

May connect parks

Bikeway plan OK on agenda

By TIM RICHARD

The broad outline of a 4,000-mile system of bicycle routes is on its way to approval by the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG).
The 46-member executive committee of SEMCOG approved the plan without dissent last week and recommended its adoption by the general assembly. Final authority for the seven-county planning agency. The general assembly is expected to act March 12.

Local governments, county road commissions, the state highway department, the state department of natural resources and the Michigan State Department of Transportation are expected to implement the plan.
SCENIC RIVER valley systems and the shorelines of the Great Lakes and its connecting rivers are proposed for 984 miles of "regional" bikeways.
Among the corridors are the Huron River in Livingston, Washtenaw and Wayne counties; the Middle Range (Huron Parkway) in Wayne County; Paint Creek in Oakland County and the north and south branches of the Clinton River in Macomb County.

The plan text, by SEMCOG staffer Brian Blanning, says bikeways should be considered not only a means of recreation for the 500,000 bicyclists in the region, but as an alternative means of transportation.

BIKEWAYS SHOULD connect such regional park areas as Busby Creek, Metropolitan Beach, Rochester-Utica, Lower Huron, Willow, Potomac Meadows, Hudson Mills, Belle Isle, Rouse, Maybury, Sterling Island Lake and Purood Lake. The plan says.

Bikeways also are proposed for universities and their nearby residential and commercial areas. Specifically mentioned are the campuses of Oakland University (Rochester), University of Michigan (Ann Arbor), Eastern Michigan University (Yp-

sent), Wayne State University (Detroit), the University of Detroit, Henry Ford Community College (Dearborn) and the University of Michigan-Dearborn.

At their most elaborate, bikeways could be separated entirely from highways. "Abandoned railroad rights-of-way are every nearly ideal of bikeway development," according to the plan.

More localized bikeways could be drag roads, exclusive lanes of roads or even shared lanes with posted signs where traffic is light.

IF ALL proposed bikeways were built, the region would have had 2,328 miles in 1976, but it will have 2,000 miles by 1980 and 4,120 miles by 1990.

About one-fourth of that mileage would be the more elaborate regional bikeways, the rest, less elaborate local routes.

STATE LAW—Public Act 227 of 1973—requires that counties, cities and villages spend "reasonable amounts" of their state gasoline and vehicle tax returns for "non-motorized" transportation.

No map is yet available of the proposed regional system. The SEMCOG plan designates broad "corridors" for bikeways rather than detailed plans.

To some extent, bikeways have already been designated or are under construction. A separate bikeway is being built for I-275 in the Haggerty Road corridor of western Wayne County.



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Oakland Republican reps disapprove magistrates

Local district courts would be able to appoint magistrates—persons with the administrative powers of judges—under a bill passed 78-22 by the Michigan House of Representatives.

But three Oakland Republican lawmakers said they weren't convinced magistrates were needed. Reps. W. V. Brotherton of Farmington, James Delehough of Bloomfield and Ruth McNamee of Birmingham voted against SB 829.

Backing it were Reps. Joseph Forbes (Oak Park), Mel Larsen (Oakland) and Sal Rocca (Sterling Heights). The bill

goes to the governor.

A MAGISTRATE would be a lawyer who would have some powers of a district judge—signing search warrants accepting guilty pleas in minor traffic cases, setting bonds and performing marriages.

The bill would affect district courts in Farmington, Southfield and Birmingham-Bloomfield.

"Farmington just got a second district court judge," said Brotherton, and I thought they were adequately staffed and paid. And I just voted for an increase in pay for district court judges.

"Notice the legislation is permissive. But the pressure would be on to implement it," he said.

"I RECEIVED no communication from our judges on that bill," said Mrs. McNamee. "And we just added a new judge to our court."

"I don't believe our courts need magistrates," added Delehough. "None of the judges in the Oakland district courts contacted me on the bill. It's another financial burden—improven and unjustified."

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