term bicycle security, such as the bicycle shelters at Mercy Hospital, the Transportation Center, and the Amtrak station may encourage bicyclists to use their bikes as their initial transportation to one of these storage areas before continuing their trip by train or bus. This long-term parking will be especially helpful for bicyclists wanting to take Greyhound, since Greyhound will not carry bikes.

4.3.4 Bike Support Facility Map

Existing bike support facilities are shown in Appendix C. These maps reflect, to the best of the City's knowledge, the current location of these support facilities.



4.4 Safety and Education Programs

4.4.1 Introduction

Possibly the City's greatest bike-related need, safety and education programs, will enable increased use of bike facility infrastructure. Education about cyclists'/drivers' responsibilities to share the road needs to be distributed and discussed, from school-aged children to adults. There are riders who are misinformed, apparent in the number of bikes seen on the sidewalk, running stop signs and red lights, and riding the wrong way, as well as the number of unhelmeted riders. Additionally, many drivers still believe that cyclists should not be on the road at all, must ride on the sidewalk, or believe that they can't drive out of their lane to maneuver around a cyclist, which results in close calls and a general fear of riding on the street.

4.4.2 Safe Routes to School Program

A Safe Routes to School program is an opportunity to make walking and bicycling to school safer and more accessible for children, including those with disabilities, and to increase the number of children who choose to walk and bicycle. Safe Routes to School programs can benefit communities by enhancing children's health, well-being, and academic performance; easing traffic congestion and air quality near schools; and improving community members' overall quality of life. The information and resources here will assist with starting and sustaining a range of Safe Routes to School activities.

California's SRTS efforts have many local champions. At the state level, SRTS is led by Caltrans Division of Local Assistance. Caltrans funds TARC to support the statewide California SRTS Program and Caltrans-funded non-infrastructure projects. California has two distinct Safe Routes to School Programs administered by Caltrans: a state program (SR2S) and a federal program (SRTS). Both programs work to increase the number of children walking and bicycling to school by removing barriers and facilitating opportunities for active transportation.

Successful SRTS programs include elements of each of the 5 E's: Education, Encouragement, Engineering, Enforcement, and Evaluation. Each of these E's is designed to remove barriers that prevent children from walking and bicycling to school.

Education: For Safe Routes to School programs, students are taught bicycle, pedestrian and traffic safety skills, and educational campaigns aimed at drivers to be respectful at sharing the road.

Encouragement: Events and contests such as walkathons are used to encourage walking, bicycling, or carpooling. These events are especially effective when they include participation by parents in an effort to change their travel behaviors as well.

Enforcement: Law enforcement agencies use a variety of specialized enforcement tactics, such as pedestrian safety stings and speed radar trailers to enhance the ridership safety.

Engineering: Signing, striping, and infrastructure improvements are put in place to create clearly delineated walking and cycling routes to schools.

Evaluation: Helps determine whether the aimed improvements have been met and to assure that resources are directed towards efforts that show the greatest likelihood of success.

Merced has applied for and received SRTS grants, which have been used to fund traffic signals, flashing school warning lights, sidewalks and curbs, and gutters.

LOCAL PROJECTS

The Merced City School District and the Weaver Union School District have been recipients of funds to install traffic signals, flashing school warning signs, and curb, gutter and sidewalk projects. Within the City of Merced, there are 14 public elementary schools, 4 public middle schools and 5 public high schools. At this time, there does not appear to be any established Safe Route to School Programs.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROJECTS IN THE BICYCLE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Special emphasis was made in the crafting of the 2013 BTP to identify projects to create safe routes to school. Public input and support for bicycle facilities that would benefit local schools was invited and resulted in several recommended projects.

This plan also recommends that the City implement a comprehensive funding and improvement approach that includes an assortment of projects (bikeways, signage, enforcement and education) be focused near school sites on public rights-of-way, whose administrative, student and community members have established and are developing their *Safe Routes to School Program*.

4.4.3 Other Safe Bicycling Skills for Youth

Bike Clinics or Rodeos: Outside of schools, bicycling skills are taught through bike clinics or rodeos. Bike rodeos are held as part of the annual *Merco Credit Union* racing event by the Merced Police Department's Explorer Scouts.

