

FOLSOM'S TRAILS

• A Wonderful Resource!

One of the perks of living in Folsom is its extensive trail system. These trails perform two important functions: a recreational facility for all residents that is easy and convenient to access, and a realistic bicycle commuter thoroughfare that links homes with businesses and major retail centers. Folsom's trail system is unique because it provides residents with the ability to escape the hustle and bustle of urban/suburban life and unwind in a natural, quiet setting. The ability to access recreational trails located just a short distance from one's home and enjoy natural open space with wetlands, vernal pools, streams and an abundance of wildlife is a rare amenity in a rapidly growing suburban community. Some of these trails will even provide a direct connection to three new light rail stations in Folsom, providing a new alternative transportation method.

I can personally rate the enjoyment and tranquility of these trails as very high. I live within walking distance of the new trails in the Parkway off of Silberhorn, and enjoy bike rides, pulling my two-year old daughter in a trailer, and runs with my dog, on a weekly basis. On an evening run just a couple of days ago, I received, and reciprocated breathless, but friendly, hellos with my fellow runners; witnessed ducks and rabbits frolicking in their natural habitat, and was accompanied by an overwhelming chorus of "ribbits" that somehow matched the tempo of my stride. It was a very enjoyable and relaxing experience.

Over the last three years, the City of Folsom and California State Parks have completed approximately 16 miles of Class I trails. A significant section of the 16 miles completed was the six-mile Lake Natoma Trail that provides bicycle access around Lake Natoma and makes a direct connection to the 30-mile American River Bike Trail. The City has also completed approximately eight miles of the planned 16-mile Humbug-Willow Creek trail. The final sections of the trail are anticipated to reach completion within the next three years. One

of the standout projects is a bike/pedestrian over-crossing at East Bidwell Street. The over-crossing is needed to provide a safe, grade-separated crossing of East Bidwell Street, a major arterial street in Folsom. Also to come is the installation of a 280-foot combination bridge/boardwalk running across a section of trail along Humbug Creek.

Another bike trail project planned for the future is the six-mile Folsom Lake trail. When completed, this trail will extend from Green Valley Road in El Dorado Hills along Folsom Lake down to the Historic Folsom Powerhouse Canal Trail with a direct connection to

the Historic Truss Bridge and the American River Bike Trail.

The City was honored with a Bicycle Friendly Community Award in 2003 from the League of American Cyclists. This award is presented only to a select few communities that show a remarkable commitment to bicycling. Folsom was honored for the impressive achievement of having 95% of its arterial streets lined with bike lanes or paved



shoulders, and for its evident dedication to making bicycling safer and more enjoyable for its residents. In addition, the City was honored for its efforts to promote bicycling as a fun recreational activity and a viable transportation alternative. The well-attended "Bike to Work Day" event is one such event that promotes bicycling within the community. This year's "Bike to Work Day" takes place on May 21. The highlight of the day is the free noon lunch rally held in Folsom City Lions Park (corner of Natoma and Stafford streets) featuring lunch, awards, and amazing raffle prizes. All pre-registered participants receive a free, commemorative T-shirt. Visit www.50corridor.com to register and for more details. ❶

— Lesley Miller and co-written by Elizabeth Morabito.

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