

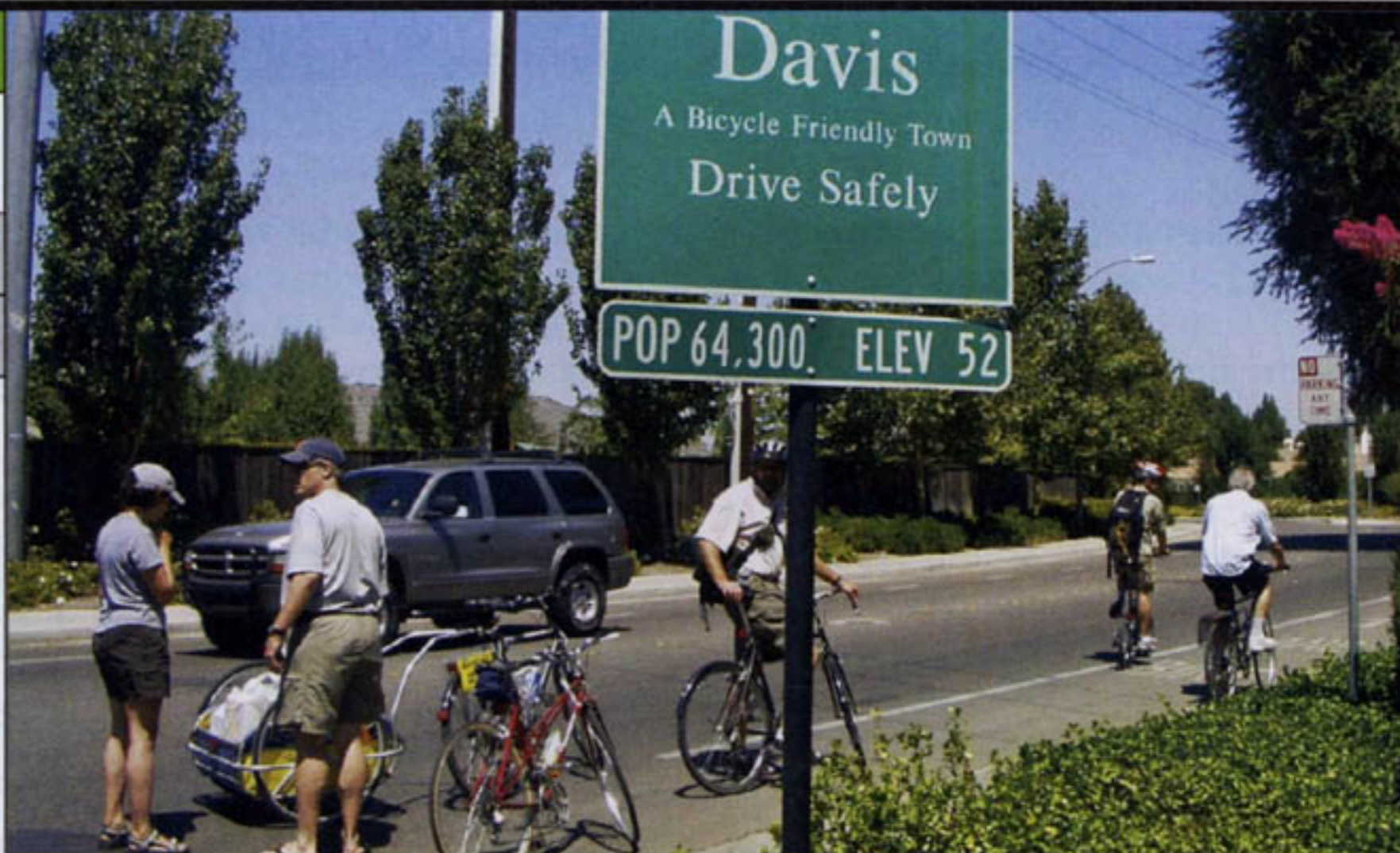
Davis CALIFORNIA

Level Awarded: Platinum

Date Awarded: October 2005

Population: 63,722

Square Miles: 10.5



Education: City residents voted to get rid of public school busses many years ago, so many children walk or bike to school. There is a comprehensive local bike map with tips and resources on the back, and the university offers BikeEd courses and has League Cycling Instructors on staff.

Encouragement: Bicycle volumes are so high on campus that there is a car lockdown during class changes. Bicycling is so core to this community's identity that the city's logo is a bike. The City of Davis and UC Davis are in the process of establishing a west coast bicycle museum. Davis has secured \$400,000 from state TEA funds to purchase a rare collection of bikes ranging from 1835 to 1920. Davis was one of the first cities in the U.S. to actively start planning for and incorporating the bicycle into its transportation infrastructure. This process began in the mid-1960s, at a time when this country was still very much caught up in its love affair with the automobile, so this kind of commitment to a multi-modal transportation network was simultaneously hailed at the time as both crazy and visionary. During the month of May, the city holds a month-long celebration of the bicycle called Cyclebration that includes one double century, a bike auction, a historic bike tour, and a bike commute day. Davis has had a city/university bike map in one iteration or another since the 1970s. They update the map every few years, and typically do print runs of 20,000 - 40,000 maps at a time. These maps contain routing/distance/travel time on one side, and bike-ed info on the back. This map is multi-colored, it is free, and it is distributed through the city, university, and local bike shops.

Enforcement: The community lowered the fines for cycling offences to encourage police officers to increase enforcement. The local police officers give away blinking rear lights to people who don't have them.

Engineering: Davis has bike lanes on approximately 95 percent of all its arterials and collectors. The city has 27 different grade separations for bicycles and pedestrians. In the last ten years alone, the city has spent well over 14 million dollars just on bicycle projects. The city has recently spent \$7.4 million dollars completing a bicycle undercrossing of a two lane county road, six lanes of Interstate 80, and two sets of railroad tracks. The year before that, we spent





\$3.2 million dollars on a bicycle overcrossing of I-80 at the other end of town. Davis budgets about \$100,000 per year for bike path maintenance, and has just initiated another bicycle undercrossing project of a major arterial. The community is great at trying experimental facilities such as bike detectors, signal heads and bicycle-only roundabouts. Davis began planning for bicycles at a time when it was uncommon to do so. It was not easy — it had “never been done before” — but earlier residents and elected officials recognized “quality of life” issues before they were even part of the national dialogue. They weren’t just responding to crisis — they were trying to avoid one. They looked around at other growing urbanized areas throughout the country, and made the proactive decision that they did not want to become just another auto-dominated city. The City of Davis took a lot of chances to create a bicycle friendly city.

Evaluation: This great community grew from 6,000 people to 60,000 with bicycling at the core of the comprehensive plan. There are more bikes in Davis than there are cars, and 17 percent of trips are by bike. This is the only U.S. community that has two full-time bike coordinators (one for the city and one for U.C. Davis), plus staff, and two bicycle advisory committees (one on campus and one in the city). Davis has a seven-member Bicycle Advisory Commission, and U.C. Davis also has a separate Bicycle Programs Committee. When the city began planning for bicycles nearly 40 years ago there were no local, state, or national guidelines at the time, so the city researched and developed its own guidelines. When the California Department of Transportation (CALTRANS) began formulating its own guidelines a number of years later, much of their work was loosely based on what Davis had developed. And, when national guidelines were developed, a lot of it was based on what CALTRANS had done. So the research, planning, and design work that Davis began 40 years ago has had a dramatic “trickle-down” effect on communities throughout the country.

