Promoting Cycling and Walking for Sustainable Cities: Lessons from Europe and North America

Speaker: John Pucher

Professor Pucher argues that cycling and walking are the most environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable of all transport modes. He then provides an international overview of cycling levels and trends among many different countries in the developed world, noting that even technologically advanced countries with high per capita income and high levels of car ownership can have high levels of walking and cycling and much lower levels of car use than typical in the USA, Canada, and Australia. Pucher then describes and illustrates a range of policies and programs necessary to make cycling and walking safe and convenient for daily travel, as it is the case in Dutch, Danish, and German cities. Although much of the focus is on European success, Pucher also shows many specific examples of policies, program, and infrastructure in American and Canadian cities that have greatly increased cycling and walking levels while improving the safety of cycling and walking. He also includes highlights from his new book "City Cycling" with MIT Press, which provides an overview of cycling trends and policies in cities across the globe. Pucher concludes by advocating for far more investment in the measures necessary to promote safe cycling and walking, since these are the key to truly livable, sustainable and socially just cities.

John Pucher is a professor in the School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University in New Jersey. He has conducted research on a wide range of topics in transport economics and finance, including numerous projects for the U.S. Department of Transportation, the Canadian government, and various European ministries of transport. For over three decades, he has examined differences in travel behavior, transport systems, and transport policies in Europe, Canada, the USA, and Australia. Over the past 15 years, Pucher's research has focused on walking and bicycling, and what North American and Australian cities can learn from European cities to improve the safety, convenience, and feasibility of these non-motorized modes. His research emphasizes walking and cycling for daily travel to increase physical activity and to enhance overall public health. Pucher has published three books and over 100 peer-reviewed articles in academic and professional journals. His latest book, "City Cycling" for MIT Press, provides an international overview of cycling trends and policies: http://citycyclingbook.wordpress.com

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