



MAR 26 2009

909 12th Street Ste 114 Sacramento, CA 95814 (916) 444-6600 www.sacbike.org

March 24, 2009

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8-1

Sacramento Regional Transit District
Attn: Don Smith, Senior Planner
P.O. Box 2110
Sacramento, CA 95812-2110

RE: Draft Environmental Impact Report on MOS-1 "Green Line to the River District"

Dear Mr. Smith:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the DEIR. Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates (SABA) offers the following comments:

The project will affect the circulation of cyclists. The new light rail tracks will be a hazard to cyclists and the existing bikeways on 7th Street will be changed to a new shared bicycle/pedestrian configuration that is less safe and less convenient. That changed configuration must be planned very carefully.

Temporary bike and pedestrian passage through the 7th Street underpass. Because of the anticipated delay in constructing a new separate bike and pedestrian underpass west of the existing 7th Street underpass, it is critical that the project include a fully safe and usable temporary route for bikes and pedestrians through the current 7th Street underpass. The width of this shared facility should be maximized for safety reasons, roughly equivalent to the space being used for light rail (i.e. at least 12 ft). Because of the down grade leading to the underpass, bicyclists may be traveling at relatively high speeds. They will need space to pass other cyclists and pedestrians at the same time they need to keep a safe distance (Caltrans standards are 2 ft.) from the vertical barriers on either side. This facility should rely on a K-rail barrier for the full length of the underpass to separate vehicles from bike and pedestrian traffic through the underpass because of the narrow passage width and likely higher vehicle speeds as they travel the underpass.

8-2

Access to combined bike and pedestrian facility along 7th Street. Access to the bicycle/ pedestrian facility along 7th Street will create conflicts with the light rail tracks and opposing vehicle traffic at each end. This access needs to be carefully coordinated with the city to minimize these conflicts. A bicycle signal head directing bicycle traffic and allowing diagonal crossings of the 7th and F and 7th and B Street intersections is one possible way to minimize the conflicts and improve convenience for bicyclists.

8-2
(cont'd.)

Routing of 7th Street Bikeway between G and H Streets. Currently, bicyclists traveling west on G Street have no obvious route at 7th Street to proceed on toward Sacramento Valley Station without riding on a sidewalk. Sidewalk riding is dangerous and violates city ordinances. We recommend including provisions for better access to the station. One option is that both lanes of the 7th Street bikeway continue southward on the west side of 7th Street as far as the alley between G and H Streets. At that point, the bikeway could turn west along the G/H alley to 6th Street, then south along 6th Street as a link for bicyclists from 7th Street and from G Street to get to the Sacramento Valley Station. Also, we request signage to the Sacramento Valley Station for bicyclists using G Street. We request that Regional Transit work with the city in designing access to the station from G and 7th Streets.

8-3

Design of Richards Boulevard Station. We understand the "above-ground" portions of this station are being designed by the Township 9 development team. We appreciated RT's General Manager's comments at the Open House that the station will represent the most integrated design of a development project and an RT station ever. We look forward to reviewing these plans as they are completed to help ensure the station provides excellent 1) access for bicyclists and pedestrians to station platforms, 2) bike parking facilities (both long-term and short-term), and 3) signage and signaling to direct bicyclists to the station.

8-4

Flangeway hazards for bicyclists. Throughout the project, the flangeways along the light-rail tracks where they cross pavement will pose hazards for bike traffic that may cause bike crashes and injury or even worse. We request that Regional Transit explore methods to create safe crossings of the flangeways for bicyclists.

Please keep us informed of future stages in completing the design of the Richards Boulevard Station and the bikeways associated with the project.

SABA is an award-winning nonprofit organization with more than 1400 members. We represent bicyclists. Our aim is more and safer trips by bike. We're working for a future in which bicycling for everyday transportation is common because it is safe, convenient, and desirable. Bicycling is the healthiest, cleanest, cheapest, quietest, most energy efficient, and least congesting form of transportation.

Yours truly,


Jordan Lang
Project Assistant

cc: Ed Cox, city of Sacramento

Response to Comments
Submitted by: Jordan Lang, Project Assistant
Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates
24 March 2009

8-1

The comments regarding bicycle access through the 7th Street underpass during construction are noted. On 3/11/09, the City of Sacramento told RT that the separate bike and pedestrian underpass west of the existing 7th Street underpass would not be constructed coincident with the DNA MOS-1 Project, and that provisions should be made for bicycles and pedestrians within the existing underpass. The City suggested that the existing sidewalk be widened as much as possible while providing a 12-foot-wide southbound traffic lane. The widened sidewalk would be in lieu of a K-rail traffic barrier. This temporary facility will be designed and constructed in accordance with applicable state and City standards.

As noted in Impact TC-2 (see MMRP), provisions would be made for bicycles and pedestrians within the existing underpass during construction. The existing sidewalk would be widened as much as possible while providing a southbound traffic lane.

8-2

The comments regarding bicycle access at the termini of the 7th Street bicycle / pedestrian facility are noted. It should be noted that the location of the shared bicycle / pedestrian facility on the west side of 7th Street are associated with a separate project by others. The recommendations will be forwarded to the City of Sacramento, who will own, operate, and maintain the traffic signal system at the subject intersections

In response to: "Access to combined bike and pedestrian facility along 7th Street."

On 3/26/09, we met with Ed Cox at the City of Sacramento to discuss bicycle access to the bike and pedestrian path on the west side of 7th Street. At the south end of the project, the recommendation is for a bike lane on westbound G Street from 8th Street to 7th Street, and a northbound bike lane on 7th Street from G Street to F Street. This bike lane would not cross the light rail tracks; it would remain to the right of the tracks. Northbound bikes would cross the tracks at the F Street intersection at a marked crosswalk perpendicular to the tracks to get on the south end of the bike and pedestrian path. A southbound bike lane would be provided on 7th Street from F Street to H Street.

In response to: "Routing of 7th Street Bikeway between G and H Streets."

At the north end of the project, bike lanes would be preserved from Richards to North B Street. The bike and pedestrian path on the west side of 7th Street through Railyards will end at North B Street. Bicyclists going northbound will be encouraged to cross 7th Street and the tracks at the new traffic signal at North B Street. We are planning to add a southbound bike lane on 7th Street between G and H Street. However, there is no nexus between the DNA MOS-1 Project and provision of bicycle paths west of 7th Street to the Sacramento Valley Amtrak Station.

8-3

Comment noted.

Per Regional Transit's Light Rail Transit Design Criteria, the station at 7th and Richards at the Township 9 development will include bike racks and bike lockers. The station design will integrate access for bicyclists and pedestrians to station platforms and will include signage to direct passengers to the station.

8-4

The design concept for the DNA MOS-1 Project is consistent with the City of Sacramento and Railyards plan for a separate bike facility on the west side of 7th Street to avoid conflicts in the underpass and at the transition from side-running single-track to street-running double-track at North B Street. The project includes new segments of on-street bike lanes. The design concept encourages bikes to cross the tracks at designated perpendicular crossings where the risk of a bicycle tire getting caught in a flangeway is minimized.