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Roadshow: Bicycle crossings over I-880 are in the works

By Gary Richards
Mercury News

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Q As an avid cyclist, I enjoyed your review of new freeway crossing bridges. But crossing Interstate 880 north of 101 has been totally neglected. The last decent crossing is at Gish Road. North of that, the litany of dangerous roads is frightening: Brokaw Road (no bike lanes, merging entrances), Montague Expressway, Tasman Drive, Dixon Landing Road (bike lanes merge across entrance and exit lanes), Mission Boulevard (no crossing at all). That's it. For 10 miles there is no safe crossing by bicycle of 880. Before we claim to be such a bicycle-safe county, it would be nice to see a solution to crossing 880.

Ed Simon

San Jose

A A couple are in the works. When the new Warren Avenue bridge over I-880 opens in Fremont in June, there will be bicycle lanes and sidewalks. Plus, San Jose has plans to extend Charcot Avenue over I-880, including bike lanes and sidewalks. This is high on the city's wish list, but it may be a few years away. In addition, there are plans to extend the Coyote Creek Trail over the freeway, but again it's not certain when this will happen. The Valley Transportation Authority has identified 112 potential bike crossings over area freeways.

Q Where can I find a map of current and future bicycle routes in Santa Clara County? I ride daily 20 miles round trip to work on some busy roads, and know that others would also be out there if they

were aware of accessible trails. "... Is there a map that shows trails and bridges? I'm from Boulder Creek and would love to come over and ride there.

John Geise, Paul Sacco and other pedal pushers

A Come on over. There are several useful maps, and here is a list:

For a map of existing and planned bike lanes in San Jose, go to www.sjparks.org/Trails/documents/CityTrailsMap_All.pdf, www.sjparks.org/Trails/TrailsList.asp or www.sanjoseca.gov/transportation/bikeped/bikeped_maps.asp.

For a countywide list of existing bikeways, see www.vta.org/schedules/bikeways_map.html.

For a regional bikeway map, see 511.org's bike mapping tool at <http://bikemap.per.mtc.ca.gov/BikeMapper/index.jsp>.

Q I live near one of the newly opened bicycle bridges in Sunnyvale and have a few questions regarding use of the bridge. Is there any handbook of rules available for etiquette when using these bridges? From afar, the bridge appears narrow, so can two bicyclists going in the opposite direction cross safely at the same time, or do they have to slow down? I have a 6-year-old with whom I would like to go bike riding, but the ramp may be too steep for him to climb. Can we walk with our bikes on the bridge? Can pedestrians go on the bridge?

Paul Shawn

Sunnyvale

A Yes and yes. The two bridges near Borregas Avenue are for bicyclists and pedestrians. They are 8-foot wide, which should be enough room for two bikers to use at a time. These bridges are not meant

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to be a speedway, so either walk your bike across or ride slowly. Pedestrians need to be alert and, if they see a bicyclist approach, walk single file. Use common courtesy — and common sense.

Q Great article about the new bicycle bridges, but all is not sunshine in the urban cycling landscape. Have you heard about the bridge over 101 in Menlo Park that people on the west side want removed? This would create a real problem for bike commuters and pedestrians from east of the highway. It would be very interesting to hear opinions of people that want to burden nondrivers.

Paul Guerra

Los Gatos

A The bridge will be torn down to make way for widening 101, but Caltrans plans to replace it. Residents on the west side don't want it rebuilt, but without a span bicyclists and pedestrians would have to cross busy Marsh Road to navigate 101. Go to <http://295bus.blogspot.com/2009/04/saving-wood-ave-bikeped-bridge.html> for more on this battle. Supporters of a new bridge can go to www.petitiononline.com/mpbridge to sign a petition.

Q Any idea when the Stevens Creek Trail extension to Sleeper Avenue will open? It will help cyclists miss Grant Road completely.

Wyn Schuh

A Soon, I am told, just a matter of days.

Contact Gary Richards at mrroadshow@mercurynews.com or 408-920-5335.

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