

The President's Energy Plan did not include consideration of bicycles. However, this mode of transportation, being non-polluting, inexpensive, healthful, and the most efficient, is a viable and highly desirable transportation option. A comprehensive national energy program should include provisions to encourage the use of bicycles in commuting by creating safe and secure environments for cycling, and making cycling practical, convenient, and pleasurable. It is the intent of this section to initiate a federal program to do this. The purpose of the study described in the section is to plan such a program, present to Congress legislative and funding proposals necessary to realize the potential energy savings that bicycle use could offer, and coordinate Administration activities and plan to encourage bicycle use. It is the intention of this section that bicycles be treated in a comprehensive way, and treated with the priority that is given to other alternatives to the automobile such as van pooling, car pooling, and mass transit.

The major deterrents to increased use of bicycles for commuting are accident risk, theft, lack of access, and bad weather. Some people feel what is needed is bikelanes to encourage use. But this only addresses part of the problem. Most bicycle accidents occur at intersections where bikelanes would not provide protection. Most accidents occur because a cyclist did not obey a traffic law or safety rule. Local ordinances do not clearly treat bicycles as pedestrians or vehicles. Bicycle regulations are almost never enforced by police. Bicycles are easily stolen and hard to identify. A bicycle commuter needs to have a secure place to park at his place of work. Also, the availability of shower facilities greatly

enhances the desirability of bicycle use. Bridges and tunnels often present insurmountable problems to cyclists by prohibiting access. Inability to secure bicycles near transit stations or to take bicycles on trains and buses discourages a highly efficient intermodal transportation option. It is clear that simply building bikeways is not enough; a comprehensive approach is necessary.

There is a great need to assemble or develop new educational materials and programs directed at cyclists and motorists through means such as school programs and driver education training. Police forces need to be apprised of the problems in bike law enforcement. A comprehensive package of planning materials could be made available to cities and towns and employers interested in starting programs. Such education and information services might be established in a national bicycle information clearinghouse.

There is a need to assemble bicycle statistics. Statistics on accidents are inadequate because most accidents are unreported. A means should be developed to encourage such reporting. Baseline bike use figures will be necessary to measure effectiveness of various programs.

The study should examine existing legislation regarding bicycles. Bicycle classification and safety rules need to be clarified, made consistent, and publicized. Bicycle technology and associated equipment, such as helmets, should be examined as a possible means of reducing accidents and injuries. Federal activities should be modified to encourage bike use. All federally funded highways and bridges should consider bicycle use in their design. Federal office

buildings should serve as models for private businesses in provision of secure parking lots, shower facilities, and educational information. The federal government should also establish a program of planning and construction grants but should also ensure that these grants are not used to create bikeways in the absence of educational, legal, and institutional programs. Mass transit systems should be equipped with bike storage lockers or have carry-on capability.

Particular attention should be paid to the potential for encouraging the use of bicycles by urban commuters who now drive automobiles.

The study should also examine the use of motorized bicycles to assess their potential, ways of encouraging their use, and their compatibility with unmotorized bicycles.

It is expected that the Secretary would take advantage of information developed by bicycle associations, environmental groups, cities, and universities. A great deal of information is available but the Secretary may need to do additional research and planning.