



Cyclists do pay for roads

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I would have thought that the Post-Gazette had already given enough space for motorists to express their supposed rights to the road vis-a-vis cyclists based on the old pay-for-road-use argument (most recently Henry Peter Gribbin, ["It's Time to Be Sensible About Sharing Streets."](#) Sept. 17). Besides raising that often-repeated but fraudulent argument, Mr. Gribbin asks that cyclists be prohibited from using Forbes Avenue in Squirrel Hill.

First of all, cyclists are, by and large, car owners with bikes. I myself own two cars, both of them gas guzzlers, if that makes Mr. X any happier, so I do pay gasoline taxes and license fees.

More to the point, by far most of the city streets and secondary roads cyclists use are not paid for by gasoline taxes and automobile licenses but out of general revenue paid by everyone, whether they use the roads or not. And, while bicycles impose essentially zero wear on roads, cars additionally impose an estimated 6.5 cents per mile of road wear that eventually comes due (as is only too evident in and around Pittsburgh). Everyone is forced to pay for that 6.5 cents per mile per car just by being a taxpayer, whether they contribute to road deterioration or not.

Cyclists don't deserve the imposition of a road-use fee as much as they do a tax rebate. I would be willing to cut out the middleman and accept a check directly from Mr. Gribbin. The busy stretch of Forbes Avenue he wants to ban bicycles from has two of Pittsburgh's largest bicycle dealerships on it.

A better idea would be to ban motorized traffic on this stretch. As Mr. Gribbin correctly points out, there are lots of parallel streets that cars could use instead.

Anyone who wants to contribute intelligently to this discussion should first consult Google under "who pays for roads" and read a few of the many articles cited there.

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