

Kayla Laferriere

People everywhere ride their bikes and walk to almost anywhere. The thing that stops people from riding their bikes or walking is the fact that bikes are considered vehicles and should be ridden in the street, not on the sidewalks. In drivers-education I learned that a bicyclist should follow the same requirements as drivers. Bicyclists need to know all the hand signals for turning and stopping and have to maintain the same speed limit. However, since it is almost impossible for a rider on a bike to do twenty-five miles per hour on the side street using only their feet and legs, bike riders are forced onto the sidewalks.

Distance and time consumption is also an issue with people that like to ride their bikes. Although riding your bike to get to someone's house or to school helps your planet, it can be a very long ride. Many people who would like to ride their bikes places cannot due to health issues such as asthma and other breathing related diseases. Riding your bike also takes up more time, which means if you had to be somewhere at a certain time you would have to leave much earlier to get there in time.

Everywhere you go in my city of Pawtucket, someone is riding a bike. I know of many students who ride their bikes to school within a reasonable distance. Many places do not have bike racks outside, so people are not able to lock up their bikes. An option my city could pursue to allow the students to ride their bikes would be to install bike racks so students do not have to worry about their bikes being stolen.

To make my town a more bike-friendly place, city officials could make a path in the street made for bikes only. Bikers who are forced to ride on the sidewalks are taking up the room that is meant for someone who is walking. People cannot even ride their bikes to the bus and put their bikes on the bike racks on the front of the bus because depending on where they are going, there may not be a spot for them to store their bike.

Walking is not that safe in many places especially in the winter when there is snow everywhere on the sidewalks. Many homeowners do not shovel their sidewalks, and many times the city does not even plow the snow from where students stand waiting for the school bus. When it snows many people are forced to walk in the streets where it gives them a greater risk of getting injured by a vehicle.

As for walking and bike riding being environmentally safe, it takes no power or use of gasoline to get places when walking or riding a bike. People who take the bus are still causing pollution because it takes gallons upon gallons of gasoline and diesel fuel to keep a bus moving. Instead of taking the bus, riding a bike, or walking, people who live semi-close to each other and are going to the same location may carpool to conserve energy. If it were up to me, I would ride my bike everywhere! Would you rather be stuck in traffic or be able to weave through it on a bike while breathing clean air?