

Bike Lanes Help Move Toward “Complete Streets”

Written by

Wednesday, 09 May 2007 02:26

- [Buy OEM Autodesk ImageModeler 2009 MAC](#)
- [9.95\\$ Lynda.com - HTML5: Messaging And Communications In Depth cheap oem](#)
- [Buy Smith Micro Spring Cleaning 11 Deluxe MAC \(en\)](#)
- [59.95\\$ Adobe Dreamweaver CS5 cheap oem](#)
- [Buy Kigo Video Converter Pro MAC \(en\)](#)
- [Buy OEM Autodesk AutoCAD 2014 \(64-bit\)](#)
- [Discount - Adobe Muse CC \(Full LifeTime License\)](#)
- [Discount - Autodesk AutoCAD Electrical 2015 \(32-bit\)](#)
- [Download Adobe InDesign CS5 Classroom in a Book](#)
- [Download Lynda.com - Photoshop CS6 One On One: Fundamentals](#)
- [Discount - Intuit QuickBooks Pro 2013 \(USA Version\)](#)
- [Buy Adobe Captivate 5.5 \(en,fr,de,ja\)](#)
- [19.95\\$ ElcomSoft Advanced ACT Password Recovery 2.35 cheap oem](#)



The week of May 12 through 18 is “Bike to Work Week,” but if you’re a casual cyclist, good luck.

The Quad Cities have a great trail system along both sides of the Mississippi River - which one day is expected to form a loop on each side of the river. Yet that system is geared more toward recreation than transportation - getting you from home to work. And very few drivers are good at sharing the road with bicyclists in a way that makes both feel safe.

Enter “complete streets.”

Bike Lanes Help Move Toward "Complete Streets"

Written by

Wednesday, 09 May 2007 02:26

Across the country, there's a growing recognition that roads should be transportation systems for everybody - drivers, bicyclists, pedestrians, mass-transit customers, people with disabilities. A road should be "safe and comfortable for everyone who is traveling along it or crossing it," said Barbara McCann, coordinator of the National Complete Streets Coalition.

One element of complete streets is the striping of bike lanes on roadways, an idea that has taken hold in Rock Island but not other Quad Cities. Striped bike lanes give riders and automobiles a clear sense of where they should be to safely share the road.

The vision for striped bicycle lanes is that they can help connect the homes of bikers with the existing trail systems and with their jobs. Because a system of striped bike lanes could make biking to work (and biking in general) more convenient and safer, it could have health and environmental benefits to the community.

And with younger people interested in transportation alternatives to the automobile, an integrated web of bike trails and lanes could be marketed as a community amenity.

When it comes to designing streets, "you can't just look at how to get this car from Point A to Point B ... with the fewest interruptions," said Doug DeLille, the trail coordinator and a senior planner with the Bi-State Regional Commission, which leads transportation planning for the Quad Cities.

The National Complete Streets Coalition has identified 45 jurisdictions that have complete-streets policies, including Cascade, Iowa, and the City of Chicago. "It's still kind of new," McCann said.

Complete streets typically include sidewalks for pedestrians, striped bike lanes or paved shoulders for cyclists, audible crossing signals for the elderly and people with disabilities, and bus stops that make it comfortable for mass-transit customers to get on and off vehicles.

Bike Lanes Help Move Toward "Complete Streets"

Written by

Wednesday, 09 May 2007 02:26

DeLille called complete streets a collection of "complete, cohesive connections for all users." (See sidebar for more information on complete streets.)

The National Complete Streets Coalition has been around in several forms for the past three years, McCann said, and was created to push for policy changes. Bicyclists and walkers, she said, have long been pushing for elements of complete streets on a piecemeal basis. "People have gotten *tired* of doing that project by project," she said. But in the past decade, "we've seen a lot of communities start to pay attention" to different types of roadway users.

No city in the Quad Cities has a complete-streets policy, so at least locally, it's going to remain a project-by-project process. And what has happened in Rock Island doesn't constitute complete streets, but it's a step in that direction.

So far, there have only been two striped-bicycle-lane projects in the Quad Cities, both in Rock Island: on 17th Street (in 2005) and on Seventh Avenue (2006). This year, the city plans to stripe Seventh Avenue from 11th Street to Mill Street, connecting the earlier striped section (starting at 20th Street) to the Great River Trail along the Mississippi River. In the long run, the city hopes to connect the new Rock River Bridge to the trail at Sunset Park via striped bike lanes on 38th Street and 31st Avenue.