Other opportunities to teach bicycle skills to the youth that could be explored include youth bike clubs, youth recreation programs, and helmet fit seminars.



4.4.4 Diversion Program for Cyclists and Motorists

If children are stopped by police for riding without a helmet or any other bicycle-related infraction, they are required to attend a four-hour Saturday bicycle safety class with their parents instead of paying a fine. Following this clinic, the youth would be given a free bicycle helmet. While the program and agreement with the probation department is still in place, there is currently no funding or staffing for it. Once funding is renewed to the program, it will restart, however. There is no diversion program for adult cyclists and motorists (other than regular traffic school).

4.4.5 “Share the Road” (Motorists and Cyclists) Publicity

Indicated below with a checkmark (✓), are publicity tools about motorists and cyclists sharing the road that have been utilized by the City and/or community.

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Public Service Announcements | ✓ Dedicated bike page on community website |
| Community Newsletter Article | Billboards |
| New Resident Packet | ✓ Share the Road Signs |
| Utility Bill Insert | ✓ Share the road information in driver's education |
| Bicycle Ambassador Program | |
| Newspaper column/blog on bicycling | |

Dedicated Webpage: The City's Cycling Webpage includes the agendas, minutes, and reports of the Bicycle Advisory Commission, and a summary of the CA bike laws. The site includes links to excellent local websites: (1) the Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG) webpage on cycling: <http://www.mercedrides.com/BIKE/rules.htm>; and, (2) the Merced Bike Coalition's website: <http://www.mercedbicyclecoalition.org>.

Share the Road Signs: In 2008, Merced County installed “Share the Road” signs on a popular ride located outside of the City (G Street, from Old Lake Road to the community of Snelling).

4.4.6 Community Bike Safety Classes

Table 4.3 describes the frequency of various traffic safety classes that may be offered in the community. There are two League Cycling Instructors (LCI) in Merced.

| Table 4.3: Frequency of Available Traffic Safety Classes | | | | | |
|--|--------|---------|-----------|----------|-------|
| | Weekly | Monthly | Quarterly | Annually | Other |
| Traffic Skills 101 | | | | | * |
| Cycling Skills Classes | | | | | * |
| Commuter Classes | | | | ✓ | |
| League Cycling Instructor Seminar | | | | | * |

* Although not on an established regular basis, Merced's two LCI's have begun to hold classes in the area. As interest is received and classes are filled, they are given.

4.4.7 Professional Driver “Share the Road with Cyclist” Training

Training opportunities for professional drivers that includes information on sharing the road with cyclists exists in the checked (✓) category below:

| | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| City Staff | ✓ School Bus Operators |
| Taxi Drivers | Delivery Drivers |
| ✓ Transit Operators | |

Transit Operators: Drivers must go through a 40-hour training program upon initial hire, which includes a segment on cyclists; rights to the road, use of bike lanes, and distances to stay away from cyclists when passing them.

School Bus Operators: Operators are trained from the “Instructor’s Manual for California’s Bus Driver’s Training Course,” which is developed and distributed by the California Department of Education. Drivers are informed that bicycles are vehicles and are expected to obey the same traffic laws as vehicles, but to driver defensively around them, as collisions are often fatal to the cyclist. Drivers are also taught to slow down and allow room when passing, and when passing is not possible, to keep the cyclist in front of them until passing is safe. Beginning in 2011, drivers are being re-taught “the basics” from the California Driver Handbook 2010, which focuses more on safety around bicyclists.

4.4.8 “Wheel Solutions” - Bike Repair Education

In 2011, the Merced County Community Action Board (MCCAB) launched “Wheel Solutions” – a program that accepts donations of used bicycles, shows homeless persons how to repair them, and gives bicycles away to the homeless. The intent is to provide an additional resource for transportation to a job. Between August 2010 and February 2011, 305 persons were trained in bicycle repairs and 56 bicycles were given away. While the program is no longer funded, MCCAB accepts donated bikes, and a clinic is held once a month to show local citizens how to repair bicycles.

4.5 Enforcement

4.5.1 Police Department Bike-Related Actions

The Merced Police Department (MPD) operates a limited bicycle safety program. Opportunities for the Police Department to interact with Merced’s Cycling Community could include: 1) police officer involvement at the Bicycle Advisory Commission (BAC); and, 2) an identified law-enforcement point person to interact with cyclists.

