



The Squeaky Wheel

www.sacbike.org

Newsletter of the Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates

May 2003

From the Chair Elkhorn Boulevard Bike Lanes Must be Preserved

By Lea Brooks

SABA and the Sacramento City-County Bicycle Advisory Committee (SacBAC) are asking the Board of Supervisors to reject a proposal by the county Department of Transportation staff to eliminate the bike lanes on Elkhorn Boulevard from Don Julio Boulevard to Watt Avenue to accommodate a third vehicle lane.

Eliminating the bike lanes, which the Department of Transportation has the gall to call a "compromise," is bad public policy. If the Board of Supervisors supports the proposal, it would set a terrible precedent and send a message to the transportation staff that eliminating bicycle facilities is OK when they get in the way of widening roads to accommodate more motor vehicles.

Elkhorn Boulevard currently has four lanes with Class 2 bike lanes that provide a safe, convenient and direct route for bicyclists. Elkhorn Boulevard is a designated bikeway in the Sacramento City-County Bikeway Master Plan, which is part of the county General Plan.

These key factors don't count to the transportation staff, which justifies eliminating the bike lanes by arguing that Elkhorn Boulevard is designated as a thoroughfare (six lanes of traffic) in the General Plan. The transportation staff wants to re-stripe the current road to six lanes for motor vehicles. It claims that widening the road to accommodate bike lanes on a six-lane thoroughfare would cost an additional \$500,000 — money that the county doesn't have.

The transportation staff's solution: divert-

Chair, page 4

Freeport Boulevard/ 21st Street Restoration

By Chris Morfas and Walt Seifert

The Sacramento City Council voted 8-0 on April 8 to proceed with further study of restoring two-way traffic to Freeport Boulevard and 21st Street between W Street and 4th Avenue. On 21st, options including and omitting bike lanes will be studied. The council also directed that a traffic circle at the intersection of Freeport, 4th Avenue and 21st be studied.

Peter Jacobsen, representing SABA, and Ken Murray, testifying for the City/County Bicycle Advisory Committee (SacBAC), both asked the council to select the 21st Street option that has only one lane in each direction and bike lanes.

Neighbors for Livable Streets (NLS) had a strong turnout. Many NLS supporters asked the council to provide bike lanes on 21st Street. There was considerable support by others for bike lanes on 21st as well.

Council Member Steve Cohn and Mayor Heather Fargo stated they were in favor (without knowing the results of the upcoming environmental study, which could change their opinions) of bike lanes and one lane in each direction on 21st. Thanks to Council Member Yee for urging in his motion that bike lanes be studied; something that not been recommended by staff. Council Member Hammond understandably struggled to address the sometimes conflicting opinions of her constituents.

The Freeport/21st study is expected to be complete in nine to 12 months. Through the separate Central City Conversion project, there is the possibility of conversion of 19th and 21st streets to two-lane, one-way traffic north of W Street. With favorable outcomes

Freeport, page 3

U.S. Senate Adopts "Conserve by Bike" Amendment

According to an April 12 news release from the League of American Bicyclists, "During yesterday's debate on the energy bill, the United States Senate adopted an amendment that would promote energy conservation through bicycling. The Conserve By Bike Amendment passed by a voice vote and was recommended by Sen. Frank Murkowski (R-AK.), ranking member of the Energy Committee, as an amendment that 'suggests the obvious benefits of the bicycle.'

"Introduced by Sens. Richard Durbin (D-Ill.) and Susan Collins (R-Maine), the Conserve By Bike Amendment establishes within the Department of Transportation a Conserve By Bicycling pilot program. This program would oversee up to 10 pilot projects geographically dispersed across the country designed to conserve energy resources by providing education and marketing tools to convert car trips to bike trips. In addition, the projects would encourage partnerships between stakeholders from transportation, law enforcement, education, public health, environment and energy fields. Project results and energy savings must be documented, and the secretary of transportation is instructed to report to Congress on the results of the pilot program within two years of implementation.

"The Department of Transportation is also authorized to conduct a study on the feasibility and benefits on the conversion of car trips to bike trips. The amendment authorizes \$5.5 million for the pilot projects and the study." ☉

SABA Mission

SABA represents bicyclists. Our aim is more and safer trips by bike.

SABA Vision

Bicycling for everyday transportation is common because it is safe, convenient and desirable.

SABA meets the fourth Tuesday of each month, usually at noon, but once every three months at 6:00 p.m. For more information call us at (916) 444-6600, or e-mail us at saba@sacbike.org.

