



# The Squeaky Wheel

February 2002

Newsletter of the Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates

Volume XI, Number 2

## From the Chair Supervisors Should Reject SunRidge Plan

By Lea Brooks

While dozens of community leaders have spent months laying the groundwork to improve Sacramento County's putrid air quality and reduce traffic congestion, the Sunrise Douglas Community Plan/SunRidge Specific Plan has been working its way through the approval process.

The Board of Supervisors currently is considering this disturbing project during a series of public hearings. The project area is roughly bounded by Sunrise Boulevard, Douglas Road, Grant Line Road and Jackson Highway.

The Sunrise-Douglas Community Plan covers more than 6,000 acres of pasture and wetlands. The SunRidge Specific Plan is the first phase of the project proposed for approximately 2,600 acres. More than 10,000 homes would be constructed in this initial development.

At full build out, more than 22,000 homes would be plopped down in an area that is not served by public transit. The only access to the project, which is expected to generate more than 200,000 vehicle trips on local roads each day, is via roads that have no bikeways or sidewalks.

In a sane and just world, developers would be prohibited from submitting proposals like this. The Sunrise Douglas Community Plan/SunRidge Specific Plan is an island of sprawl that would be accessible only by motor vehicle. Bicyclists would be able to ride safely within the project boundaries, but could not

*SunRidge, page 3*

## Caltrans Bike Survey Released

By Walt Seifert

In a recently released report, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) District 3 described results from a survey of cyclists on Bike to Work Day, May 17, 2001. The survey focused on commutes between Sacramento and Davis.

A surprising 113 survey forms (about 15 cyclists did not stop for the forms) were distributed during the early morning two-hour survey period. Surveys were handed out at the Yolo Causeway and Tower Bridge.

More than half the cyclists who responded started in Davis. About one-quarter each originated their trips in West Sacramento and Sacramento. Sacramento was the destination for three-quarters of the trips.

First time bike commuters represented 8 percent of the respondents. Seventy-one percent of the respondents commute on a weekly basis.

*Bike Survey, page 5*

## Haggin Oaks Trail Dilemma Unresolved

By Walt Seifert

At a Jan. 23 meeting, no progress was made in resolving the dispute over the city of Sacramento's funded Haggin Oaks Golf Course trail.

Golf Manager Anne Weaver and her boss, Barbara Bonebrake, director of the Convention, Culture and Leisure Department, termed a direct route through the course unacceptable. They had concerns about disturbing



golfers, cyclist safety and interference with maintenance operations in the yard.

SABA found their alternative, a trail around the east side of the course, equally unacceptable from a transportation stand-

*Haggin Oaks, page 3*

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## NEWSLETTER OF THE SACRAMENTO AREA BICYCLE ADVOCATES (SABA)

SABA was formed in the summer of 1991 to improve conditions for bicyclists. SABA members educate the public and government agencies about the environmental and health benefits plus cost-effectiveness of bicycling. The group meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month, usually at noon. For more information, call (916) 444-6600.

The newsletter is produced and distributed once each month. If you have an idea, a compliment, a tale of woe or article for the newsletter, contact Lea Brooks, 2013 Roaring Camp Drive, Gold River, 95670, via email at lea2skip@aol.com, or call evenings at (916) 635-9332 by the third Thursday of each month.

## Welcome new members!

Marian Ashe  
Torey Bookstein  
Dwight Freund  
Matthew George  
John Obermeier  
Vincent Sterne  
Peter Warner



## SABActions

### Meetings

SABA members attended the following meetings:

- Sacramento Transportation and Air Quality Collaborative caucus and plenary sessions
- Ninos Parkway in Natomas
- SACOG Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee
- SACOG Bike/Ped MTP Subcommittee
- SACOG Regional Planning Partnership
- Environmental Council of Sacramento
- SACOG Regional Trails group
- Central City Two-Way Conversion
- Hazel Avenue Citizens Advisory Committee
- South Watt Area Transportation Study
- Bike to Work committee.

