

# FOLSOM: A CYCLIST'S PARADISE

by Lynn Machon

**T**he Folsom community has long been recognized for its outstanding system of biking trails and amenities. Since 2003, Folsom has held national distinction as a silver level Bicycle Friendly Community from the League of American Bicyclists.

Folsom residents and visitors enjoy a network of 32 miles of paved bike trails that meander through beautiful open spaces and wetlands and alongside seasonal creeks throughout the community. Natural splendors and abundant wildlife provide a priceless outdoor classroom for both children and adults alike.

With easy trail access from most neighborhoods, as well as major businesses and retail centers, it's one of the area's most valuable treasures – a peaceful escape from the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

Riders seeking greater challenge can connect to the American River Parkway Trail, which stretches from Sacramento to Folsom – the longest continuous bike path in the U.S. – and has become a scenic destination for cyclists from all over Northern California.

As a result, both hard-core cyclists and recreational riders discover endless opportunities for two-wheeled fun and exercise. Whether you prefer to “hop on” your bike, or “clip into” it, Folsom has the perfect trail for you.

## A MASTER PLAN

Folsom leaders say the region's extensive pedestrian and bike trail system has been a planning and engineering priority since today's neighborhoods were first developed.

“I'm so proud of what a spectacular job we've done with

this City in terms of being bicycle friendly,” says Mayor Jeff Starsky, a resident of Folsom for the last 25 years and an avid cyclist. He credits great foresight by prior city councils and the City's Parks and Recreation Department for the intricate trail system enjoyed today.

Folsom's senior trail planner, Jim Konopka, says the Bikeway Master Plan, created in 1998 and last updated in 2007, provides the official blueprint for on- and off-street biking.

A major section of Folsom's internal bike trail is comprised of the 16-mile Humbug-Willow Creek Trail, originally constructed through both developers and grants in the early 1990s. “Much of what we've done over the years is fill in the gaps and add to that main trail so that riders can go as far as possible without ever leaving pavement.”

But the system's success goes far beyond simple construction. Along the trail, cyclists find plenty of conveniently-situated parks and rest areas, restroom facilities and picnic tables that create the perfect setting for an afternoon outing.

According to Konopka, at build out, the Master Plan includes a full 50 miles of Class 1, paved off-road trails. In an important distinction, he notes that those numbers don't include the hundreds of miles of bike lanes adjacent to every main arterial and collector street, a system managed and maintained by the City's Public Works Department. “We all work together to try and make it as convenient as possible for cyclists, so they have more options to get more places.”

One of the biggest accomplishments in 2010, says



Konopka, will be the completion of Folsom's first bicycle and pedestrian overcrossing over East Bidwell, near Blue Ravine, a safe connector for two major portions of the trail system.

## GEARING UP IN GROUPS

As the popularity of cycling has grown over the years, several formal riding groups, in the form of race teams and cycling clubs, have developed to provide support and encouragement to area riders.

Cycle Folsom ([cyclefolsom.com](http://cyclefolsom.com)) is one such group that focuses on training and the fitness side of the sport. The group organizes Saturday rides and mid-week rides, ranging from 40-60 miles in length.

A similar organization focused on mountain biking fun is the Folsom-Auburn Trail Riders Action Coalition known as FATRAC ([fatrac.org](http://fatrac.org)). The adventurous group holds regular rides as well as keeps an important commitment to build and maintain dirt trails and terrain in the area.

Other social and training cycling clubs include Sacramento Wheelman, Team Revolution, Bodacious Biking Babes and Folsom High Cycling to name just a few.

## CYCLING EVENTS AND CELEBRATIONS

Biking-related special events throughout the year attract thousands of visitors onto Folsom bike trails, and into Folsom businesses, for a weekend full of fun.

The month of May is recognized as National Bike Month, and Bike to Work Week welcomes huge participation by Folsom residents and businesses. Regional efforts include employer competitions and the annual Mayor's Ride from Folsom to Sacramento, an event that grows in popularity each year. In 2009, nearly 100 people joined Mayor Starsky in the 31-mile trek to the State Capitol. "It was just awesome, it was so much fun," he recalls. "We had folks from all different levels, it was great."

Ride for a Reason ([rfar.org](http://rfar.org)) was co-founded by John Crews, owner of Bicycles Plus in Folsom. Crews has long been a cyclist, riding on the BMX race circuit since age 15. In 2003, John was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease and today considers himself a "survivor." The August event

is a family-oriented charity bike ride around Lake Natoma with proceeds benefiting Parkinson's research and cancer survivor programs.

