As the San Diego region continues to grow, a robust, interconnected bicycle network will help solve a variety of complex, interconnected issues related to traffic congestion, air quality, carbon emissions and public health. The San Diego Regional Bicycle Plan proposes to develop, by 2050, a diverse system of connected bicycle corridors, related facilities and programs to make biking practical for more users. The Regional Early Action Program is accelerating this work by funding more than two dozen distinct projects in the next three years, worth over $270 million.

For San Diego County, the economic and transportation benefits of the bicycle network are intertwined. An increase in bicycling would reduce traffic on the region’s typical transportation system and, thus, reduce the need for road expansion and improvement projects. Through the project, bicycle mode share for the region will rise from 2.7 percent to 7 percent and replace 189,035 car trips per weekday, improving traffic flow. As a result, money that would have been spent on an expensive road-widening project could be used elsewhere for the region’s well-being. Air quality would also improve significantly, with the county estimating that reductions in carbon monoxide and asthma-inducing nitrogen dioxide would equate to 10 million pounds per year and 791,000 pounds per year, respectively.

San Diego's bike plan takes a self-help approach to funding the network through TransNet, a local half-cent sales tax that helps fund regional transportation projects. While the sales tax alleviates some of the need for funding, the addition of federal and state funds—on which the county also relies—would help accelerate the completion of the bicycle network before the proposed year of 2050.

The bike network is a critical step toward achieving the goals of San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan, which include not only facilitating transportation, but also supporting a sustainable and healthy region, a vibrant economy and an outstanding quality of life. The bike network will provide practical mobility options that provide economic benefits and increase public health to meet the goal of a thriving region.