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Larkspur ferry terminal more bicycle friendly

Mark Prado
Posted: 04/26/2009 10:31:48 PM PDT

The Golden Gate Bridge District has made good on a promise to improve bicycle amenities at the Larkspur Ferry Terminal after it got busted for allowing cars to park on a bike and pedestrian path.

As parts of its pedal penance, the district is also offering free ferry rides to bicyclists on selected weekends in May.

"We had parked vehicles on the bike path, and now we have made things right," said Mary Currie, bridge district spokeswoman.

As part of recently completed work, the existing bicycle path was restored and its entrance relocated over a creek, a project that included construction of a new bicycle bridge. New landscaping, lighting, benches and safety signs also were part of the project.

"The path is now well connected all around the perimeter," said Kim Baenisch, executive director of the Marin County Bicycle Coalition. "It's much smoother, and the new entryway into the terminal is much better and it's more obvious now that this is for bicyclists. The district should get a lot of kudos for their work."

The work to improve bike access was pushed by the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, which directed the district to spend \$50,000 to reopen the pathway after it discovered the path was covered by parked cars and SUVs in late 2007.

The practice had dated back to 2003 to handle excess cars at the terminal. The district even built a ramp to allow drivers to more easily climb onto the bike path after drivers complained about damage to

their tires from driving over the curb.

But allowing cars to park on the path designed for public access was in violation of a 1974 permit issued by the commission, which governs development along the Bay Area waterfront. That permit requires public access around the perimeter of the parking lot.

In addition to making improvements to the lot, the commission called for the free ferry rides. The rides will be offered on weekends in May, but do not apply to service from Sausalito, to AT&T Park or for special service to the Kaboom fireworks display on May 9 or the Bay to Breakers run on May 17.

FREE RIDES

The Golden Gate Larkspur Ferry is offering free ferry rides for bicyclists on weekends in May, including Memorial Day. The free rides are available on May 2 and 3; May 9 and 10; May 16 and 17; May 23, 24 and 25. The vessels can accommodate up to 40 bicycles.

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Contact Mark Prado via e-mail at mprado@marinij.com

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