

*Bikerways*

# Tentative Bike Policy Is Passed

A county bicycle policy, designed to get people out of their cars and onto bikes, was tentatively approved by county supervisors Tuesday.

The seven-page statement — which includes a proposal for setting up a comprehensive system of bicycle routes in the county — is expected to be reviewed in two months.

Meanwhile, county staff, local cities and the sheriff department will be looking at the plan.

Under the policy guidelines, the county hopes to have 10 per cent of all adult trips in the county be on a bicycle.

In order to reach this goal, it proposes to set up an integrated system of bike routes which would link the major shopping and work areas of the county.

Eventually, every major road would have some sort of bike route.

Whether the paths will be separated from the road, or simply a designated area on the side of the road has yet to be decided.

Supervisor Dale Dawson suggested setting up a specific color and decal to designate bike paths in the county.

Even though the state has stalled on adopting a uniform color code for bike paths, Dawson said Santa Cruz County should take steps to develop its own bike designation system.

He suggested blue as a color for the bike path marking.

Other suggestions in the policy statement include provisions for using some sidewalks as bicycle paths, a plan to turn some streets into one-way roads so there is room for cars and bikes, parking

restrictions on heavily-traveled roads so that bikes may ride on the road shoulder and a policy of widening all road construction so there is room for bikes.

One area of the policy statement points out it is necessary to get cooperation between cities and the county in order to develop a linked bicycle system.

Supervisors said the county would meet with planning staffs of local cities to discuss the bicycle policy.

The policy also suggests a bicycle incentive program — which would encourage county employees to ride their bikes to work — be set up.

Either cash rewards, more bicycle parking or a system of providing bikes at low cost to employees was suggested.

One of the major portions of the new policy statement is designed to set up a system of bicycle safety education.

Supervisors said they would ask the sheriff what he thought of having a Comprehensive Employment and Training Act employee in his office to teach a bicycle safety program to local schools and organizations.

County representatives are also expected to meet with school districts to ask their ideas on the subject of bicycle safety.

Finally, supervisors suggested setting up a bicycle ordinance to promote bicycle use and safety.

Before the ordinance is adopted, Dawson suggested setting up a series of bicycle hearings before the planning commission or county transportation advisory committee to study the

suggestions.

A number of bicycle enthusiasts turned up at the meeting to applaud the policy statement.

Tom Cuthbertson, chairman of the county bicycle subcommittee, suggested, however, that the county begin taking

better care of the bike paths it has now.

Sweeping and cleaning the lanes of debris is needed, he said.

He also suggested that parking restriction signs be set up on a number of bikeways in the county.

Don Porath, county public works director, added that the county had approved purchase of a street sweeper and the machine could be used to sweep bike paths which were not separated from the road.

Tentative approval of the bike plan came on a unanimous vote.

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