

Community gears up for Bike to Work Day

by PI Staff

Patterson Irrigator, Thursday, May 9, 2013

If there seem to be more cyclists on the road Friday, May 17, don't worry that your eyes are playing tricks on you.

Two-wheel commuters — some veteran cyclists, others giving the alternate mode of transportation a try — are expected to be out in force to celebrate Patterson's first Bike to Work Day.

Kari McNickle, a regional planner with the San Joaquin Council of Governments, said the day is intended to support those who already use bicycles to commute to work, and encourage others to give it a try.

"By switching to a sustainable commute alternative, such as biking or walking, commuters can help make a difference in improving air quality and relieving traffic congestion, as well as improving their health and saving money," McNickle said.

She helped organize the event in partnership with Commute Connection, a nonprofit commuter advocacy program in Stanislaus, Merced and San Joaquin counties.

More than 200 cyclists have pledged to participate in the three counties, McNickle said.

"By making the pledge to ride instead of drive one day during the week, commuters will experience the rewards of making a car-free commute," she said.

Patterson will begin its celebration with a community gathering at 7 a.m. in the South Park off Plaza Circle.

Upon arriving, bicyclists will be treated to refreshments and gifts from a variety of local vendors, as well as information on bike routes and cycling groups in the area.

Participants can register for county-wide raffle prizes, which include three bike commuter prize baskets worth \$250 each, six \$125 Visa Gift Cards and monthly gym memberships.

In addition, local companies can compete for prizes by aiming for the highest percentage of employee participation.

McNickle added that as cyclists pump up their tires and tighten their brakes in preparation for the event, they should recall the rules of the road: Obey all traffic signs, stay in the bike lane when one is available, wear a helmet, clearly indicate turns when you're about to make them, and keep your eyes open for drivers and pedestrians.

[Letter to the Fresno Bee, Thursday, May 9, 2013:](#)

It will cause air problems

There's no doubt. Fresno's new General Plan will be tough to implement, especially since it will reverse decades of poor planning. The proposed Granville Health Sciences project will serve as an anchor for a new town in the Sierra foothills.

From a public health perspective, Central Fresno is the answer. Locating a new town in the foothills will only contribute to our air quality problems and increase air pollution-related diseases like asthma, heart disease, obesity, cancer, etc. If located in Central Fresno, this Health Sciences Center campus would provide better access for patients and follow the intent of SB375 by creating a more walkable and bikeable community for those who need it the most, and improve the quality of life.

The Assemis have purchased property in Southwest Fresno that is an adequate size for the project and a few miles from the main teaching campus of UCSF-Fresno, with its hundreds of doctors and specialized training programs. It is not too late for the city to encourage an alternative location. We hope Granville's pre-selected environmental consultant provides an objective and reasonable range of alternatives.

Dr. Alex Sherriffs

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