Every September brings Folsom's Cyclebration event ([folsomcyclebration.com](http://folsomcyclebration.com)), organized by Folsom Parks and Recreation Director Robert Goss. The weekend-long series of 13 different events attracts serious racers and family

participants from throughout the state. Two popular attractions are the Fam Jam held at Cummings Park and the family treasure hunt in Folsom's Historic District.

The Princess Promenade ([princesspromenade.com](http://princesspromenade.com)) was started in 2007 by Janae' Noble, a professional trainer, and resident of the area the past 30 years. With nearly 1,000 participants expected, the October biking event, geared toward empowering women and girls to discover the benefits of cycling, is the largest event of its kind in the country. "I started the event as a great big group workout, to help combat the obesity epidemic," says Noble. "It's an opportunity for women to mentor their friends in exercising, while doing something good for the community, our air and our health." The event includes a healthy living expo, costume contest and biking routes that range from a 3-mile fun course to a 62-mile metric century.

## IN THE BUSINESS OF BICYCLES

The growth of Folsom as a cycling paradise doesn't just provide benefit to residents and visitors - it's good for businesses and the local economy too.

A number of businesses, including bike shops such as

## FOLSOM BIKE SHOPS

Bicycle Planet ([bicycleplanet.net](http://bicycleplanet.net))  
1760 Prairie City Road #100, Folsom  
Phone: 916-355-1234

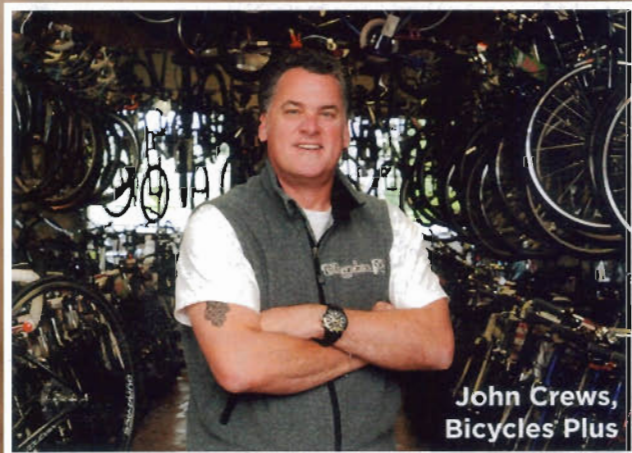
Bicycles Plus ([onlinecycling.com](http://onlinecycling.com))  
705 Gold Lake Drive, Folsom  
Phone: 916-355-8901

Folsom Bike ([folsombike.com](http://folsombike.com))  
7610 Folsom Auburn Rd. Ste 100, Folsom  
Phone: 916-844-1000

REI - Folsom ([rei.com](http://rei.com))  
2425 Iron Point Road, Folsom  
Phone: 916-817-8944



Keith Purser,  
Bicycle Planet



John Crews,  
Bicycles Plus



## Does Your Child Need Tutoring?

- ✓ **Improve Grades**
- ✓ **Sharpen Academic Skills**
- ✓ **Boost Academic Confidence**

**Call Today!**



American River Montessori

**916.294.0788**

[www.folsomtutoring.net](http://www.folsomtutoring.net)

401 Mormon Street, Folsom

## A CYCLIST PARADISE



Erin Whatley,  
Folsom Bike

REI, Bicycle Planet, Bicycles Plus and the newer Folsom Bike are thriving in the bike-friendly climate. While obviously devoted to all things cycling, these shops also give back to the community by sponsoring many of the local biking events and clinics.

The strong bicycling community is one of the reasons Body Concepts owner Rob Kopitzke relocated his 12-year old physical therapy business here from the El Dorado Hills business park in 2008. "Moving from El Dorado Hills to Folsom greatly improved our access to the cycling community with an ideal location next to Bicycles Plus, Karen's Bakery and the American River Bike Trail," says Kopitzke, whose company offers cycling coaching and has been an active sponsor of the Prairie City Mountain Bike Races and the Folsom Challenge Criterium.

Other Folsom area employers have found Folsom's bike-friendly reputation to be yet another way to attract and retain talent. Companies such as Intel, REI and Folsom Cordova Unified School District offer incentives and organize biking groups as a fun way to boost camaraderie and help keep employees get in shape.

In an effort to encourage two-wheeled commuting, City planners have coordinated with Folsom Stage Lines and Sacramento Regional Transit's Light Rail to provide amenities such as bike racks and secure bike lockers at bus stops and train stations.

