

Reactor

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Is Pacifica your dream city?

Is Pacifica your dream city? Not likely. There are too many flaws in our semi-cul de sac by the sea. The hills that divide our town and give it the rugged character we love also make it difficult to get around.

As I've pointed out before, Pacifica is the only city of our size in the known world (or at least in my known world) that makes you climb 600 to 700 feet in altitude every time you want to leave town. The exception to that is the Devil's Slide, which has its own set of problems.

Some cities have families that can trace local connections back 150 years. When you go back 150 years in Pacifica you find Francisco Sanchez and his family. Sanchez gathered for a family reunion a few weeks ago, but none of them are prominent in present day Pacifica. Jim Coen's local roots go back more than 80 years, Nick Gust's more than 60, Enrico Romano's more than 70, but they are major exceptions to the rule that Pacifica's "first" families came to town together in the late forties and early fifties. They moved almost simultaneously into houses that were almost interchangeable. This scenario occurred in Pacific Manor, repeating itself in Westview, Linda Mar, Sun Valley, Park Pacifica, Fairway Park, Fairmont, even portions of funky old Sharp Park.

Pacifica's kids, like the houses they lived in, had a lot in common. With fewer than 20,000 people at incorporation, there were more than 4,000 children in elementary school. By comparison, Pacifica is now double 1957's population, with just

members, Grace McCarthy, got organizing experience in the Girl Scouts. People who came to Pacifica looking for an artist's colony by the sea have been uniformly disappointed. Pedro Point, the nearest thing, doesn't seem to qualify. Rockaway and Vallejo have their own charm, but they don't make it either.

Pacifica isn't a tropical paradise. The water's too damn cold. It's not a fishing port. San Pedro Bay by no means qualifies as a harbor, romantic or otherwise. That means no romantic sailing ships, no ship's chandlers, no crab pots at the non-existent wharf. (Yes, I know about the pier and the boat dock, but a few rowboats aren't

enough to make a dream town on the ocean). We don't have the cutesiness of Carmel, the wealth of Pebble Beach, the wild reputation of the Barbary Coast, the quaint Main Street of Half Moon Bay, the boardwalk and roller coaster of Santa Cruz or the Italian flavor of North Beach and Fisherman's Wharf.

We also don't have the tourist influx that annoys many of the residents of those communities. It's not easy being green, as Kermit says, nor is it easy to live with an oversupply of invaders, even when they bring cash. Perhaps we should count our blessings.

