

**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TESTIMONY
HEARING BEFORE THE CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
*LEADING THE WAY FOR BICYCLING IN AMERICA: WHERE IS NEW YORK CITY NOW AND
HOW CAN WE IMPROVE?*
NOVEMBER 20, 2014**

Good morning, Chairman Rodriguez and members of the Transportation Committee. My name is Polly Trottenberg and I am the Commissioner of the New York City Department of Transportation (DOT). Today, I am joined by Joshua Benson, Director of Bicycle and Pedestrian Programs; and John Frost, Executive Director of DOT's Bike Share Programs. Thank you for having us here today to discuss cycling in New York City.

As the title of this hearing suggests, New York City has become a leader in cycling nationally. All of our hard work has been recognized by Bicycling Magazine, which recently named New York City as the best biking city in the U.S. This is an exciting honor and is a testament to the ground-breaking innovation, vision, determination and careful implementation of New York City's bicycle program. It is also due to the strong support of our City's elected leadership and tireless advocacy community.

Cycling is a mode of transportation which is inexpensive to own and operate, burns no fuel, emits no carbon, helps tackle obesity, connects people to their communities and let's face it, brings joy. New Yorkers love to cycle and they bring an energy and passion that is unique to this city.

In recent years, we have seen tremendous growth in cycling in New York City - cycling has more than quadrupled from 2002 to 2013. Over 340,000 trips per day are made by bike in New York City and nearly 30,000 of those trips are using Citibikes. New Yorkers today can ride on 960 miles of bike lanes, including 650 miles of on-street lanes, of which 35 miles are protected lanes, and the remaining 310 miles from our greenways, parks, and bridges.

New Yorkers have also embraced bike share with nearly 90,000 annual members taking over 14 million trips since May of 2013. Bike share has become an integral part of the City's transportation system and a world-class amenity, and the program will double in size of the by the end of 2017.

However, even with all the progress we have made so far, DOT is planning to aggressively pursue Mayor de Blasio's ambitious goal of doubling cycling trips in New York City by 2020. To achieve this, we must

continue to quickly expand the City's bike lane network and successfully roll out the next phase of bike share.

We are committed to building 50 miles of bike lanes citywide per year, and this calendar year, we have already installed 42 miles; including five miles of protected bike lanes, such as the recently completed protected lane on Lafayette Street in Manhattan. New Yorkers are calling for more protected bike lanes and you can understand why: they are safe, innovative, and increasingly the standard used in cycling cities throughout the world.

We are continuing to build out our bike network beyond the Central Business District, such as the two-way fully protected lane on Paerdegat Ave in Canarsie, the Franklin Avenue bike lane extension in Crown Heights, the 106th Street lane spanning East Harlem and the upcoming Fort George Hill two-way protected lane in Washington Heights. We are also working intensively at the neighborhood level in communities such as Brownsville, East New York, Long Island City, and Ridgewood to build bike networks customized to community needs. And we are very excited about the newest neighborhood planning initiative that we have just kicked off with Council Members Reynoso and Espinal in Bushwick.

But to get to the Mayor's goal of doubling cycling trips we have continue to up our game, and one big way to do that is by improving bike access on our bridge network. Our bridges are a critical component of the transportation system here in our island city, and are especially important access points for the bicycle network. Our four East River Bridges carry more than 19,000 bike trips per day and we have always placed an emphasis on access to and from those bridges.

Today I am announcing DOT's "Bikes on Bridges" campaign: a renewed and expanded look at New York City's bridges and how they can accommodate increased and safer cycling. We hear a lot from cyclists, particularly in the Bronx about the Harlem River crossing. So we will be studying each of 15 Harlem River crossing and their Bronx and Manhattan approaches in depth.

The study will yield recommendations for network improvements we can make in the short-term and will guide future capital investments as we rehabilitate the bridge structures in the long-term. With these improvements, we can significantly enhance the cycling experience in upper Manhattan and the Bronx.

Also on the bridge front, I have some very exciting news to share: we are working with the MTA on a "Bikes on Buses" pilot for some key bridge routes. This will consist of adding, for the first time ever on

NYC Transit buses, a bike rack on the front of the bus where the customer loads and unloads their bike. This pilot is in the preliminary stages, and we will need to work closely with the MTA to get input from bus drivers and cyclists. But I think the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Verrazano Bridge would be the ideal time to pilot this program on a needed crossing for the bike network.