Folsom Parks and Recreation's Konopka is a big advocate for commuting. During spring and summer months, he rides his bike to work at least two days a week – from his home in Midtown Sacramento. "It's about 28 miles each way and takes about an hour 45 minutes to two hours." Fortunately, says Konopka, his trip is mostly on

## You Can Feel The Difference!

**COMMERCIAL - RESIDENTIAL  
SALES • SERVICE • INSTALLATION**

- New Construction
- Remodels
- 100% Financing O.A.C.
- Air Conditioners
- Heating & Heat Pumps
- Top Industry Warranties
- We Service All Makes And Models



**TRANE™**

IT'S HARD TO STOP A TRANE SM

**916-988-6137**

**530-677-1918**



Family Owned And Operated  
Since 1982



**GOLDENAIRE**  
HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING

9408 Orangevale Avenue, Orangevale

[www.goldenaire.net](http://www.goldenaire.net)

Lic. # 423363

### NEW MOUNTAIN BIKE SKILLS COURSE

Located at Cummings Family Park on Creekside Drive, Folsom's new facility offers a unique mountain biking experience for all skill levels and ages. In addition to a traditional BMX track, innovative terrain includes elevated trails, a pump track and a wall ride.

### Did you know?

Folsom's Bike Park was championed by world-class mountain bike racer and Folsom resident, George Stephenson.

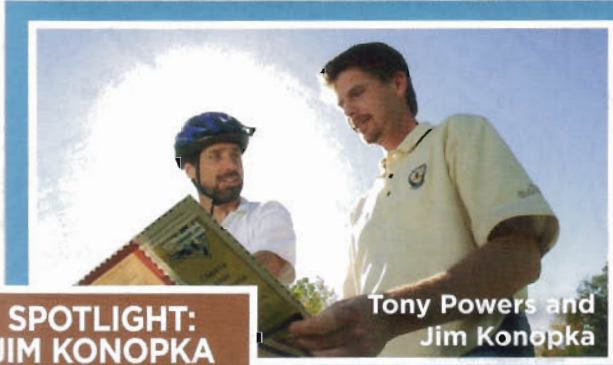
the bike trail, making it an easy and enjoyable way to exercise.

### LET'S RIDE

With the support of groups such as Folsom Area Bicycle Advocates (FABA), the Folsom Chamber of Commerce and Folsom Tourism Bureau are working to promote cycling in the region, especially to newer riders and families. In fact, Folsom hotels feature special cyclist packages on the weekends with great rates and complimentary backpacks. More information on this promotion can be found at [visitfolsom.com](http://visitfolsom.com).

Check out [spinfolsom.com](http://spinfolsom.com), for a complete listing of special rides, trails and attractions for cyclists of all ages and abilities. There's also links to equipment rentals and current events in and around Folsom.

"For the people who live inside Folsom, the trail system is a family-friendly way to get exercise without ever having to leave the City," says Mayor Starsky. "And for commuters or recreational users, it's just a great system of alternative transportation for our community."



### SPOTLIGHT: JIM KONOPKA

Tony Powers and  
Jim Konopka

**TITLE:**  
Senior Park Planner, Trails  
City of Folsom Parks and Recreation Department

**How long have you been with the City?**  
12 years

**How did you get involved with Folsom's trails program?**  
I've been a bike advocate for years, since college really. Over the years, I wanted to focus my career on something I enjoy, and I was very fortunate in getting the job with Folsom.

**What is your greatest focus?**  
When I started with the City, I began looking for options to fund all the plans we had. So a lot of what I do is grant writing for federal and state grants. Although it's a very competitive arena, we're successful in getting three out of four grants applied for each year.

**Favorite accomplishment to date?**  
The bike and pedestrian overcrossing at East Bidwell. It's been a long time in planning, and now it's going to be completed.

# SNOOKS

◆ SINCE 1963 ◆

◆ CHOCOLATE FACTORY ◆

## Made in Folsom



Handcrafted Candies made  
on location in Historic Folsom  
731 Sutter Street  
916-985-0620  
[snookscandies.com](http://snookscandies.com)

# BITWISE

## Computer Repair & Consulting

**(916) 987-5474**

**Open  
Weekends!**

House Calls  
Virus Removal  
Network Setup

**3 Year  
Warranty  
on new PC's**

Remote Connection Support

New & Custom Systems

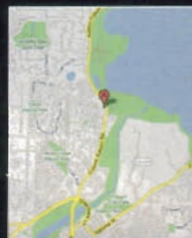
**Pick-up  
& Delivery  
Service**

Off-Lease PC's & Laptops

Data Recovery

Hardware Upgrades

**Free  
Diagnostic!**



7700 Folsom Auburn Rd. Ste. 125, Folsom CA. 95630  
[www.BitWiseComputerRepair.com](http://www.BitWiseComputerRepair.com)