### Letters

SABA sent letters to:

- the city of Sacramento regarding the 65th Street Transit Village Draft Environmental Impact Report
- the city of Sacramento on two-way conversion
- Congressman Robert Matsui regarding the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers delaying the H Street undercrossing.

### Testimony

- SABA made a presentation to the Arden-Arcade transportation team.

### Miscellaneous

- Walt Seifert got a sound bite in SACOG's long-version video on the MTP.
- SABA made a field visit to the disputed Placerville Highway 50 widening/trail right of way site. ☼

## SABA/Community Calendar.

### February

26 SABA General Membership meeting, noon

### March

12 SacBAC, 6 p.m. Planning Commission Hearing Room, 13th and I Streets

14 SABA Volunteer Work and Pizza Party

21 FABAs membership meeting, 7 p.m., Yeagers

26 SABA General Membership meeting, noon

## SABA General Membership Meeting

Tuesday, Feb. 26, noon. American Lung Association, 909 12th Street Sacramento

11:45 I. Pre-meeting mingle, chat and eat.

12:00 II. Introductions (Lea Brooks).

12:05 III. Executive Director's Report (Walt Seifert).

12:20 IV. Central City Streets Project Status Report (Walt, Chris Morfas and/or Doug Thompson).

12:35 V. Sunrise Douglas Community Plan/SunRidge Specific Plan Status (Lea).

12:45 VI. American River Parkway issues (Lea).

12:55 VII. Other business and announcements.

1:05 IX. Adjourn.

## SABA members Pizza Party — Pizza, Soda and doin' stuff

The next SABA Volunteer Work and Pizza Party will be Thursday, March 14 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the SABA Imperial HQ, 909 12th Street



*SunRidge, from page 1*

venture outside their suburban island unless they wanted to risk death or serious injury on congested roadways with no accommodations for non-motorized travel.

Let's say, for example, that you wanted to ride your bicycle to the light rail station at Sunrise and Folsom Boulevards that will be constructed along the light rail extension to the city of Folsom in the next couple of years. The distance between the SunRidge development and the proposed light rail station is approximately five miles. For the bulk of the distance, Sunrise Boulevard between White Rock Road and Folsom Boulevard, is six lanes of extremely heavy traffic with no bike lanes. This is a miserable, dangerous stretch of roadway for cyclists.

Once upon a time, there were bike lanes along this stretch of Sunrise. But the county Public Works Department removed them under cover of darkness to accommodate more motor vehicles without even having the courtesy to notify the bicycling community. The county has refused to restore the bike lanes because of the negative impact on motor vehicle traffic.

One possibility is developing an on- and off-street bikeway that connects side streets on the east side of Sunrise. The City-County Bicycle Advisory Committee is working with county Alternate Modes Coordinator Bob Ireland to identify a route and determine how it would be financed. Of course, the developer of the Sunrise Douglas Community Plan/SunRidge Specific Plan would not have to pay a cent.

The project violates one of SABA's most sacred goals: the ability to ride your bicycle safely and conveniently anywhere. How can the county justify approving a plan that will result in more than 22,000 homes whose occupants cannot safely and conveniently ride their bicycles outside the project site?

The project's final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) actually concludes that the impacts on bicyclists and pedestrians are less than significant and that no mitigation measures are required. The fact that the EIR reached this conclusion shows that the county's environmental review process is deeply flawed when it comes to bicyclists and pedestrians because it does not look beyond the project site. There is no requirement that the developer look at connectivity for bicycle travel or contribute to a regional fund for bikeways.

The EIR includes a statement that the Folsom-South Canal is an existing off-street bikeway that runs along Sunrise Boulevard from Grant Line Road to Hazel Avenue. However, it doesn't explain how bicyclists access this bikeway from the development nor does it discuss a number of issues that need to be addressed before it will realistically be used by bicyclists. Those issues include: access, maintenance, security, management and lack of a controlled crossing for bicyclists at Sunrise.