And as the network grows across the City, we have been diligent about adding bike parking to keep up with the increased ridership. We now have over 22,000 bike racks, including 46 multi-rack bike corrals. DOT also administers the Bikes in Buildings Program, which currently covers nearly 350 buildings and provides access for over 6,500 bicycles.

Now let me turn to safety. Even as we expand cycling in the City, DOT remains focused on the Mayor's Vision Zero goals of reducing traffic injuries and fatalities to zero. While the overall trend in cyclist safety over the last ten years is headed in the right direction, tragically this year we have seen 18 bicyclist fatalities due to crashes.

So our work on cyclist safety remains as urgent as ever at DOT. Nearly ten years ago, New York City released the landmark report *Bicyclist Fatalities and Serious Injuries in New York City* that looked into the causes of these incidents. The report created the robust set of guiding principles that helped shape DOT's work and propel New York to become a national leader in cycling. The time has come to update the fatality and injury report and we plan to release a new version in 2015 with new data to enable a fresh review of bike safety, informed by our experiences of the last 10 years as well as experiences in other great cycling cities.

Studies around the world have found that greater bicycle use coincides with a stronger cycling safety record. A greater presence and visibility of cyclists on city streets habituates motorists, pedestrians and cyclists themselves to the presence of regular bicycle traffic.

In September, DOT released a new study that shows that on streets with protected bicycle lanes, injuries for all roadway users declined by 20 percent. The results confirm the safety benefits of protected bicycle lanes and DOT has committed to adding five miles of protected bike lanes each year.

As part of our Vision Zero efforts, well-designed bike lines also protect pedestrians by including refuge islands, which shorten the crossing distance of wide avenues, and trees, which humanize the street and

signal to motorists that the area is residential. They can also include priority left turn lanes and signals, which deter conflicts between motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians.

While the City's bike lane network clearly makes riding on our streets safer, a helmet can dramatically reduce injury in the event of a crash. DOT fits and gives away the official New York City bicycle helmet at events throughout the City, and has distributed nearly 125,000 free helmets since 2007. We have conducted many helmet giveaways with community partners and with many of you here at the City Council.

While we are focused on cyclist safety, we are also concerned about the two recent pedestrian deaths caused by cyclist crashes in Central Park this past summer. We worked with our partners at NYPD, the Parks Department and the Central Park Conservancy to find a solution that would create a safer and more enjoyable environment in the park.

Earlier this week, we announced that we will be lowering the speed limit from 25 mph to 20 mph for all modes of transportation and we will be shortening the four pedestrian crossings with the worst crash histories. DOT will also be distributing our Bike Smart Brochures and Central Park-specific brochures geared toward cyclists and pedestrians.

Let me now turn to Citi Bike. At beginning of this year, it was clear that New Yorkers loved Citi Bike but the system was facing financial and operational challenges, and from day one, the de Blasio Administration focused on fixing this.

The Administration's priority was to improve service and accountability for riders of the system all the while keeping it privately funded. Our effort is resulting in new ownership with a proven transportation leader, Jay Walder, at the helm, and a guaranteed infusion of \$30 million. These funds will help to stabilize the system's software and equipment, and double its size from the current 330 stations and 6,000 bikes to over 700 stations and 12,000 bikes by the end of 2017.

For the first time, the program will extend to Queens. The agreement provides for an expansion of 1,000 bikes into Long Island City, as well as Greenpoint, Williamsburg, and more of Bedford-Stuyvesant by the end of 2015. After that, the expansion will continue contiguously up the East and West sides of Manhattan into Harlem, and into Cobble Hill, Boerum Hill, Prospect Heights, Carroll Gardens, Gowanus, Park Slope, Red Hook, and Crown Heights in Brooklyn, and Astoria in Queens by the end of 2017.

DOT will be conducting an extensive community outreach process in these areas and work with elected officials, community boards, and local groups to site the new bike share stations. We will hold community planning workshops at community boards throughout the expansion zones, and are already encouraging New Yorkers to use our “Suggest a Station” portal online at nyc.gov/bikeshare.

We are also thrilled that Alta Bike Share will be moving its national headquarters from Portland to New York City—creating well-paying jobs for New Yorkers, under the leadership of NYC General Manager Matt Berlin, who you will hear from today.

