



City Council

AGENDA REPORT

DATE:	May 6, 2025
TO:	Mayor Martinez and Members of the City Council
FROM:	Councilmember Claudia Jimenez
Subject:	Design and implementation of a Ciclovía project
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	Staff time to work on the design and implementation of the Ciclovía project, additional costs to be determined.
PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:	None
STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE:	An event is being proposed to temporarily close certain streets in Richmond to create opportunities for traffic-free cycling, walking, and play to promote sustainable mobility, public health, and community engagement.
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	DIRECT staff to work on the design and implementation of the Ciclovía project and come back to the council in early May with the proposed design, budget, and implementation plan to launch the first Ciclovía during the Summer of 2025 – Councilmember Claudia Jimenez (510-620-6565). This item was continued from the April 22, 2025, meeting.

DISCUSSION:

Definitions & History of Ciclovias:

According to the Project for Public Spaces, a Ciclovía is an event that temporarily closes streets to automobiles to provide safe spaces for walking, bicycling, and other social activities. This is done to promote alternate forms of transportation, particularly within communities where access to open streets for biking and walking is only sometimes available due to car-centric infrastructure, like in San Francisco or Los Angeles.

The roots of Ciclovías can be traced back to Bogotá, Columbia, which began the practice of closing down streets for bicyclists and pedestrians in the mid-1970s. Since this period, Bogotá has routinely closed down streets from 7 am to 2 pm both on Sundays and during holidays, in which all main roads across the city are closed, creating a connected 75-mile path covering all the city's major parts.

Bogotá's Ciclovía program has drawn mass participation from residents and community members since its inception, with an average number of 1.7 million people (or about 1/4th of the city's entire population) turning out every single week. What is more impressive, however, is that nearly half of these pedestrians and bicyclists use the block-off streets for at least three hours.

In recent years, the Ciclovía has become a widespread phenomenon that has found itself in various cities across the world, including the Bay Area. One prominent example is Sunday Streets San Francisco, an open streets program that has incorporated the Bogotá Ciclovía model into a denser, urban-oriented event that can be much more reproducible by the City of Richmond. Since its inception in 2008, Sunday Streets San Francisco has operated under a volunteer-oriented program that collaborates with nonprofit organizations, small businesses, and sponsors across San Francisco to facilitate and provide entertainment and activities for its many riders. What makes this particular model unique, however, is its denser routes, which are often around 1-4 miles long in total.

Considerations for Ciclovía Implementation:

If approved, City staff would work to implement a route, budget, and implementation plan for a pilot launch of a Ciclovía in Richmond. There are certain considerations, however, to ensure that a program like this can be as effective as possible.

Bus routes are the first consideration when looking at roads to choose from, as these would require the closure of certain routes in at least one direction throughout the Ciclovía event. This would require coordination with local transportation agencies like AC Transit to create detour routes during the event.

The next consideration for a Ciclovía project would be determining a path where roads will be closed, either one way or both ways. One of the big draws of the Ciclovía in

Bogotá is that bike paths are created for residents to get around different prominent areas of the city using alternate modes of transportation. This, however, is largely contingent upon the fixed route that the Ciclovía presents.

Finally, another potential consideration for determining a Richmond Ciclovía route is its synergy with an upcoming or completed street improvement project. This could serve two purposes depending on the state of the improvement project: Either express to relevant parties that work must be done to fix these roads as soon as possible, or encourage pedestrians and cyclists to interact with a street improvement project that has been completed.

Community Input:

Another important aspect of implementing a project like this is ensuring that community voices are included in the implementation and vision of this program. If approved, one recommendation can be to host workshops to collaborate with local residents, neighborhood council, and community organizations to design a route and recommend programming. If not feasible, a poll or survey can also be sent out to local residents and stakeholders to collect local input. The hope is that this program can be largely guided by community input to encourage ownership in the success of a Ciclovía in Richmond.

Estimated Costs of Ciclovías in Richmond:

If approved, City Staff would be assigned to produce a budget for implementing a Ciclovía project in Richmond. It is important to note, however, that data suggests open street programs like Ciclovías are incredibly cost-effective, since the infrastructure already exists for residents to utilize roads across the city.

A 2012 study of the economic analysis of Ciclovía programs shows that Ciclovía projects are among one of the most cost-effective options for investments in community health and wellness compared to larger investments like fitness centers and other recreational infrastructure: (<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/22170324/>)

Potential Programming:

Some potential inclusions of a Ciclovía project could include community bike rides, fitness and yoga classes, food and beverage stands, arts and crafts stations, bike repair clinics, and bike valet services. All potential programming, however, would be contingent upon the funding allocated by City Staff and Council to implement this program, as well as input from community members. Ultimately, however, this program should be flexible in budget so that the initial pilot program can be built upon through future investments and programming.

Currently, Rich City Rides has expressed interest in supporting this program through community bike rides, bike repair shops, and bike valet during the Ciclovía event.

Additional Considerations:

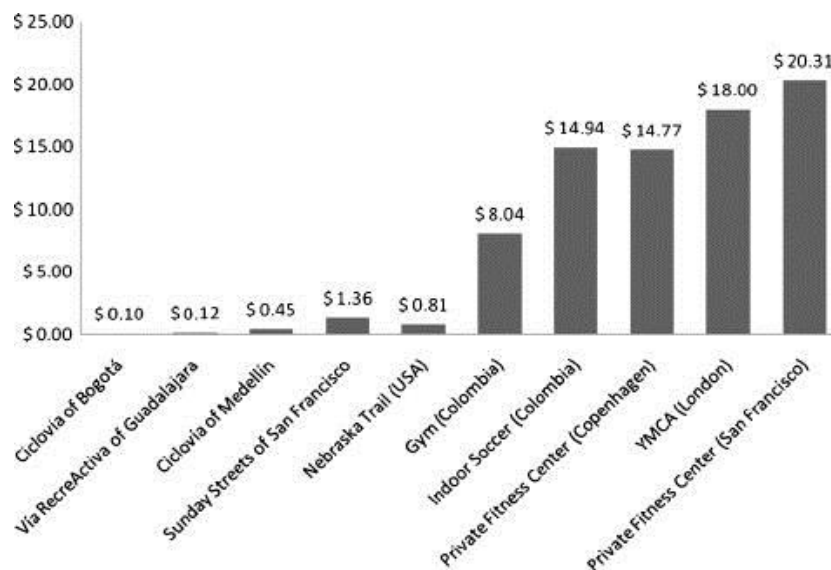
Post-Event Report

To properly assess the success of this kind of project, feedback from participants, partners, and stakeholders should be collected, as well as the number of participants who engage in the Ciclovía event. This should be put together into a post-event report written by stakeholders to inform future events.

Outreach Strategy

While community partners will be able to support with community outreach, the City of Richmond can also support with community outreach by allocating funds towards the marketing and outreach of this event to the public. This can include things like:

- Creating and distributing flyers to residents and local businesses
- Creating digital advertising on social media
- Collaborating with AC Transit to advertise the event on buses and bus stops
- creating and distributing flyers to residents and local businesses, creating digital advertising on social media, collaborating with AC Transit to advertise the event on buses, trains, and stations
- Recruiting residents or community leaders as ambassadors to spread the word and build excitement in their networks
- Reaching out to local newspapers, radio stations, and TV channels for coverage.



DOCUMENTS ATTACHED:

Attachment 1 – PPT of Ciclovía