The timing for the Sunrise Douglas Community Plan/SunRidge Specific Plan stinks. Wouldn't it make sense to place this and other poorly planned projects on hold until Sacramento's County's Transportation and Air Quality Collaborative has a chance to develop realistic solutions to crowded roads and dirty air? As Executive Director Walt Seifert explained in the January issue of the Squeaky Wheel, the county created the collaborative in an effort to achieve what the Water

Forum did for regional water supply.

What's frustrating to the collaborative's Environmental Caucus in which SABA is participating is that the Sunrise Douglas Community Plan/SunRidge Specific Plan represents development that causes the exact problems we're trying to fix. The issues and interests being developed by the Environmental Caucus to use during negotiations with the entire collaborative include:

- Achieve and maintain clean air.
- Increase the mode split for bicycle use, pedestrians trips and transit to 20 percent each regionwide by 2020 with an emphasis on improved safety, access and facilities.
- Reduce the over-reliance on automobile use.
- Recognize that land-use patterns and transportation systems are so closely linked that public decisions on these issues need to reinforce each other for efficient and effective use of both land and transportation resources.

The Sunrise Douglas Community Plan/SunRidge Specific Plan is plagued by other serious problems, including a questionable source of water due to a plume of contamination from Aerojet and proximity to the Sacramento Rendering Co. The odor from millions of pounds of dead animals and gallons of restaurant grease apparently is quite potent.

However, SABA is limiting its comments to the project's nasty effect on traffic congestion and air quality and the fact that it violates many of the county's own policies, including utilizing design and development standards that support travel by transit, walking and bicycling, and requiring that new development be designed to promote pedestrian and bicycle access and circulation. ☸

*Haggin Oaks, from page 1*

point. The alternative adds a mile or more in travel length and provides no direct connection to the Roseville Road light rail station. In addition, it does not comply with the federal funding requirement that there be an air quality benefit.

Please contact your council member and let him or her know you think the city should be building the number one-ranked trail in the city as planned. You can check out SABA's letter on this issue on the Web site ([www.sacbike.org](http://www.sacbike.org)). ☸

## New Look!

You may notice that this month's newsletter has a new look. We've tried to make it easier and more interesting to read. We hope to soon be including more photographs of people and places that are involved in current bicycle-related issues.

We'd like the newsletter to be what *you* want it to be, not just what the guys in the back room want. So, we beg you to tell us what you like about it, what you don't like, and any other suggestions of things you'd like to see the newsletter have. Please send any comments to SABA, P.O. Box 1295, Sacramento, CA 95812-1295 or *preferably* email it to [bikesaba@pacbell.net](mailto:bikesaba@pacbell.net).

# Transportation Plan Nears Finish Line

By Walt Seifert

After nearly two years of effort, the draft Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is very near adoption. When the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) Board of Directors hears the plan in April, it is unlikely any substantial changes will be made to the plan.

If you only take one bicycle advocacy action this year, please do it now. This plan guides regional transportation spending for the next 23 years. Now is the time to let the board know how you feel.

The plan allocates only 2 percent of funding to bicycle/pedestrian projects. Amazingly, that's better than the past, but still insufficient. There is another 3 percent allocated to "community design," which is likely a good thing for cyclists, but still to be defined in detail.

Here's what you can do.