4.5.2 Police Officer Training in Bicycle Traffic Laws

In Merced, training opportunities for police officers concerning traffic laws as it applies to bicyclists are noted by check marks(✓) below:

- ✓ Basic Academy Training
 - International Police Mountain Bike Association
 - Law Enforcement Bicycle Association Training
- ✓ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Law Enforcement Training
- Completion of Smart Cycling Course by Police
- Presentation by League Cycling Instructor or local cyclist
- Institute for Police Training and Development Bicycle Training

Other opportunities include *Basic Academy Training* and *National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Law Enforcement Training*.

4.5.3 Enforcement Campaigns

Enforcement campaigns can improve cyclist safety. The Merced Police Department provides services as indicated by the check marks (✓) below:

- ✓ Helmet/Light Giveaways
- ✓ Targeting cyclist infractions
- ✓ Targeting motorist infractions
- Share the Road Campaigns

4.5.4 Bike Relate Collisions

CITY DATABASE

In Table 4.4 below, each incident of a bike-related collision is recorded once (priority-wise) based on the most serious condition. Collisions are ranked from highest to lowest priority, in the following order: Fatal, Hit and Run, Injury, Non-injury and Property Damage. *Hit and run* is more serious, so this is coded as a collision type. *Hit and run* could be *injury* or *non-injury*. Therefore, a collision labeled as *injury*, *non-injury* or *property damage* would not be *hit and run*. *Fatal* will always be classified as *fatal* even if it was a *hit and run*.

TABLE 4.4:- NUMBER OF "RECORDED" BIKE-RELATED COLLISIONS

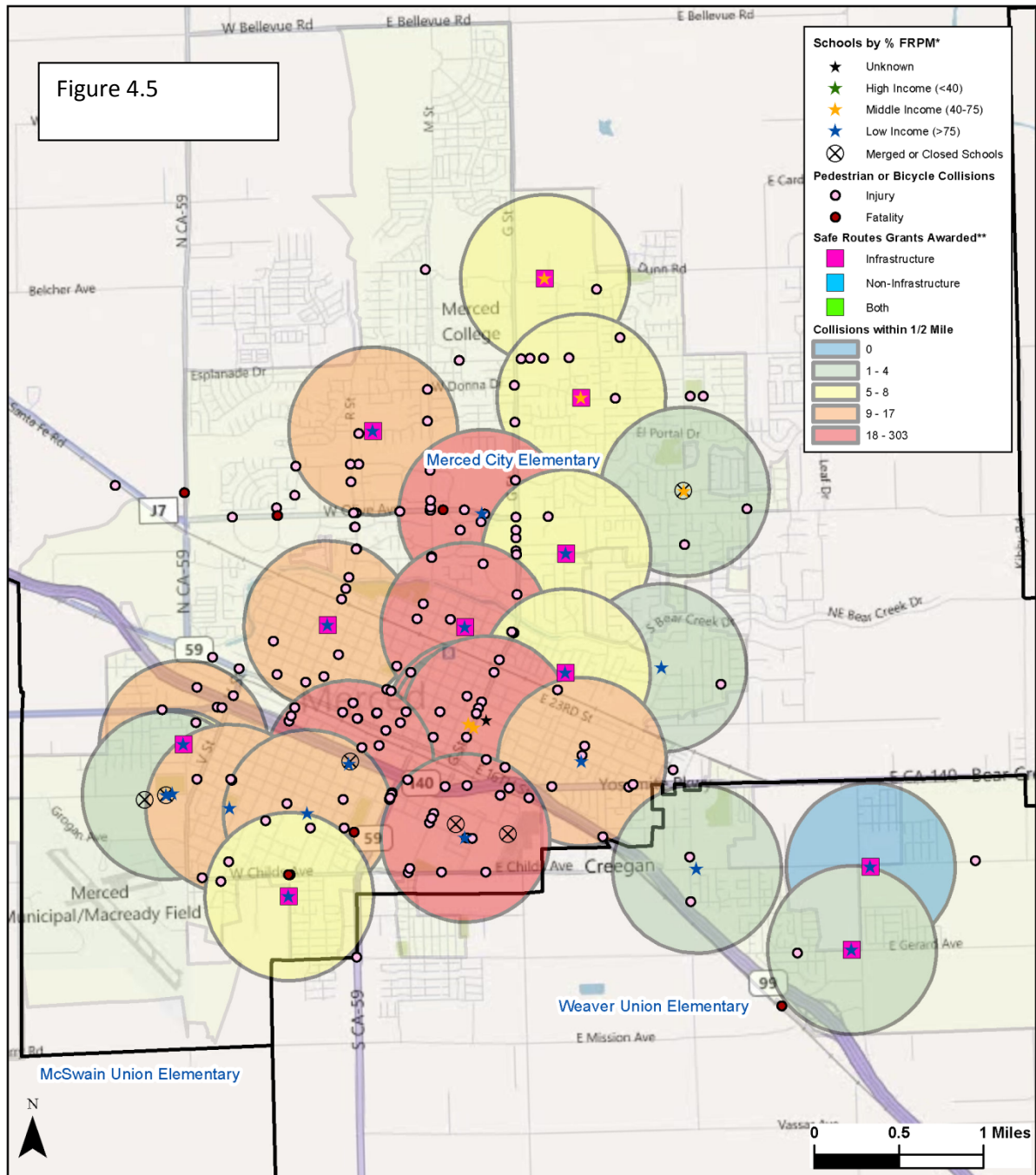
| Count of Year | Type | | | | | |
|--------------------|----------|-------------|------------|------------|--------------|-------------|
| Year | FATAL | HIT AND RUN | INJURY | NON-INJURY | PROP. DAMAGE | Grand Total |
| 2008 | | | 28 | 4 | 13 | 45 |
| 2009 | | 4 | 23 | 5 | 4 | 36 |
| 2010 | 1 | 18 | 36 | 6 | | 61 |
| 2011 | 1 | 11 | 31 | 7 | 1 | 51 |
| 2012 | | 7 | 16 | | | 23 |
| Grand Total | 2 | 40 | 134 | 22 | 18 | 216 |

