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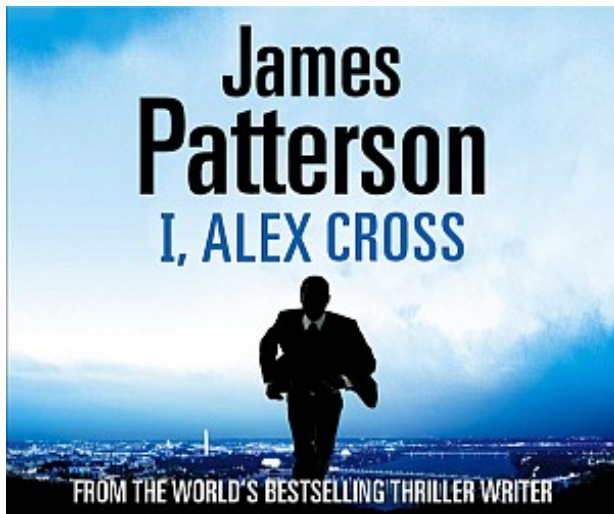
KGO Radio Bay Area News

SJ Aims to Make City Bike-Friendly

San Jose city and transit officials are dreaming of a more bike-friendly city that could become reality for residents as soon as next spring.

City Council members adopted a comprehensive bicycle plan this week that within the decade aims to reduce car lanes and expand bike lanes from 300 to 500 miles, increase the percentage of commute trips from 1 to 5 percent, reduce bike collisions by 50 percent and add 5,000 bike parking spaces.

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Councilman Sam Liccardo said the city is working to create a streetscape that would be more comfortable for cyclists.

"The whole effort is about remaking what had been a city built for cars into a city built for people," Liccardo said. "Like so many other suburban cities in the west, changing the way we build a city has to go hand in hand with changing attitudes about mobility. We know this is the right path for us to follow."

Ultimately, Liccardo said the goal is to alleviate congestion, improve public health and be environmentally friendly.

"As I see it, cycling is good for the wallet, good for the body, and good for the planet," he said.

Funding for the project would be derived from state and federal grants and existing funding resources, Liccardo said.

Next spring, the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority will launch a bike-sharing pilot program that

would make bicycles available at Caltrain stations in Mountain View, Palo Alto and San Jose for commuters to ride to work or school.

Liccardo said the project would enable more people to participate in the workforce as well as address problems such as bike bumping on trains.

VTA transportation planner Aiko Cuenco said bike sharing would allow commuters to drop off their bikes at a transit station, hop on a train, and then pick up another bike at the station to ride to their destination.

"The biggest goal is making bicycling a viable form of transportation, not just for recreational purposes, or riding during weekends, but if you connect with transit, you expand transportation options," Cuenco said.

The VTA has applied for a \$500,000 grant from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission to kick-start this program in the spring of 2010

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