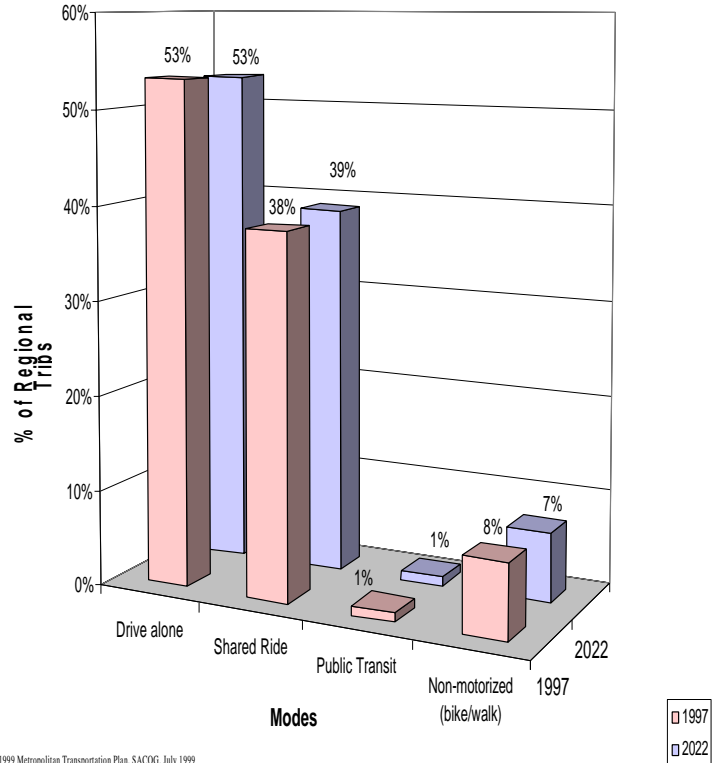
1. Use SABA's points listed below (complete SABA letter will be on the Web site) as a model to write your own letter to the SACOG board. It's always good to personalize letters with experiences that illustrate your points. Your letter can have a real impact. SACOG's address is 3000 S Street, Sacramento, 95816.
2. Call or send an e-mail to SACOG Board members, especially if they represent you as a mayor, supervisor or council member.

Reasons for increasing bicycle/pedestrian funding in the MTP:

- Bicycle and pedestrian projects best meet the MTP goals approved by the SACOG Board.
- More funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects reflects the desires of the SACOG Roundtable.
- Bicycle and pedestrian projects are extremely cost-effective compared to other modes.
- Increasing the mode share for cycling and walking is a cleaner, cheaper and healthier way of decreasing congestion than adding road capacity.
- There has been a historic deficiency of funding for cycling and walking, with these modes receiving only 1 percent of past transportation funding.
- Because of past neglect, current conditions for cyclists are inadequate.
- The benefits of increased levels of cycling are such that we should be striving for excellence, not adequacy, in bicycle facilities and programs.

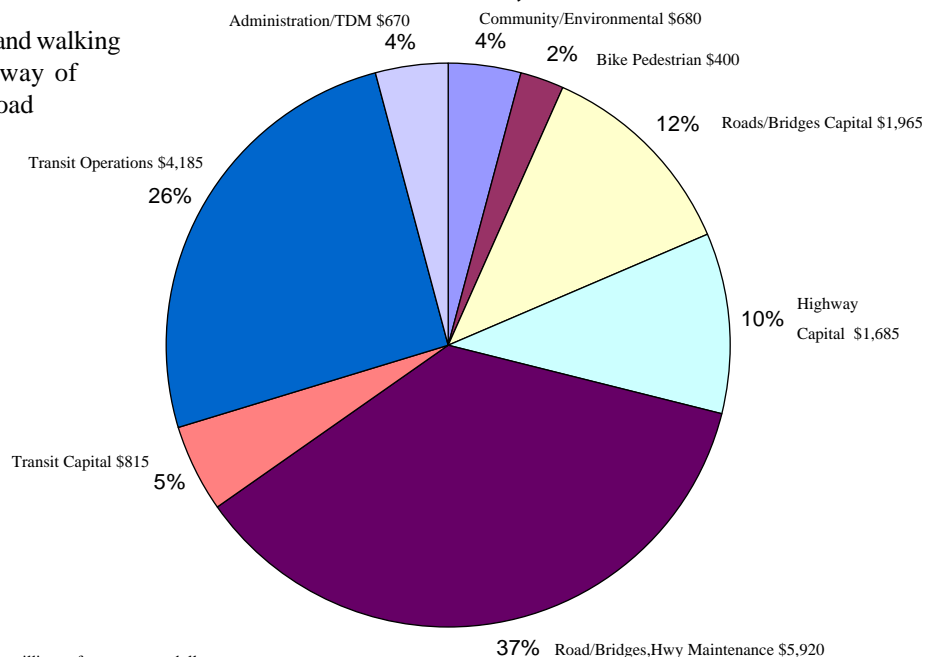
More information on the plan is at <http://www.sacog.org/>. Board members' e-mail and snail mail addresses are also on the Web site ☎

