

Monorail

Many years ago, after the Italian Olympics, I watched three guys out on the lake crewing. They were towing a water skier. A few years later, I watched two guys do a half mile sprint at sixty mph on a tandem bicycle. The guy in front was pedaling, but with the very simple addition of connecting rods and sliders, the guy in back was recumbent and rowing.

The human body can sustain several times as much usable energy output with a rowing motion versus pedaling, and it's a more balanced muscle builder. One obvious evolution of this technology is human powered monorail. I visualize a web of monorail track spread out across the city with bicycle racks at the stations. Pick the slow or the fast track, get in, swipe your card, crank up the catapult, and artificial intelligence will time your launch into traffic. With compressible bumpers with pressure sensors front and rear, you pay or get paid according to how much energy you care to put into the system. The rate for going too slow on the fast track would be severe and exponential. If you needed a little cash, you could get a workout pushing the slow track. It wouldn't surprise me at all to see the slow track moving at thirty and the fast track at fifty. If the fast track was clear, two or three guys working together could probably get all the way across a small city at sixty mph. Most of the cost would be the stations. The track is just a pipe with a pigeon cover. It would be unaffected by ground traffic and need minimal right of way.

Many more uses for stationary human power would become feasible with the simple addition of connecting rods. Many of the current uses for human power could be easily