We expect the customer experience to be greatly improved. Though New Yorkers loved the program, we often hear concerns about bike availability, the functionality of the docking stations, or the accuracy of the real-time app. I know Matt will be addressing those issues and speak to them in more detail.

There will also be a new sustainable pricing model, which will support the improved system and operations. And I am proud to say we are continuing the \$60 membership rate for NYCHA residents and members of participating credit unions. We will be working with NYCHA to spread the word to residents about this affordable membership in both the current and expanded bike share service area.

To summarize, cycling in New York City has never been safer, easier or more popular. At DOT and in the de Blasio Administration we pledge to continue to grow and improve cycling in this city. Thank you, Chairman Rodriguez and members of the Committee. We will be happy to answer your questions at this time.

11/20/2014

Testimony for City Council Hearing on Bike lane expansion

Fabrizio Ayoro, Make the Road NY

Thank you, Councilmember Rodriguez and the rest of the committee members for holding this important hearing.

My name is Fabrizio Ayoro and I am a member of **Make the Road NY**, the largest immigrant workers organization in the city.

I work as a personal computer repair technician in Queens, and **I ride my bike out of necessity**. I go house to house to fix people's computers, and I get around by bike. Riding my bike is significantly faster and more efficient than taking the bus. Riding a bike for work ensures that I can get to my clients' homes on time, do a good job and pay my bills.

Often, the most direct way, or the only way, to get from house to house requires riding on an **arterial road like Queens Blvd or Northern Blvd**. It feels extremely dangerous, because you constantly have to look behind and in front of you to look out for cars and trucks.

That is why it is essential for us to improve and expand bike lanes, particularly on arterial roads, if we want to be a first-class city and grow our economy.

We need bike lanes so that works like me can get around and do our jobs. Other workers, such as food delivery workers, rely on bicycles to do their job, and many New Yorkers rely on them to get hot food delivered to their offices and homes. Workers on bikes help to make this city run, so let's make sure that the streets are safe for them, and for all of us who benefit from safer streets.

Finally, we also need **better bike lanes in Corona, Queens**, to make it easier for us to get to **Flushing Meadows Corona Park** on the weekends for a bit of relaxation and recreation. Right now the bike lane system leading to the park needs significant improvements, and we have been working in coalition with other community organizations to identify the improvements that are needed.

November 20, 2014

David Dartley
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Testimony at T2014-2032

New York City Council – Committee on Transportation

“Leading the Way for Bicycling in America: Where is New York City Now and How
Can We Improve?”

I have been bike commuting for ten years and in that time also biking for errands and other transportation reasons. I have done almost no leisure bicycling.

For NYC to continue to lead America in cycling, it must focus on transportation cyclists rather than leisure cyclists. This will help normalize urban cycling even more than it has been. That can help to slow down all vehicles (including, importantly, bicycles); and both of those things can have a profound salutary effect on overall pedestrian safety. These things feed each other in a virtuous cycle, and successful work by the city towards any one of them helps the others.

Don't just expand Citibike. Add bike and dock saturation to the already-served area too. Expanding without adding saturation will not help the problem of rebalancing, which remains a major fault in the system.

Meet the admittedly very difficult design challenge of slowing down all vehicles—including bikes—on one hand, yet improving the ability for buses and emergency vehicles to move fast, on the other hand. Note: that's preserve the ability, not keep them moving fast at all times. And if those two opposing wishes really are mutually exclusive, then the city should favor the former—slowing everyone down—at the cost of preserving speed for emergency vehicles—because public health and safety are net better served by the former, which reduces the number of emergencies in the first place.

Long term, get much more ingenious than even we have been so far with infrastructure such as protected bike lanes. Perhaps very long term, replace red/yellow/green traffic controls with a less blunt instrument. Red/yellow/green controls take away a driver's interest in negotiating spaces, and instead make drivers concerned only with one binary: “as fast as possible” on one hand and “stopped” on the other. I don't know how to do it, but I urge the city to force drivers, when they're turning, to be extremely cautious and slow. I would point to the fact that even gently curving highway ramps, where no

vulnerable users exist, are subject to complex federal requirements including case-by-case calculated advisory speed signage. Contrast that with thousands of 90 degree turns in NYC. I don't think any government agency takes any action to advise NYC drivers that the posted speed limit is unsafely fast for any of these thousands of 90 turns—and indeed those intersections are where we see such a huge percentage of our pedestrian and cyclist fatalities. Red/yellow/green signals contribute at least in part to this dangerous behavior. Some alternative could compel drivers to add the amount of attention and care that is sorely needed yet sorely lacking in turns in NYC.