## Regional Mode Choice Projections, 1997-2022



Source: 1999 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, SACOG, July 1999

## Tier 1 = \$16,315



\* In millions of current year dollars

*Bike Survey, from page 1*

Many respondents provided detailed and quite colorful comments. More comments were received about the poor conditions of Yolo County Road 32A than any other topic, but there were many comments about the approach speeds of cars on the west side of the Tower Bridge and the pavement conditions on the bridge. Others called for more frequent sweeping of the causeway bike path and West Capitol Avenue.

Analysis of the survey results and the individual comments suggests a couple of project ideas, including improving the neglected I Street Bridge for cyclists and traffic calming on the west side of the Tower Bridge to slow vehicles traveling at freeway speeds.

The full report is at [http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist3/departments/environmental/ct\\_home/reports.htm](http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist3/departments/environmental/ct_home/reports.htm) ☼



Looking east, north side of Tower Bridge

### SABA Business and Organization members.

Business members with an \* offer SABA members a discount.

- |  |                          |  |  |
|--|--------------------------|--|--|
| • Air Resources Board                        | • Gary Brustin, LLP      | • Lambertwebworks.com*                       | • Sacramento Bike Hikers                     |
| • American Lung Association                  | • Gregorini & Associates | • Natomas Bike Shop*                         | • Downtown Sacramento Partnership            |
| • American River Bicycles* (Folsom Blvd.)    | • Franchise Tax Board    | • North Natomas TMA                          | • Sacramento TMA                             |
| • American River Bicycles* (Riverside Blvd.) | • Hannan Specialties     | • Power Inn BTA                              | • Sacramento Wheelmen                        |
| • The Bicycle Business                       | • The Hoyt Co.           | • Regional Transit                           | • Savoyard Bed & Breakfast*                  |
| • Bicycles Plus*                             | • Inside Publications    | • REI  | • Sierra Engineering                         |
| • Bob's Cycle Center                         | • JHME Advertising       | • The Rest Stop*                             | • SMUD                                       |
| • Body Concepts                              | • Ken's Bike and Ski     | • Rex Cycles                                 | • South Natomas TMA                          |
| • City Bicycle Works                         | • Judith Lamare, PHD     | • Sacramento Air Quality Management District | • UC Davis Transportation & Parking Services |

**Check SABA on the Web: [www.sacbike.org](http://www.sacbike.org)**

## Dry T-shirt contest

*Walt*

How about a creative, colorful SABA T-shirt? While SABA's classic T-shirt is noble in its own way, some would say it is a mite stodgy. As the T-shirt larder is almost bare, now's a good time to do a revamp.

So in keeping with a SABA tradition of having a contest to come up with something better (that's how the Squeaky Wheel got its name), we are proud to announce the SABA T-shirt Design Contest. Winner will receive a \$50 gift certificate and the priceless first T-shirt hot off the silk-screen. SABA gets a fresh design. Contest is open to all comers. You don't have to be a SABA member.

Use your imagination to come up with something visually appealing that relates to SABA's mission or simply celebrates cycling or the simple beauty of bicycles. Use the SABA logo—or don't use it. Use the SABA "official" colors of beige and reflex blue, or something jazzier.

Entries due by March 30, 2002.

## SACOG Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee Notes

*By Walt Seifert*

Yolo County is updating its bike plan. The city of Roseville's bike plan should be going to the City Council in February or March.

