



BICYCLE RESEARCH REPORT NO. 8

January 1991

ON YOUR BIKE, ZURICH

An information campaign is launched to encourage Zurich to switch to cycling

- The Key Facts** Zurich City Council's cycling campaign for 1990 is set to persuade more Zurich people to switch to bikes. Besides bringing out publications, press and promotional material, they will also be backing the building of cycleways and cycle shelters.
- Contents** As motor traffic increases, sometimes growing even more aggressive, conditions for cyclists in the area have continued to deteriorate; so there is to be a campaign "On Your Bike, Zurich" to encourage more people to take up cycling again. An important aim of the campaign is also to create mutual consideration between car drivers and cyclists, and between cyclists and pedestrians.
- The campaign, which is run by the Zurich town-planning office on behalf of the Council, intends to smoothe the path to cycle use for newcomers and give moral support to those who already cycle. In September there will be local guided rides, cycle sales, cycling lessons, a "bike Friday" and a cycling spectacular. In addition the authorities are keen to complete new cycleways and shelters, open one-wayu streets to cyclists, and where possible lend support to companies and individuals who encourage cycling.
- The campaign is aided by a wide-ranging programme of publications and press releases. Its intentions and the various cycling activities will be covered in three detailed pull-out newspaper supplements. Stickers, placards, press files and cyclists' map will ensure that all the ideas behind "On Your Bike, Zurich" get plenty of publicity.
- Campaign** "On Your Bike, Zurich", the cycling campaign for 1990, run by Zurich Town Planning Office on behalf of Zurich City Council, Press and Publicity Office 3.
- Address** Bauamt I, Amtshaus V, Werdmühleplatz 3, Postfach, CH-8023 Zürich 1, Telefon 0041-12165111.



Information from Board of Works I, Zürich City Council:

"On Your Bike, Zürich" - a cycling campaign for 1990

Some dates for your diary:

10 March: Prelude

Celebrities from sport and politics meet at the Werdemühleplatz for a social ride on mountain bikes with sidecars. An exhibition of custom-built cycles will be opened. Owners of roadworthy cycles to receive a free cycling magazine. Anyone fit enough to commit themselves to clocking up 1000km on a bike before autumn receives, on payment of a registration fee of 8 Swiss francs, an attractive cycle-computer.

6 April: a newspaper for the Year of Cycling

A cycling newspaper will be issued in the form of a ten-page supplement to the daily paper. It will include articles on cycling routes, cycle sales, prominent cyclists, on good behaviour in traffic by cyclists and motorists, and consideration for pedestrians; also a competition and a look at cycling in other countries. The events diary will publicize the many activities planned for the summer period.

Throughout the year

Cycling courses, local rides, cycle sales, excursions and a competition between a motorist, a cyclist and a pedestrian/tram user is to show who can travel fastest in town. There will be a commentary on local radio. Further information will appear in the newspaper on 22 May and on 25 August.

1 September

First-ever Zürich cycling spectacular. Come and watch, marvel, cycle, find out and have fun. A great day for everyone - in the town centre.

On the first Friday in every month: Bike Friday

Everyone in Zürich gets on a bike on the first Friday in every month - purely voluntarily, of course!



Press conference on cycling, 8 March 1990

The Cycleway Network: a provisional appraisal - with a couple of
equally provisional notes
by Councillor Dr. R Aeschbacher, Board of Works Committee

The human faculty of walking upright or proceeding on a narrow-tyred two-wheeler may be a complex affair. In essence, however, it is too straightforward to merit much discussion. On the other hand, when it comes to local government support for walking or cycling in everyday city traffic, exactly the opposite is true. If we look at the details, it proves to be a tough nut to crack.

We have plenty of examples of how not to do it, both from here and elsewhere. Today we shall deal not only with them but also with the positive examples we have set.

The City of Zürich has reached a high standard of support for public transport. There is also a broad consensus that the two other environment-friendly transport modes, walking and cycling, need clear encouragement. That is why the voters of Zurich set a benchmark on 23 September 1984 and gave the Council a mandate to act. That vote approved spending of 25 million Swiss francs to promote cycling (with about 75% of votes in favour!) The task was quite simply to complete a network of cycleways within the 8 years up to 1992.

Provisional appraisal

But the origins of the Zürich cycleway network go back a great deal further. The first route was opened as early as 6 November 1976. It led from the Katzensee through the suburbs of Affoltern, Oerlikon and Schwamendingen as far as the Mattenhof in Stettbach. By 1977 we already had a route length of 130km. Two-thirds of this consisted of sections which at the time required no structural alteration. Today's structure plan for traffic commits the city to 300km of regional and local cycle routes, of which three-quarters are now in use (compared with a total road length network of about 800km). The rest has yet to be completed.



Note One

Three-quarters of the period is over, and three-quarters of the cycleway network is now in use. What now remains to be dealt with is a number of unsolved problems, and I have to come back to the tough nut I mentioned before. It is not the case that everything can be expected to move smoothly forward in a logical progression. The obstacles are not merely technical; there are political ones as well. This is why the City Council has recently passed a policy statement discriminating in favour of pedestrians and cyclists. The administration now has a specific mandate to carry out the task required of them by the public and the Council, rather than blocking it in a conflict of interests.

Note Two

The administration does not simply work in a vacuum. It is subject to a variety of shades of opinion from outside. Sadly, not everyone is convinced that the bicycle, as a means of transport suitable for cities, has to be included in our plans and accorded the space it deserves; this despite the fact that we must promote cycling if we are to care for the environment and reduce exhaust emissions and noise, particularly in cities. And this is not just the idea of a few madcaps, but of environment experts all over the world. Talking, however, is not enough; there must be suitable action as well. The Worldwatch Institute in Washington, which specializes in environmental matters, writes in its report "State of the World 1990" that if the earth is to avoid destruction, tram users and cyclists will need to dominate the city scene by the year 2030. Today there are already twice as many bicycles in the world as cars, and futurologists tell us that in 40 years' time there will be 10 bicycles to every car.

"On Your Bike, Zürich"

In many cities including Zurich this trend has already been considered. Varying degrees of progress have been made. Our cycling campaign for 1990, "On Your Bike, Zürich" aims to show how natural and beneficial cycling is, and thus encourage more people to take it up. The Council, for its part, is committed to its mandate to provide the necessary infrastructure. But the campaign also needs to promote mutual understanding among the various road users, whether they be motorists, pedestrians or cyclists. If they all respect each other's needs we will have taken an important step forward. Cycling is not just an alternative option or the fad of a few eccentrics and fanatics; it has an important contribution to make, especially in cities, enabling us to keep the mobility we require whilst maintaining or improving the quality of our homes, our city, our environment and our lives.