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Press Release

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Mike's Bicycle Centers and BART Open Embarcadero Bike Station

Free Bicycle Parking Facility New Initiative in Public/Private Cycling Projects

San Francisco (July 7, 2003) – Mike's Bikes & Sausalito Cyclery, the Bay Area's premier bicycle retailer, has teamed up with San Francisco's Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) underground rail network to open the Embarcadero Bike Station, a free bicycle parking facility with a financial objective of self-sufficiency.

The Bike Station offers safe, secure, and – for the foreseeable future – free bike parking to commuters and anyone else traveling to downtown San Francisco.

While the Embarcadero Bike Station may not be the Bay Area's, or BART's, first bicycle parking facility, it differs from existing facilities in that it is intended to pay a substantial part of its costs.

Other such publicly supported facilities, notably one at the BART station in Berkeley and another at the CalTrain station in Palo Alto, depend on public funding.

A similar bicycle parking facility in Long Beach, California, run by the same organization that holds the contract for the Berkeley and Palo Alto bike stations, opened in 1996 and, according to a 2002 *Los Angeles Times* article, costs the city's general fund about \$50,000 annually.

Following a publicly funded one-year evaluation period, the Embarcadero Bike Station targets financial self-sufficiency and an end to public funding by Summer 2004.

Ken Martin, co-owner of Mike's Bikes & Sausalito Cyclery, said, "This public-private partnership is a great opportunity for us to move beyond the role of the traditional bike shop.

"The Bike Station strengthens our ties to the bicycle advocacy community, and we're honored to help uphold San Francisco's worldwide reputation as a progressive-thinking city."

Laura Timothy, BART Project Manager, described the selection process for the Bike Station's operating contract:

"We looked at different proposals from non-profit and for-profit organizations, and Mike's Bikes was the best proposal.

"They had a history of running a business, and they had a depth to their abilities to handle a lot of different situations."

The Bike Station project is the result of the joint efforts of and funding from the Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART) the City and County of San Francisco Bicycle Program, San Francisco County Transportation Authority, and Bay Area Air Quality Management District Transportation Fund for Clean

Air (TFCA), and the California Department of Transportation. Local community bicycle organizations were active in planning and supporting the project.

Open weekdays 7am-7pm, the Embarcadero Bike Station provides free bike parking during these hours, and for a small fee also offers secure overnight storage. A commuter-oriented selection of parts and accessories is available, and repairs and service performed by Mike's Bikes Wheelsmith-certified mechanics are offered in a small workshop attached to the facility. Parking capacity is 150 bicycles.

Adorning the exterior walls is a sculpture by Bay Area artist Robert W. Ellison entitled "Spin", depicting different bicycles from children's to racing models.

Since this is a relatively new concept, some potential customers have been uncertain about how best to use it. The following lists suggested uses in respect of the fact that peak time restrictions apply to bicycles on certain parts of the BART network.

- Cyclists traveling during peak commute hours from the East Bay or the Peninsula to San Francisco can use the Bike Station as an overnight storage facility, collect their bikes in the morning, and ride to work.
- Cyclists who live near downtown San Francisco, and travel during peak commute hours can ride to the Bike Station, use its safe parking and available repair services, and take BART to work.
- During off-peak hours, cyclists can bike to any BART station, travel to downtown San Francisco, and leave their bike at the Bike Station.
- Also during off-peak hours, cyclists can pick up their bicycle from the Bike Station and bring it on any train.
- The Bike Station is also a great starting point for travel on the new BART extension to SFO.

The Bike Station is outside the paid area of the station, and anyone biking into downtown San Francisco – including those arriving by train, bus, or ferry – can take advantage of its safe parking and available repair services.

About Mike's Bicycle Center

Mike's Bicycle Centers operates three Mike's Bikes stores in San Rafael, Berkeley, and Palo Alto as well as Sausalito Cyclery and the online retailer bikesmart.com. Owners Ken Martin and Mike Gabrys, along with over 60 experienced and enthusiastic employees, are proud to have put together what they believe to be the best family of local bike shops in the country. For more information about Mike's Bicycle Centers, as well as general Bay Area cycling information, visit www.mikesbicyclecenter.com

About BART

BART, the Bay Area Rapid Transit District, operates six transit lines servicing 43 stations throughout the Bay Area. BART's extension to San Francisco International Airport and Millbrae opened on June 22 and carried over 100,000 passengers in its first week. For more information about BART, visit www.bart.gov.

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