El Dorado County, spurred by the interest and comments at the last SACOG Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee meeting, is planning on establishing a trails coordinator position.

Folsom is forming a bicycle advisory committee.

In Davis, the Mace Boulevard interchange is complete, with bike ramps included. The nearby Dave Pels overcrossing of Interstate-80 is almost finished. The Putah Creek undercrossing of the Union Pacific railroad tracks should be completed in several months.

At the University of California at Davis, six turtle-like "Bike Lid" lockers have been installed on campus. The lockers have advertising and were provided free. It's too early to tell about usage and cyclists' response. ☼

## Letters to the Editor

In this new section, we'd like to hear from you regarding your opinions, concerns, and topics of interest to other area bicyclists. Letters may be edited for length or clarity. If you have something you'd like to say, please send it to:

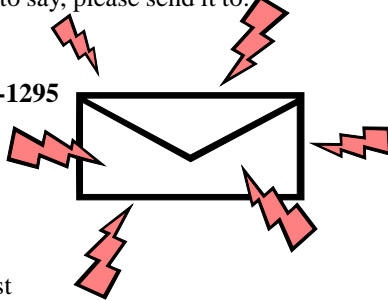
**SABA**

**P.O. Box 1295**

**Sacramento, CA 95812-1295**

or preferably email it to:

**bikesaba@pacbell.net**



\* \* \*

Re: New Year's Wish List

I liked your wish list. But I feel you don't realize the scope, depth and power of your opponents. You're taking on a whole civilization and the fantasy world that a significant segment of its people inhabit.

Where the social sciences are still based on the assumption that we humans are rational, natural scientists studying *Homo sapiens* (particularly recent brain research) firmly prove our irrationality. Our corporate marketers follow this research closely-to manipulate us in directions they find profitable. With this they've fashioned our fantasy world and have herded a large majority of people inside.

A majority is locked into their gas-guzzlers, the regular commute traffic jams and all that goes with it. This majority is unwilling to entertain any effort to change. Scandinavians have implemented a change that offers them real help and it'd help us too. But we don't ever hear about it. Our transportation experts don't mention it, because they feel it's too controversial. Any politician would be dead if he or she supported it.

The idea is very free enterprise, demand and supply, market economics. It uses high-tech to charge for using our highways (an increasingly scarce commodity)-high prices at peak times, low prices off peak. It provides strong incentives to seek alternatives, like public transit and bicycles.

Such changes are almost impossible in this society-and most others. Of course, change will come-in time. But not soon-perhaps decades, more likely 100-200 years. In the meantime, we push for incremental change and hope for the majority's fantasy world to erode.

Merick Chaffee

## Tahoe to Bay Bikeway

At the end of 2001, Caltrans District 3 sought grant funding (supported by SABA) for planning a Lake Tahoe to Bay area bikeway. This project would be a combination of bike paths and on-street facilities, either bike lanes or routes.

While the decision on the grant funding is still pending, Caltrans planner Bruce de Terra indicates that District 3 will proceed with planning the bikeway even if the grant is not funded. de Terra said planning and construction of the bikeway could represent the first use in the state of interregional transportation funds for a bike project. ☼

## Regional Trails Project Update

At a Jan. 3 meeting, the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) revisited the regional trails project. A large turn-out demonstrated high interest in the topic.

The assembled group moved that the SACOG Overall Work Program include planning for regional trails with other partners such as the California Department of Parks and Recreation and the Rails to Trails Conservancy.

State Parks Gold Fields District Superintendent Jacqueline Ball said that state parks is very interested in a partnership and had funding available for the effort. She felt that the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation is also interested. ☼

## PCL Withdraws Initiative

The Planning and Conservation League (PCL) has withdrawn the "Traffic Congestion Relief and Safe School Bus Act" ballot initiative planned for the November 2002 election. The decision was prompted by unfavorable polling results. The initiative would have dedicated additional state funding for bike projects and programs. ☼

