

VeloCity '99 Highlights

These are some of the things that struck me at VeloCity in April 1999. I welcome suggestions and additions from anyone else who was there!

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The Conference

- 4 Days - 3 in Graz in Austria, and one in Maribor, in Slovenia
- Around 400 attendees - a good mix of NGOs, officers, politicians, academics.
- Impressively well organised - especially helpful to get the proceedings done before the conference.
- Many parallel sessions, so I missed out on lots of stuff - so this represents only a fraction of what took place.

Buzzwords

- Gentle Mobility
i.e. to "create a city for people and not for cars".
www.eltis.org/data/128e.htm

Resources

- Bike Federation of America
www.bikefed.org
- European Cyclists' Federation (with information about Euro-Velo route network project)
www.dcf.dk/ecf/index.htm
- European Local Transport Information Service - ELTIS
www.eltis.org
- 'Cycling -The way ahead for towns & cities' - announced by European Union
- ADONIS project - CDROM available on 'Best practice to promote cycling and walking'
www.cordis.lu/transport/src/adonisrep.htm
- UCI - International Cycling Union - a sporting organisation - has decided to promote utility and leisure cycling - offering support to non-sporting organisations, e.g. free, tame racing stars!
www.uci.ch
- Car Busters - very informative antidote to car culture
www.antenna.nl/eyfa/cb

Revelations

- Politicians seeking support - doesn't match up to cycle campaign groups' experiences. For potentially unpopular measures to be implemented, e.g. road-pricing, our public support will be needed.
- Do councils and/or campaigns under-rate the value of NGO's work?
- Do cycling campaigns do too much for local government for free?
- Energy consumption due to poor surfaces, stops and low tyre pressures - it's been quantified
- Promoting cycling alone may simply reduce bus usage - need instead to restrict the car strategically
- National Walking Strategy coming soon - will be important
- Positive publicity more effective than negative publicity
- In attitude surveys, it helps to know whether someone has actually tried cycling. If not, they tend to report "perceived" deterrents.

Best and worst

- Best joke - David Begg on cycling to gyms
- Best (or worst) hype
www.millenniumtrails.org
- Best title - 'Post routism' - by Andrew Budd
- Best gadget - the Trondheim cycle lift
- Most comfortable bike tried - Bike Friday
- Scariest concept - Swedish 'Vision Zero' - reduce road casualties to zero, by restricting liberties rather drastically
- Worst chairing - the representative of European cycle manufacturers - who managed to offend nearly everyone present at the closing session - several times over

Observations on Graz

- A very well-behaved city!
- Where off-road routes provided, they were continuous, and well-integrated at junctions - albeit sometimes rather fiddly
- No need for special routes in 30kph zones
- Impressive transport information service - I've made lots of notes on the services they offer for bus, train, tram, bike, walking and car-sharing
- People-friendly - e.g. children's playground in City Centre

International Bicycle Policy Resolution

This is the outline of the third draft, which was adopted at the closing session at Velo-City 99 in Graz.

Let's Bike - for a More Sustainable World

1. Raise community awareness better climate for more cycling
2. Promote bicycle usage in education and professional training
3. Plan land use for bicycle distances
4. Minus 10% per year of accidents involving cyclists
5. At least 3% of all transport budgets for bicycle traffic
6. Make urban transport networks safe for cycling
7. Optimise transfers between bicycle and other modes
8. Strengthen the alliance between transport and bicycle traffic
9. Include bicycle garages in building regulations
10. Connect communities by long distance cycle networks

Future Conferences

- Velo Mondial - Amsterdam 18-22 June 2000 - Bad timing for the UK - with Ride the Net and Millennium Festival of Cycling
www.velomondial2000.nl (allegedly)
- 2001 - Either Strasbourg or Glasgow/Edinburgh