TRANSPORTATION INJURY MAPPING SYSTEM

TIMS (Transportation Injury Mapping System) is another source used by the City of Merced to depict bicycle collision data. TIMS was established by researchers at the Safe Transportation Research and Education Center (SafeTREC) at the University of California, Berkeley to provide data and mapping analysis tools and information for traffic safety related research, policy and planning. Figure 4.5, "Merced Pedestrian or Bicycle Collisions near School Sites (2007-2009)," shows the frequency and location of collisions near school sites throughout Merced.

Merced - Pedestrian or Bicycle Collisions Near School Sites (2007-2009)

Figure 4.5



*Schools classified according to percentage of students eligible for the Free/Reduced Price Meal Program (2010).
 **Safe Routes to School awards include state and federal funding from 2005 - 2011.



 Sources: California Public School Database; SWITRS 2007-2009; Bing Maps

4.5.5 Youth Citations

Since California passed Vehicle Code 21212 in 1997, which prohibits persons under 18 from riding or being a passenger on a bicycle without wearing a certified helmet, the Merced Police Department has issued 302 citations for breaking the code. Table 4.5 below, shows number of tickets given to persons under the age of 18 for not wearing a bike helmet (bicycles only, excludes motorcycles). See *Diversion Program for Cyclists and Motorists*, in Section 5.3.4 Education and Safety Programs.

| TABLE 4.5: NUMBER OF TICKETS FOR YOUTH NOT WEARING A HELMET | |
|---|------------|
| Count of Year | |
| Year | Total |
| 2008 | 30 |
| 2009 | 69 |
| 2010 | 21 |
| 2011 | 1* |
| 2012 | 1* |
| Grand Total | 122 |

* The drop in tickets issued could be due to the lack of a dedicated Traffic Unit, which was removed due to budget cuts.

4.5.6 Stolen Bikes

| TABLE 4.6: NUMBER OF "REPORTED" STOLEN BICYCLES | |
|---|------------|
| Count of Year | |
| Year | Total |
| 2008 | 139 |
| 2009 | 120 |
| 2010 | 152 |
| 2011 | 226 |
| 2012 | 158 |
| Grand Total | 795 |

4.6 Existing Mobility Connections

Mobility connections encourage bicycling. Figures in (Appendix C) show the existing bikeway system relative to: 1) the Merced County bus service; 2) Cat Tracks; 3) the Amtrak station; and, 4) the Merced Transportation Center, which is the hub location in Merced for the Merced County bus service, Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS), and Greyhound Bus.

