From:	Peter Wang
To:	Air Quality Study; Mergo, Cheryl; BikeHouston Advisors;
Subject:	Comment on bicycle-pedestrian portion of Mobile Source Control Strategies document
Date:	Saturday, December 27, 2008 6:59:17 PM

I agree with the methodology employed on pages 116 - 119 of the Environ Corp. "Evaluation of Mobile Source Control Strategies Document" (by Ms. Barbara Joy) for evaluating the cost per ton of ozone reduction for bicycle-pedestrian modes, but I heartily disagree with the choice of data inputs, and therefore with the conclusions. Basically, I think the results are meaningless. The $390,000 per ton figure should be replaced by $12,200 per ton.

The investigator takes $96 million in bike-ped projects as the numerator and divides that dollar amount by the estimated tonnage of ozone eliminated. The problem with this large numerator, however, is that the local bicycling community has had absolutely no input into this bicycle plan, and there has been zero buy-in to the alleged commuting utility of this plan which has been assumed by the investigator. If you take a look at the cited plan, you will see that the bulk of it is recreational in nature.

The consultant is also caught in the mental trap that, like cars, all you need to do is build infrastructure and it will get used. That is not the situation with bikes, because of suppressive social and cultural factors which could be much less expensive to change than building new infrastructure. What am I referring to? I am referring to governments:

- actually actively encouraging people to ride bikes on the roads (which would be a 180 degree shift from the current Harris County stance)
- enforcing speed limits, and lowering speed limits generally
- enforcing drunk driving and distracted driving laws
- prosecuting road-rage and assaults against bicyclists
- making use of the corps of dozens of low-cost (or in some cases free volunteer) League of American Bicyclists Cycling Instructors in the Houston area
- enforcing laws that cyclists break that endanger cyclists (running stops signs and lights, and riding in the dark without lights, and riding against traffic)

What is the cost of these types of actions? The "encouraging" actions are almost free. Strongly enforcing speed limits, DWI, and distracted driving should be done anyway, and those costs should not be borne by cyclists, but generally. The Vehicular Assault team at the Harris County DA's office could be beefed up. The education component could be quite low cost, since the instructors will work for little money mostly for the joy of teaching, but they need to be made part of an official adult bicycle educational program that governments widely promote to the public. Writing tickets for traffic violations by cyclists could be revenue neutral. I think we're not talking about $96 million, honestly I am guessing at a multi-year program cost of maybe $3 million, in my estimation, which would lead to ozone reduction costing $12,200 per ton.... not $390,000 per ton.

I am writing this letter as an individual, but my affiliations are listed below.

Thank you.

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Sincerely,

Peter Wang

League of American Bicyclist Instructor
Board Member, Citizens' Transportation Coalition
Advisor to BikeHouston