SABA's Folsom Chapter, the Folsom Area Bicycle Advocates (FABA), meets at 7:00 p.m. the third Thursday of the month. For more information call Chapter Chair Tony Powers at (916) 353-1745 or e-mail them at faba@tomatoweb.com.

The Squeaky Wheel

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



SABA/Community Calendar

May

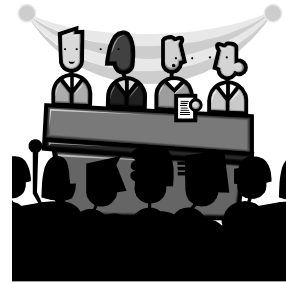
- 20 Central City Two-way Conversion hearing Sacramento City Council, evening session
- 27 SABA General Membership Meeting, noon, American Lung Association

Blueprint Transportation and Land Use Workshops - Go to www.sacog.org for description, dates and locations and to RSVP.

SABA General Membership Meeting

Tuesday, May 27, Noon, American Lung Association, 909 12th Street, Conference Room, Sacramento.

- 11:45 I. Pre-Meeting mingle, chat, eat
- 12:00 II. Introductions (Lea Brooks)
- 12:05 III. Executive Director's Report (Walt Seifert)
- 12:15 IV. Bike to Work Day follow-up (Walt Seifert and Sue Teranishi)
- 12:25 V. State policy on bike facilities at State offices (Lea, Walt, and Maggie O'Mara)
- 12:40 VI. Folsom Lake State Recreation Area General Plan Update (Lea)
- 12:45 VII. Report on Sacramento City Council's May 20 meeting re: two-way conversion (Walt, Lea, and Ed Cox)
- 1:00 VIII. Other business and announcements
- 1:05 IX. Adjourn



SABActions

Meetings

SABA members attended these meetings:

- Sacramento Transportation and Air Quality Collaborative plenary, environmental group and visioning sessions
- SACOG Metropolitan Transportation Plan Bicycle/Pedestrian project funding criteria
- County Supervisor's Chiefs of Staff on Elkhorn Boulevard Widening Project
- Folsom Lake State Recreation Area General Plan

Letters

SABA sent letters to:

- Congresspersons Doolittle, Matsui and Ose on closing Folsom Dam Road
- *Sacramento Business Journal* in response to their series on obesity and potential for transportational cycling to increase physical activity

Testimony

SABA testified to:

- Sacramento City Council on restoration of two-way traffic on Freeport Blvd and 21st Street

Other

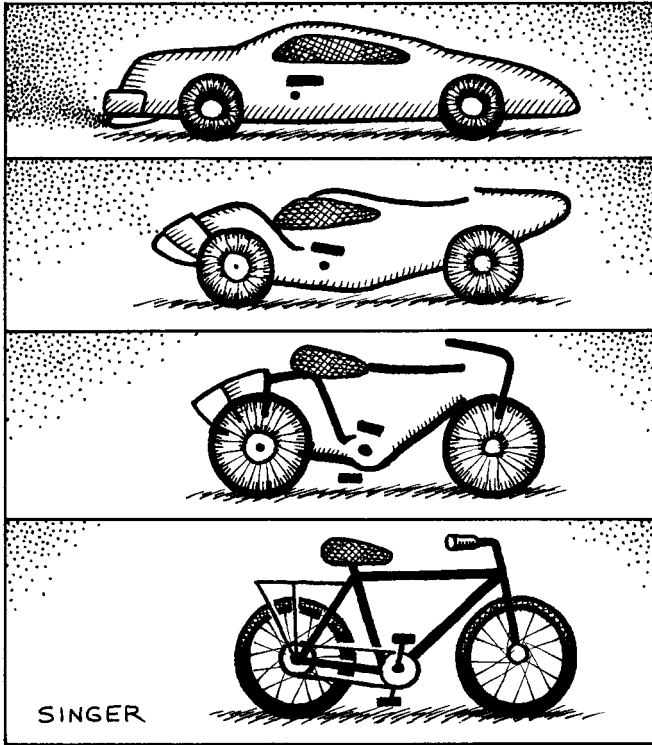
- SABA tables at City Bicycle Works SuperSale, East Sacramento Day and Earth Day at CSUS
- Attended Kickoff Luncheon for Commuter Bike Challenge

Freeport, from page 1

for the Central City and Freeport/21st projects, there is a chance for much improved conditions for cyclists in the 19th/21st/Freeport corridor within a year or two! ☼

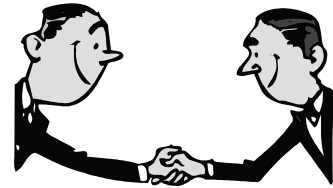
NO EXIT © Andy Singer

EVOLUTION



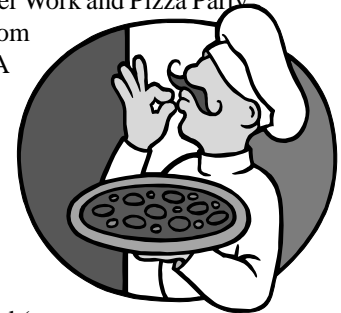
Welcome new members!

