

Bike Lanes in Copenhagen

I attended Brian Hansen's (transportation planner for the city of Copenhagen) presentation in Seattle about the physically separated bike lanes in Copenhagen.

<http://www.i-sustain.com/events/bicycleCulture.htm>

If one listened carefully to some simple facts that Brian outlined, one could get the picture.

1. Bicycling was at its most popular when facilities were not yet segregated, about twice as popular as today.
2. With the affordability of the auto, people switched to cars from transit and bicycles.
3. Eventually congestion was the result.
4. To reduce congestion, auto use was discouraged even restricted, and to "encourage" more cycling, bicycle facilities were built. Most of the effect of reducing motoring was due to restrictions on motoring.
5. The bicycle lanes are NOT safer, they are PERCEIVED as safer, and the segregated bike lanes are not safer than the ones they replaced, they shift even more of the crashes to the intersections.
6. The perception of safety is credited with increasing bicycling and it is the increased numbers of cyclists that leaves the number of crashes similar but reduces the crash RATE for each individual cyclist.

I note that the "safety in numbers" concept is the basis of the facilities program as pushed here by the bike activists and city planners.

I ask: Who needs safety in numbers? The cyclist driving a bicycle in a safe manner with traffic, or the cyclist separating from traffic and riding in a manner that is inconsistent with destination positioning for example?

Brian Hansen made it very clear, when you have thousands of cyclists per hour riding through intersections to the right of motorists, the

motorists are more easily reminded to look for the cyclists before turning. The cyclists do not provide for their own safety, they are forced to rely on the motorists as the cyclist drives into conflicts with them.

It is my perception that bike activists and city planners lie to cyclists about safety, pander to their fear and herd them like sheep into less safe situations requiring slower speeds. All to achieve a political objective that they justify by indirect means.

When I teach traffic cycling I try to be simple, direct, and honest. I can not work with these folks. I will need my independent program and it will challenge theirs.

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