4.6.1 Merced County Transit Buses

The Merced County transit buses are equipped with bicycle racks; these features enhance the bicyclist's range of travel. For locations that the Merced County transit system does not service directly (slightly off the fixed-route system, i.e. residences), bicyclists could ride to those places from locations along the fixed-route bus transit system.

4.6.2 Cat Tracks

The Merced County bus service is run by the Transit Joint Powers Authority for Merced County. Cat Tracks is run and operated by UC Merced. The Cat Tracks buses are also equipped with bicycle racks.

4.6.3 Amtrak and on YARTS

Bicyclists could take along their bikes on Amtrak and on YARTS. Bikes are permissible on certain Amtrak trains as long as the passenger's bike is no more than 50 pounds (<http://www.amtrak.com/bring-your-bicycle-onboard>). A passenger can take a bike on a YARTS bus as long as space is available in the bus' undercarriage luggage compartment. Greyhound will not carry bikes.

4.6.4 Existing Mobility Connection Maps

Existing bike mobility connections are shown in Appendix C. These maps reflect, to the best of the City's knowledge the current location of these multi-modal connection points.

4.7 Bike System Expenditures (2008 to 2013)

Table 4.7: Bike Project Expenditures between 2008 and 2013

| BIKE PROJECT | APPROXIMATE EXPENSE (\$) |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Bike Path Projects | |
| Cottonwood Creek - Phase I (E of G St N of hosp to Tanager) (Project #103045) | 207,000 |
| Cottonwood Creek - Phase II (Cottonwood Creek Commuter Bike Path) | 120,457 |
| Cottonwood Creek - Phase III (White Dove to Gardner & W of G St) | 197,531 |
| Campus Parkway bike path | <i>unknown</i> |
| Highland Park bike path | <i>unknown</i> |
| Black Rascal Creek bikeway (Parsons to McKee) | 83,600 |
| Barclay Way Bike Path (next to Bellevue Rd high school) | <i>unknown</i> |
| Fahrens Creek Bike Path (W of R St, N of Yosemite Av) (Project #101067) | 458,465 |
| Cottonwood Creek Bike Bridge to G Street (W of G over ditch) | 25,669 |
| * Black Rascal Creek - Moraga to Yosemite Ave/Lake Rd – ACTIVE | 591,000 |
| Black Rascal Creek Bikeway “G” to “M” | 149,847 |
| * Bear Creek Bike Path/Bridges CMAQ Grant - ACTIVE | 1,674,000 |

Table 4.7: Bike Project Expenditures between 2008 and 2013

| BIKE PROJECT | APPROXIMATE EXPENSE (\$) |
|---|--------------------------|
| Bike Lane Projects | |
| Yosemite Avenue bike lane @ G St / (Project #111061) | 21,500 |
| G Street Underpass (22nd St to 26th St) (Project #109052) | 33,000 |
| 16th Street Overlay (on G St, from 16th St to 22nd St) | 33,000 |
| G Street Overlay (26th St to Park Ave) | 33,000 |
| Paseo-Merced (10 feet of pavement on G/Bellevue) | <i>unknown</i> |
| Moraga (bike lanes on Yosemite Ave) | 100,000 |
| Bike lanes on Mercy Ave @ hospital | <i>unknown</i> |
| W 18th Street restriping/resurfacing (G to N Streets) | 33,000 |
| * Bike lanes, Central & South Merced – ACTIVE | 280,000 |
| Parsons Avenue Extension (Project #112036) | 5,000 |

Table 4.7: Bike Project Expenditures between 2008 and 2013

| BIKE PROJECT | APPROXIMATE EXPENSE (\$) |
|--|--------------------------|
| Bicycle Support Facilities | |
| M Street Retaining Wall (Bear Creek @ Mercy Community) (Project #104006) | 119,710 |
| Mercy Hospital (employee bike cage) / privately installed | <i>unknown</i> |
| * Bike Racks / Bike Shelters (CMAC grant) – ACTIVE | 202,100 |

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