



Friday, April 22, 2005

Cyclists, officials cheer bike lanes completion

By Philip Franchine

About 40 bicyclists celebrated the dedication of the new bike lanes on Continental Road in full regalia, riding in with helmets, multi-colored jerseys, aerodynamic sunglasses and fingerless gloves on Thursday.

They rode in on road bikes and dirt bikes, mostly two-wheelers, with one three-wheeler and a tandem, too, and parked their bikes against a wall at the La Posada entrance at the intersection of Continental and White House Canyon Road. La Posada donated \$25,000 for the project.

A parade of county and other officials was on hand under a tent there to praise the rapid development of the multi-use lanes, which connect existing bike lanes at Abrego Drive on the west and White House Canyon Road and Old Nogales Highway on the east.

Jim Jordan of the Green Valley Community Coordinating Council bicycle committee recalled that it was almost a year ago at La Posada when county Transportation Engineering Manager Rick Ellis told a Green Valley crowd that it would be five to 10 years before there would be funding for such a project.

"A lot of people and organizations came together to make it happen," said Jordan, who said he was pinch-hitting for the vacationing bicycle activist Bill Adamson.

The major players were all represented by speakers, including County Supervisor Ray Carroll; La Posada Foundation Vice President Mark Dugan; Deputy Pima County Administrator John Bernal; county Transportation Chief Kurt Weinrich, who served as master of ceremonies; Matt Zoll, the county's bike/pedestrian coordinator, President Dick Roberts of GVCCC and Greater Green Valley Chamber of Commerce President Arleen Boyuls.

Most of the speakers agreed that cooperation was key to making the project happen.

Roberts reminded the audience that bike lane improvements grew out of the Green Valley 2020 Project.

Bernal made a pitch for the Regional Transportation Authority, saying that its projects will include not only big-ticket items, but smaller projects that benefit bicyclists and walkers if

voters approve a half-cent sales tax.

Zoll said that the county also is working on improving the Continental Road/Interstate 19 intersection so walkers and bicyclists could go through the underpass more safely, and so the interchange would be seen by visitors as an attractive gateway to Green Valley.

Weinrich reminded those present to slow down while passing through the Duval Mine Road construction area, and said that nearly three-fourths of fatalities in highway construction accidents are those of motorists, not construction workers.

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