

BIKE LANES

Traffic
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Series

WHEN ARE WE GOING TO GET SOME BIKEWAYS IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD?

Bikeways have raised a lot of interest in the past few years. Some cities have built separate off-road bike paths. Many more have painted bike lanes on streets. Other have installed green Bike Route signs without the special lane.

The cost of both building and maintaining bikeways can be a deterrent to many city bike programs. Initial cost can range from a few dollars to paint alone to a small fortune to build a separate path including special bridges where needed.

Before plunging into a bikeway program, your city or county should look at the total problem of bicycle operation and safety. Bike lanes and signs alone cannot solve the problem of bicycle accidents; in some places they have increased the problem by giving riders a false sense of security.

An overall bicycle safety program should include: enforcement of traffic laws, bike safety training in the schools at an early age, follow-up training every year in the schools, and involvement of the parents of minor children who violate traffic laws or exhibit dangerous riding habits. The overwhelming cause of bicycle accidents is violation of the **RULES OF THE ROAD**.

If these recommendations seem to be oriented toward the younger set, there is good reason. Over 70 percent of cyclists involved in accidents were violating a traffic law; over 60 percent were age 17 and under. It only makes good sense to emphasize the children in training programs, since they are the principal users of bicycles.

The bike program for your community should include three principal points:

1. Education in safe riding.
2. Enforcement of rules of the road.
3. Development of well-engineered bike lanes and bike paths.

This will involve the active participation of:

1. The schools.
2. The police or sheriff.
3. The traffic engineers; and of course, you, the citizen.

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