- Sylvia Bambra
- Panama Bartholomy and Laura Kerr
- Tony & Margie DeRiggi
- Bud Leland
- Gary M. Gannon
- Chris Marney
- Kevin Sanders
- Melissa Schuler
- Daniel Whitney



**SABA Pizza Party —
Pizza, Soda and Doin' Stuff**

The monthly SABA Volunteer Work and Pizza Party will be Thursday, June 12, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the SABA Superior California HQ, 909 12th Street. You don't want to miss this meeting! This month we'll be talking about bike stuff, writing letters, talking about bikes, stuffing envelopes, talking about bikes, eating pizza, and (you might guess) talking about bikes.



Commuter Bike Challenge

By Walt Seifert

By the end of April, an amazing 62 teams, including the the American Lung Association's "Lung Rangers" and the California Department of Water Resources "Waterwheels," had already signed up for the Commuter Bike Challenge, exceeding organizer's goals. More entries were expected by the start of California Bike Commute Week, May 12-16. We'll keep you posted on final results.

The teams competed for fun, prizes and bragging rights to have the highest employee participation during Bike Week. There were weekly prize drawings for team leaders and team members leading up to Bike to Work Day. Winning teams will be receiving special prizes from La Bou.

If you didn't sign up to be a team leader or team member this year, please make it a point to do so next year. Not only will you get a chance to win a prize or two, plus lord it over competitors, you'll be leading by example.

Part of bike advocacy is helping create the cultural shift that is needed to make cycling acceptable and desirable in our society. Facilities, education and enforcement are great and are all vitally important, but getting individuals to actually change their behavior is crucial. ☼



Chair, from page 1

ing bicyclists to a series of discontinuous frontage roads, which would create additional intersections, stops and left and right hand turns for bicyclists. This proposal would make travel by bicycle along this corridor inconvenient and less safe.

On April 24, SABA Executive Director Walt Seifert, SacBAC Chairman Skip Amerine and I met with the Board of Supervisors' chiefs of staff to present our arguments that eliminating the bike lanes on Elkhorn Boulevard is unacceptable. On April 29, Walt and Skip met with Supervisor Roger Dickenson, whose district includes this stretch of Elkhorn Boulevard.

Approximately 30 percent of the project has been designed, which means the board needs to make a decision soon to preserve the bike lanes before the transportation staff spends more time and money turning Elkhorn Boulevard from a bike-friendly roadway into yet another suburban high-speed thoroughfare that makes bicycling inconvenient, unpleasant and less safe.

We gave the additional reasons why bike lanes on Elkhorn Boulevard need to be preserved:

- Removing the bike lanes will discourage bicycle use.
- For decades, cities, towns and suburbs have been developed on the assumption that every trip will be made by car. This approach has all but eliminated walking and bicycling from daily life. The consequences are dire: 65 percent of Americans are overweight and 31 percent are obese. Eliminating bike lanes on Elkhorn will continue this disastrous trend.
- Sacramento County should not remove existing bicycle facilities to accommodate additional traffic lanes.
- Sacramento County must support a balanced transportation system, not a system that accommodates only motor vehicles.
- This project would accommodate additional motor vehicles at the expense of bicyclists.
- Sacramento County is funding the Transportation and Air Quality Collaborative in an effort to ease traffic congestion and improve air quality. What kind of message will the Board of Supervisors be sending by eliminating bike lanes on a designated bikeway in the General Plan to make way for more motor vehicle traffic?
- What measures has Sacramento County taken to reduce traffic on Elkhorn Boulevard to lesson the need for additional traffic lanes? Eliminating the bike lanes, which support an alternative form of transportation, would discourage the use of a clean and healthy form of transportation.
- Sunrise Boulevard between Folsom Boulevard and White Rock Road had bike lanes until about 10 years ago. That's when the Department of Transportation, with no public notice, eliminated the bike lanes to add a third traffic lane. The result is that bicyclists no longer use Sunrise Boulevard because of extreme traffic congestion even though it is designated as a bikeway in the Bikeway Master Plan. There is no safe and convenient way to bicycle along this corridor. By eliminating the bike lanes, using a bicycle is not an option unless you ride on the sidewalk, which is illegal and dangerous. Light rail is being extended to Sunrise in approximately one year. Due to the Department of Transportation's actions a decade ago, light rail riders who

live or work along this corridor will be discouraged from combining transit and bicycles because there is no safe and convenient route. Is this the county's vision for Elkhorn?