The good news about striped bike lanes is that they can be incorporated easily and cheaply into many road-construction projects - which makes them less expensive to implement and maintain than separated bike trails or new sidewalks. The City of Rock Island used its own funds to pay for its two striped bike lanes.

If the roadway is wide enough to accommodate a striped bike lane, governments can implement it with minimal engineering, design, paint, and labor costs, said Greg Champagne, Rock Island's director of community and economic development. Bike lanes, landscaping, and decorative lighting are being incorporated into road-construction projects, he said. The bike lane on Seventh Avenue, he added, necessitated the elimination of some parking, but "neighbors didn't have any concerns."

While incorporating striped bike lanes into planned road-construction projects has a cost

Bike Lanes Help Move Toward "Complete Streets"

Written by

Wednesday, 09 May 2007 02:26

advantage, it can create a fractured system of bike lanes that don't connect much of anything. That's the current situation in Rock Island, Champagne conceded: "I think it's a fair criticism."

Furthermore, without striped lanes as part of a community's transportation policy, they might never be considered on roads where creating them would add a substantial cost to the project - for example, if adding a bike lane would require right-of-way acquisition that wouldn't otherwise be necessary.

That's the situation in Bettendorf, according to Public Works Director Wally Mook. Striped bike lanes on "the major thoroughfares that we have would be an impossible undertaking," he said, requiring a massive reconfiguration of the city's roadways. Four-lane roads would need to become three-lane roads, he said, which would hurt traffic flow. "There's no room on the roadway," he said.

The city is instead focusing on its sidewalk and bike-trail systems, he said.

In Moline, the city hasn't considered striped bike lanes, said City Engineer Scott Hinton. "One of the concerns that we've had is safety," he said, noting that the city has preferred to focus on a separated-trail system. He conceded, however, that "there are certainly gaps" in the separated-trail system.

Greg Albansoder, a project manager with the City of Davenport, said his city plans to incorporate wider lanes into road projects to accommodate bicyclists. "You don't really need a designated lane," he said. He added that the city is considering special signs on Main Street alerting motorists to the street's popularity among bicyclists.

One challenge for people interested in complete streets locally is that "everything is fairly easy to get to and fairly quick" by automobile, DeLille said. That means there's less pressure on local governments to develop or encourage alternative means of transportation; traffic congestion is one surefire way to get people out of their cars.

Bike Lanes Help Move Toward “Complete Streets”

Written by

Wednesday, 09 May 2007 02:26

That statement was echoed by Mook, who dismissed striped bike lanes by saying there isn't the demand for them. “I don't see a big surge in requests to bike in Bettendorf,” he said.

Still, Rock Island has set an example. “I think we're moving in the right direction,” DeLille said. “We're getting there.”

For more information on Complete Streets, visit (<http://www.completethestreets.org>).

For more information on Bike to Work Week, visit (<http://www.bikeiowa.com>).

Elements of Complete-Streets Policies

According to the National Complete Streets Coalition Web site, a strong complete-street policy includes the following:

Bike Lanes Help Move Toward “Complete Streets”

Written by

Wednesday, 09 May 2007 02:26

- Specifies that “all users” includes pedestrians, bicyclists, transit vehicles and users, and motorists, of all ages and abilities.
- Aims to create a comprehensive, integrated, connected network.
- Recognizes the need for flexibility: that all streets are different and user needs will be balanced.
- Is adoptable by all agencies to cover all roads.
- Applies to both new and retrofit projects, including design, planning, maintenance, and operations, for the entire right of way.
- Makes any exceptions specific and sets a clear procedure that requires high-level approval of exceptions.
- Directs the use of the latest and best design standards.
- Directs that complete streets solutions fit in with context of the community.
- * Establishes performance standards with measurable outcomes.

Written by

Wednesday, 09 May 2007 02:26

Correction

In last week's cover article (“[Better Than the Stock Market](#)”, *River Cities' Reader* Issue 631, May 2-8, 2007), we neglected to mention that Scott County Kids Empowerment co-sponsored the presentation on early-childhood education given by Rob Grunewald. The organization's Web site can be found at (<http://www.scottcountykids.org>). The *Reader* regrets the omission.