

Where are the bikeways?

June 18th, 1973

You've probably heard a lot about today's bicycle boom and the many advantages bicycling offers. It is clean, quiet, inexpensive, energy-efficient, healthful—and fun. You might say the bicycle is one of the world's greatest inventions!

However, there *is* one big, sobering drawback: Bicycling in North America today simply isn't safe! An estimated 900 bicycle riders will be killed and more than 40,000 injured in bike-auto accidents this year alone in the United States. Most of these accidents could be avoided with adequate bikeways—separate pathways just for bicycles and safe routes in conjunction with roads.

But: *Where are the bikeways?* This country's 80 million cyclists have only 16,000 miles of bikeways, or about *13 inches for each bike rider!* Compare that with the 3 million miles of paved roads available to 90 million motorists. And most of the existing bikeways are far from ideal. Instead of protective curbing to separate bikes from autos, you usually find just white lines or signs along the road's edge, which do little more than lull both cyclists and motorists into a false sense of security.

Who is holding things up?

Why aren't our millions of bicycle-riding taxpayers provided with better, safer facilities? Because most government bodies continue to pump *our* money into still more roads, highways, and freeways. Their actions make us even more dependent on automobiles, which results in more smog, noise, and traffic congestion—not to mention depletion of the world's natural resources.

And what about the citizens who *must* rely on alternate transportation? Half of our nation's adults do without the automobile, by need or by choice. Yet no major bikeway, bus or rail transit funds have been made available, and proposals fall ridiculously short of the *real needs*. The problem is further compounded by the fact that attempts to solve our transportation dilemma with gas tax funds continue to meet vehement opposition from powerful road and highway lobbies.



Photo by Lark Wilson

What could a bicycle community be like?

Here's a practical, viable alternative. Well-defined bikeways, separated from cars, radiate from residential neighborhoods to schools. On-street car parking gives way to protected bikeways on key thoroughfares. Bicycle storage facilities are located throughout the city. Commuters bicycle to public transportation stations, store their vehicles, and continue by bus or rail into commercial sectors of the city. Buses going into the countryside have racks to hold bicycles. Adequate bus and rail facilities play a key role, especially during bad weather. That's what we could have!

Friends For Bikeology is trying to help

Friends For Bikeology has been working two years for more and safer bikeways. We sponsored National Bikeology Week in May 1972, involving thousands of people in more than 70 cities throughout the nation. This activity served to publicize our ideas and goals and to win the support of many legislators and planners.

We have two main objectives. First, to see that bicycle, bus, and rail transportation receive an equitable share of public funds. In 1972, \$22 billion of our gasoline and *property taxes* were spent in the United States for roads and highways, while *less than one billion* went for public transportation. And practically nothing was provided for bikeways! We must convince

policy makers to support a balanced transportation system, including bikeways. Motorists will also benefit because congestion on roads and highways would be relieved.

Our second objective is to convince planners to "THINK BIKE!" They should see the bicycle as an essential part of the larger transportation system and an integral part of community life.

The facts are on our side. Traffic studies show that 43% of all urban work trips made by automobiles are four miles or less; and in 9 out of 10 trips, the driver is the sole occupant. These trips could just as easily be made on bicycles. Bicycles will even conserve the taxpayers' dollars. For example, a downtown auto parking structure costs approximately \$4000 *for each car space*—enough to build an enclosed facility that can hold *150 bicycles!*

How you can help Bikeology help you

We can help bring about needed changes that will benefit everyone.

Bike rider or not, if you are interested in a safer, more sensible transportation system, please send us a contribution of \$5 or more. You can also help by writing your local, state and federal representatives, asking them what they are doing to support bicycling and public transportation facilities.

As a Bikeology supporter, you will receive a copy of our poster-style newsletter, "*Serendipity*"—a mosaic of bike-related items.

Please mail the coupon and your check for \$5 or more to help Friends For Bikeology continue this important work. Thank you.

Ka Kohn

KEN KOLSUN, Executive Director



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I am enclosing my contribution of \$5 or more to help Friends For Bikeology in their endeavor to obtain sound transportation including more and safer bikeways.

Amount enclosed \$ _____

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