- Since bike lanes would remain on Elkhorn Boulevard both east and west of the project, eliminating the bike lanes along this stretch will create a discontinuous bikeway facility. ☹

SABA Members Try Segway

By Walt Seifert

What transportation device is quiet, non-polluting and has two wheels but isn't a bike? It's a Segway, the lawn mower-like "human transporter." (I guess you can argue about the non-polluting part since the electricity has to be produced somehow.) One can be yours for only \$4,950 from Amazon.com with a non-refundable \$495 deposit.



*Member Chris Halm tests Segway
Photo by Marie Schelling*

At its April meeting, SABA members got to try out a couple of Segways. One is on loan to city of Sacramento Traffic Engineer Marty Hanneman and the other was provided by manufacturer's representative Matt Dailida.

The city is trying to figure out how or if to regulate the devices. Per state legislation, Segways were given the rights of pedestrians, but cities have the authority to ban them altogether, as San Francisco did, or restrict their use by rider's age or in other ways, such as through a helmet requirement for

Segway, next page

Letters to the Editor

Editor:

Can SABA put a bug in someone's ear to make an exciting trail off the levee at the bottom end of the Sacramento River Trail near Freeport that I believe is called Freeport Shores baseball field?

I've got another question: Why was the trail near the river at the Southern Pacific, now Union Pacific, bridge destroyed? I fish by bicycle, and one day I was headed for one of my favorite fishing holes near the bridge and discovered it had not been just abandoned, but destroyed. I could understand letting it go, but to spend time and money to wreck a beautiful bike trail is just nuts. I expect someone thought it would keep the transients out or maybe the horse people have more pull than us, either way it's been a failure. I still go there by bike, and so do many others. So far I've only seen people on horseback twice in over 80 visits to the area.

One more question: Are we ever to get a paved trail on the other side of the river from the Jibboom Street Bridge up river to the college or beyond? The American River has so much to offer in its beauty and usefulness, If we can put honest people out there using it, it will drive away the undesirable types who spoil it for all of us who would use it properly.

-- C.K. Icanberry

Editors note: Per City of Sacramento Alternative Modes Coordinator, Ed Cox: "The bike trail along the Sacramento River that ends near Freeport will be extended to access the Freeport Shores Youth Sports Facility. The design plans for this project are at 50 percent completion and are expected to be completed this summer. We expect to have the project under construction either this fall or early next year."

The city of Sacramento is planning a trail on the south bank of the American River from the confluence with the Sacramento River to Sutter's Landing Regional Park next to the Capitol City Freeway. It would desirable to extend this trail further upriver to connect to California State University, Sacramento, and beyond. The trail is in the early stages of creation and no funding yet available.

Per Gary Kukkola, deputy director of the Sacramento County Department of Parks, Recreation and Open Space: "The American River Parkway bike trail was re-routed through the Cal Expo floodplain to take advantage of the higher land terrace. The old trail was subject to frequent flooding and consequently, frequent closures, and higher ongoing maintenance costs. The flat car bridge was narrow, with poor visibility.

SacBAC (Sacramento City/County Bicycle Advisory Committee) supported the re-route. Additionally, the material from the old trail was ground up and used as road base for the new section of trail, saving a little expense. Removal of the old asphalt, restored the area to a more naturalistic condition. It was never our intent to retain the old trail and have two trails in such close proximity to each other." ☸

We want to hear from *you*! Letters may be edited for length or clarity. *Preferably* e-mail it to: saba@sacbike.org or put it in an envelope to:

SABA, P.O. Box 1295 Sacramento, CA 95812-1295

Dear SABA:

I thought it was interesting to see the article in the Sacramento Bee about the needed levee repairs for the Little Pocket area. While the Little Pocket people are anxious to get \$10-plus million of public funds, they steadfastly refuse to consider any compromise to allow public access to the levee, which would include completing the south arm of the Sacramento River bike trail. The current detour to Riverside Boulevard is a poor and unsafe alternate route. Would this be a time suggest that the Little Pocket people reconsider alternatives to public access to gain support for their access to the "Big Pocket" (taxpayers dollars)!

