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Bicycle Lanes in New York City

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 Throughout the years, bicycling in New York City has become more popular as a means of transportation. The use of bicycles for transportation is a sufficient way to help the environment by not polluting the air. Biking is also a healthier way to get around the city (Chen, 2012). Although many individuals feel this is the most practical way to get around the city, other people feel it is not. There are several negative effects that come with the bicycling experience. The number of safety issues and accidents that occur in New York City due to the use of bicycles is greatly increasing. People who drive through the city on a day-to-day basis do not fully agree with the placement and use of bike lanes. This is because of the amount of injuries and accidents bike lanes have caused (Chen, 2012). Several interviews have been conducted and relevant support has been given to both the positive and negative aspects of the bicycling in New York City.

 Although the percentage of bicyclers is less then the percentage of automobiles used in New York City, there are much greater benefits to biking. Many people choose to ride a bicycle as a part of their daily routine. Bike messengers are individuals who work for delivery companies and are forced to use bikes as transportation. These bikers are usually in a rush, along with other New Yorkers to get where they need to be and also greatly add to the bike traffic (Kidder, 2008). The average length of transportation for a city worker or resident is about one mile a day. Participating in this physical activity has clear health benefits. You can get in better shape just by riding a few miles a day to get around instead of driving a car or taking public transportation (Chen, 2012).

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The usual New York City bicycler makes the healthier choice by biking, but there are dangerous aspects to biking as well. The bikers are given their own bike lane. They are sharing this area with other people such as motorized vehicles, skaters, and sometimes pedestrians (Schimek, 2013). In many instances the bikers feel they have the right of way; which they often do, but this is one of the main reasons accidents occur. To be able to get from place to place, the bikers must swerve in and out of not only other people walking the city streets, but also fast moving vehicles. At times the vehicles cannot stop or move out of the way in time. This can and has led to fatal accidents. To get hit by a vehicle while riding a bike has much more of an impact on the human body then two cars crashing for instance (Schimek, 2013).

In 2009 studies have shown that the number of car crashes and accidents were the highest in New York City due to bicyclers and these numbers unfortunately keep growing. The idea of creating “cycle tracks” has been brought to New York City’s attention. The cycle tracks would only allow bikers to travel in them (Schimek, 2013). This would help the accident issue greatly, but the location would cause another issue. Installing a cycle lane would mean space from the sidewalk and also street will be subtracted. The city streets are already extremely overcrowded with vehicles and to invade that space may then cause more car crashes. The overall solution that can be concluded is for the New York City bicyclers to be more aware of their surroundings (Schimek, 2013).

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As for my New York City experience, I have noticed many individuals biking as their main transportation. Along with other New Yorkers, I have to agree with what they say. Biking is the better and healthier choice, and it also saves you money. Although there are several positives that go along with biking, the negatives are too server. As I have walked the streets of New York City I have encountered countless bikers riding at extreme speeds. Moving at such high speeds puts these riders at even more of a risk for injury. I have also experienced bikers not paying attention to their surroundings and actually hitting pedestrians. This creates an unsafe environment for not only pedestrians, but automobile drivers as well. Drivers not only have to look out for other cars moving in and out of city streets, but bikers who seem to get in the way.

There are multiple positive and negative attributes to bicycling in New York City. Bicycling is a healthy alternative to other transportation. Bikers will also save money and the environment while bicycling. In comparison, the negative aspects to bicycling in many New York’s eyes over power the positive. The high rate of injuries and accidents that occur daily due to bicyclers is increasing. In the future I hope this problem is resolved by better accommodating riders with proper safety equipment and appropriate areas to ride. I feel this will drastically decrease the great amount of injuries that occur in New York City due to bike riders.

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