



Sacramento
Area
Bicycle
Advocates

Letter No. 24

Making Sacramento a cycling capital

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City of Elk Grove Planning Department
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Sacramento CA 95827
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Dec. 14, 2000

Re: Lent Ranch Marketplace Draft Environmental Impact Report

Dear Mr. Angell,

The Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates (SABA) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Lent Ranch Marketplace Draft EIR. This letter addresses the transportation and circulation section, specifically bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

The EIR does not adequately address the project's significant impact on bicyclists and pedestrians because it does not address how bicyclists and pedestrians are going to cross Highway 99. This issue is significant because the bulk of the population of the City of Elk Grove lives on the east side of Highway 99, while the project site and its estimated 7,700 jobs is on the west side.

The access across the freeway currently is the Highway 99/Grant Line Road interchange, which is targeted for reconstruction as a separate project. Based on the draft EIR's description of the reconstructed interchange — modified diamond type with diagonal off-ramps and loop on-ramps — SABA concludes that the interchange will be a major barrier to bicyclists and pedestrians.

SABA requests that the final EIR address a separate bicycle/pedestrian crossing within a half-mile north of Grant Line

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Road to provide safe and convenient access across the freeway. This separate bicycle and pedestrian facility must be constructed concurrently with the interchange reconstruction and be paid for by the project developer.

In August 1998, SABA submitted the following comment in response to the Sacramento County Grant Line Road/State Route 99 Interchange Reconstruction Draft CEQA Environmental Impact Report (Project Control No. 98-PWE-0067): "SABA does not believe that the bicycle lane striping in both directions through the interchange as proposed in the draft EIR will provide safe conditions for bicyclists. As proposed, the project will be a major barrier to safe and direct travel for bicyclists."

For example, the Hazel Avenue/State Route 50 Interchange Improvement project approved by the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors in 1992 and completed in 1994 included striped bike lanes in both directions. However, multi-lane on-and off-ramps and vehicles accelerating to freeway speed combined to block all but the most determined bicyclists to pass through the interchange.

The Board of Supervisors recognized that the Hazel Avenue/State Route 50 Interchange was a major deterrent to bicyclists and approved a separate bicycle/pedestrian overcrossing of Highway 50 east of Hazel Avenue at Aerojet Road. This overcrossing was completed more than five years after the interchange project was completed.

There are numerous other examples in Sacramento County and throughout the state of freeway interchanges that block bicyclists and pedestrians. In Sacramento County along the Highway 50 corridor, the interchanges of Watt and Howe avenues with Highway 50 are other examples of how residents on the north side of the freeway are blocked from cycling or walking to job sites and light rail on the south side without risking their lives.

Do not allow this to happen in Elk Grove! Unless a separate crossing for bicyclists and pedestrians is constructed, the access between your population center on the east side of the freeway and a

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shopping center on the west side will be limited to motor vehicles and some transit. Individuals without vehicles, individuals who cannot drive and individuals who choose not to drive will not have the choice of cycling or walking across the freeway without risking their lives through an interchange designed to move large volumes of fast-moving vehicles.

The Lent Ranch Marketplace Draft EIR states that the retail/commercial uses and the improvements to West Stockton Boulevard would provide an opportunity to enhance bicycle and pedestrian access to the project. Specifically, bicycle lanes and sidewalks would be constructed with the roadways, new interchange (separate project) and realignment of West Stockton Boulevard.

The reality is that bicyclists and pedestrians need a separate crossing of Highway 99 to take advantage of these proposed facilities.

SABA is a nonprofit organization with approximately 350 members who are dedicated to increasing the number of bicyclists in the Sacramento area by improving conditions for bicycling. If you have any questions, please contact SABA Executive Director Walt Seifert at 455-7561 or P.O. Box 1295, Sacramento CA 95812-1295.

Sincerely,



Lea Brooks,
Chair

24. Letter from Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates, Lea Brooks, dated December 14, 2000

Response 1

The Draft EIR recognizes that pedestrians and bicyclists would utilize the SR-99 overcrossing at Grant Line Road to access the project site(See Draft EIR at page 4.2-51). The improved SR-99/Grant Line Road Interchange would be designed to promote pedestrian and bicycle access and safety. The design of the interchange and its pedestrian and bicycle-friendly aspects are addressed in the EIR for the State Route 99/Grant Line Road Interchange Reconstruction and are not part of the project or analyzed in the Draft EIR. Construction of a separate overpass over SR-99 to serve pedestrian and bicycle visitors to the Project is not necessary, as the SR-99/Grant Line Road Interchange would serve this purpose. Bicycle lanes and sidewalks would be constructed along Project roadway (See Draft EIR at page 4.2-51).

The Grant Line Road overcrossing would include sidewalks heading East/West on both sides of the interchange and would include adequate shoulder width to accommodate bicyclists. Pedestrian crossings would be provided at all on- and off-ramps. In addition, all movements at the off-ramp terminal intersections would be controlled (i.e., no free right-turn movements). Pedestrians crossing the ramp approach at these intersections would be given ample pedestrian crossing time, primarily due to the required green time serving the large volumes heading East/West on the Grant Line approaches.