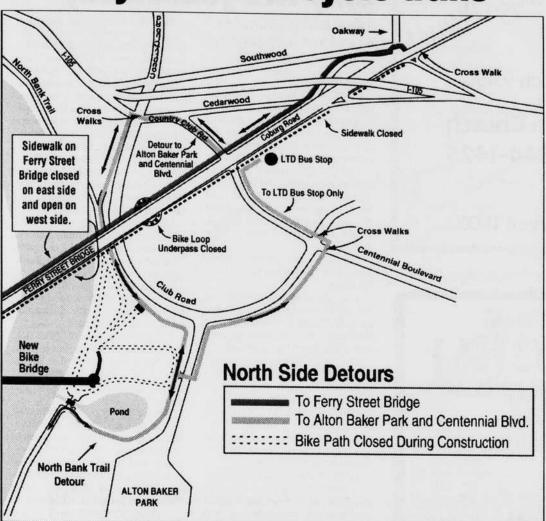
City has strong commitment to its system of bicycle trails



In the '70s, University students initiated the push for street trails

By Stefanie Knowlton Oregon Daily Emerald

Eugene has a unique character that can be seen in the diversity of people, community events and even modes of transportation.

Nearly six percent of Eugene residents use bicycles to commute to work or school, which makes Eugene one of largest bike-riding populations in the nation.

In order to accommodate these riders, the City of Eugene implemented 25 off-street bike trails and 55 miles of street trails.

"The community as a whole really identifies themselves with the trails," said Diane Bishop, Eugene bicycle and alternative mode coordinator. "Wherever we build a street we will build a bike trail."

The idea for the Eugene bike trails had its unlikely beginning in 1970 at a University protest. Students demanded to feel safe in the streets while riding their bikes. Subsequently the city council took the initiative to draw up a master plan that would result in the bike trails of today.

Maps of these trails are available at City Hall or any local bicycle shop. These maps cover Eugene and Springfield in addition to indicating points of interests such as parks, bridges, lakes and rivers.

Although the trails are easily accessible and provide transportation without fear of traffic or parking, Bishop said that "more and more people are choosing to drive their cars."

The city is planning a bike-riding campaign in order to make the public aware of the benefits of biking. Putting bike racks on all buses and building new trails is another phase of the campaign to make riding bikes more attractive to commuters.

However, most residents do not

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Lane county offers a variety of bike trails.

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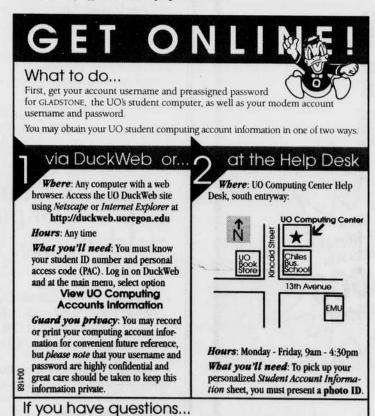
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