-- Paul Keller

Segway, previous page
riders.

A fair amount of controversy has swirled around the Segway. Its promoters have assiduously and expensively lobbied to get the devices approved at federal and State levels, sometimes seemingly trying to short-circuit normal deliberations concerning safety and other impacts.

The Segway "personal assisted mobility devices" provide an alternative to automobile use, but some fear their use on sidewalks. The machines tested by SABA weighed 60 and 80 pounds, respectively. Add the weight of a rider and a speed of 12.5 mph, and visions of sidewalk Juggernauts can put off walking advocates, as it did WalkSacramento (which opposes their use on sidewalks) and groups representing the elderly in San Francisco.

The manufacturer claims the Segway stops as soon as it strikes something, that a skilled rider can stop it with a few feet and that it stops if the rider steps off. However, in a demonstration to the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition, the Segway cracked a wall when its rider stepped off and the riderless machine ran into it.

Unlike cycling and walking, riding a Segway has no exercise benefits. Matt Smith, a columnist for San Francisco Weekly, called the Segway "the ultimate American doomsday machine," potentially responsible for a "tsunami of lard." Though company representatives suggest the Segway is something to make that last mile connection to transit, is it better for that job than a \$300 bike that provides some exercise?

The San Diego County Bicycle Coalition took the following position: "We believe the Segway Human Transporter should be treated as a pedestrian. That is, it would not be appropriate for use in the roadway or in bike lanes, but it may be appropriate for use on multi-use paths with the appropriate rules and/or controls."

SABA members' reactions to the test rides varied from "When can I get one?" to "Am I going to fly off this thing on turns?"

Right now, how the devices are treated locally does not seem like a burning issue for cyclists. Sales have been slow and there may never be enough of them around to create much of conflict with either pedestrians or cyclists. ☸

SABA Business and Organization Members

Business members with an * offer SABA members a discount.

- Air Resources Board
- American Lung Association
- American River Bicycle*
(Folsom Blvd.)
- American River Bicycle*
(Marconi Ave.)
- American River Bicycle*
(Riverside Blvd.)
- American Warp Drive
- The Bicycle Business
- Bicycles Plus*
- Bob's Cycle Center
- Body Concepts
- Chaney Chiropractic
- City Bicycle Works*
- Davis Bike Club
- Downtown Sacramento Partnership
- Elk Grove Community Services District
- Fehr & Peers Associates
- 50 Corridor TMA
- Franchise Tax Board
- Gary Brustin, LLP
- Gregorini & Associates
- Hannan Specialties
- The Hoyt Co.
- Hull & Honeycutt Marketing and Design
- Inside Publications
- Ken's Bike & Ski
- Law Offices of K. Greg Petersen
- LambertWebWorks.com*
- Natomas Bike Shop*
- North Natomas TMA
- Power Inn BTA
- Regional Transit
- REI
- The Rest Stop*
- Rex Cycles
- Sacramento Air Quality Management District
- Sacramento Bike Hikers
- Sacramento Natural Foods Co-op
- Sacramento TMA
- Sacramento Wheelmen
- Savoyard Bed & Breakfast*
- Sierra Engineering
- SMUD
- South Natomas TMA
- Sports Rack
- UC Davis Transportation & Parking Services

SABA

P.O. Box 1295
Sacramento, CA 95812-1295

Return Service Requested

**Presorted
Standard**
U.S. Postage Paid
Sacramento, CA
Permit No. 1424

**More Bikes Allowed on Last RT
Cars and Buses**

Sacramento Regional Transit (RT) has taken another positive step to accommodate bicyclists: the restriction on the number of bicycles that may be carried on board a bus or a light rail car will not apply if the vehicle is the last bus or car operated on a route for that day. The April 14 action by the RT Board of Directors takes effect on May 14.

The board also approved suspension of fares for bicyclists on May 15, Bike to Work Day. RT suspended the fares on Bike to Work Day last year and in 2001, a move that was viewed positively by the Sacramento community and encouraged bikes on board buses and trains.

Normal restrictions apply on May 15: four bicycles are allowed in each RT car (two in the front and two in the back), with the exception of the first car, which is limited to two bikes in the back. Four bicycles are allowed on one-car light rail trains that run at night and on weekends. Bicyclists must ride at the rear of the car since the front is reserved for passengers with disabilities. ☼

NO EXIT © Andy Singer

