Improvements make campus safer for cyclists, walkers

Sacramento State is even more bicycle-friendly this school year, thanks to a brand-new network of high-visibility, dedicated bike pathways and two more bike/board parking compounds.

In addition, most of the central campus has been designated a pedestrian-only zone. Cyclists and skateboarders must dismount and walk in that area.

“With this project, Sac State is hoping to encourage the use of alternative transportation to the campus, which could have a significant effect upon the current backlog of cars that occurs each day,” says Sacramento State Police Chief Mark Iwasa. “The program has a good mix of convenience and security for the bicyclist while providing additional safety aspects for our pedestrians.”

The Bike Pathways and Parking Compound Project, completed in time for the fall semester that began Sept. 2, includes about five miles of bright green pathways; stamped-asphalt signage reminding cyclists to “share the path” with pedestrians; two new stop signs for bikes and other vehicles on Sinclair Road in the center of campus; and the two lighted bike-parking compounds on the south and east sides of campus.

Together with the campus’s first bike/board compound, near the Guy West Bridge, the University now provides free, secure parking for nearly 700 bicycles. Community service officers (CSOs) normally are on duty at each compound from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday throughout the academic year.

Cyclists also can register their bikes for free with the Sacramento State Police Department at any compound. The CSOs photograph each bike to make identification easier should it ever be stolen anywhere.

“Sac State is investing in the safety of the campus community while promoting alternative transportation,” says Tony Lucas, senior director of University Transportation and Parking Services (UTAPS). “The green bike lane markings help motorists and bicyclists, because motorists know where to expect bicyclists, and bikes have a ‘dedicated lane’ for travel.”

The project was funded with UTAPS alternative-transportation money and a $10,000 donation from the student government organization, Associated Students Inc. (ASI).

“The University’s striping plan was concurrent with our efforts to help the City of Sacramento and our surrounding neighborhoods successfully pursue a Federal Highway Safety Improvement Program grant for bike-lane improvements to the intersection of Carlson Drive and J Street on the north end of campus,” says Robert Dugan, Sacramento State’s director of government and civic affairs. “We just learned that the city also will be striping the pathway between the 65th Street light-rail station and the Hornet Crossing tunnel on the south end of campus.”
Sacramento State is committed to sustainability practices and has long welcomed bicycle commuters, many of whom use the nearby American River bike trail (the Jedediah Smith Memorial Trail) and the Guy West Bridge to reach the campus.

ASI’s Peak Adventures runs a complete bike shop at The WELL, Sac State’s recreation and wellness center. Peak Adventures offers a full range of services, repairs and clinics. It also rents commuter bikes to Sac State students and employees with a OneCard for $40 a semester.

A few weeks into the fall semester, Lucas said, “It is exciting to see so many of our students, faculty and staff using the new bike pathways and bike parking facilities. And, despite the apparent increase in bikes on campus, we’re seeing far fewer bikes on the inner-campus sidewalks, and we’re receiving fewer complaints from pedestrians.”

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