In conclusion: plan projects more for transportation cyclists than for leisure cyclists; add more dock and bike saturation to the already-served Citibike area; and force vehicle traffic to travel generally more slowly than it currently does, especially at turns.

Testimonio al Comite de Transporte de la Ciudad de Nueva York

“We need the Support of the City with new Bike Lanes and Education”

Martina Bravo

11/20/2014

Thanks to the Transportation Committee for this opportunity.

I, Martina Bravo, am a member of Immigrant Movement International and Women in Movement by WE Bike.

We, as a group of women, had the experience of learning how to use bicycles. We also learned about bike maintenance and the rules to follow. We had a spiritual and almost emotional education.

I was very afraid of getting on the bike. I didn't my children bicycles for fear of the streets.

But I had the necessity. And I learned.

Now I go out and enjoy the park with my grandchildren and my friends, like Marta who is here, and who also has recently learned to ride the bicycle.

My friends and I are members of a community that have learned to appreciate the benefits of riding bicycles.

But we have also learned the rules. And what is needed is that we all learn the rules. We also need bike lanes. For example, in my neighborhood in Corona we need a better way to get to Flushing Meadows Corona Park in a way that is safe.

We appreciate your help and cooperation with the construction of new bike lanes and the education of the community.

Many thanks.

Testimonio al Comité de Transporte de la Ciudad de Nueva York

“Necesitamos el Apoyo de La Ciudad con Ciclovías y Educación”

Martina Bravo

11/20/2014

Gracias al Comité de Transporte por esta oportunidad.

Yo, Martina Bravo, soy miembro de Movimiento Inmigrante Internacional, Mujeres en Movimiento por We Bike.

Tuvimos la experiencia un grupo de Mujeres de aprender a usar bicicleta. También aprendimos de mecánica en la bicicleta y las reglas a seguir. Tuvimos un aprendizaje espiritual y hasta emocional.

Yo le tenía mucho terror subirme a la bicicleta. No le compre bicicleta a mis hijos, por tenerle miedo a las calles.

Pero tenía la necesidad. Y aprendí.

Ahora salgo y disfruto del Parque con mis nietos y mis amigas, como Marta que está aquí, y que también han aprendido recientemente a utilizar la bicicleta.

Mis amigas y yo somos miembros de la comunidad que hemos aprendido a apreciar el beneficio de usar bicicletas.

Pero también hemos aprendido las reglas. Y lo que hace falta es que todos aprendamos las reglas. También necesitamos las ciclovías. Por ejemplo, en mi vecindario en Corona se necesita una mejor manera de llegar al parque Flushing Meadows en bicicleta de una forma segura.

Nosotros agradecemos su ayuda y cooperación con la construcción de nuevas ciclovías y la educación hacia la comunidad.

Muchas gracias.

Testimony to New York City Council Committee on Transportation
November 20, 2014
Eric McClure
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On behalf of StreetsPAC, as well as Park Slope Neighbors and the Park Slope Street Safety Partnership, I'd like to thank Chairman Rodriguez and the Committee on Transportation for holding this hearing today. The importance of your commitment, and the commitment of the entire Council, to forging a bright future for bicycling in New York City, cannot be overstated.

First off, let me say that I am *shocked* that no one from "Neighbors for Better Bike Lanes" is here to unveil a 63-point plan for improving cycling in New York City! I jest, because nearly four years ago, I sat in a hearing of this committee and listened to members of that strangely named group spin a fanciful tale of woe about the Prospect Park West bike path, which at the time was just a few months old. Of course, they cared only about *one* bike lane, and their interest was in getting rid of it, not making it better.

Unfortunately, the baseless lawsuit that group filed in March, 2011, has – despite failing to gain any traction in the courts – had a deeply chilling effect on the rollout of the type of world-class, safe and protected cycling infrastructure that the Prospect Park West bike path exemplifies. After the bike path was installed, biking on PPW tripled, almost instantly. Riding on the sidewalk dropped by 90%. And speeding by drivers on Prospect Park West plummeted, falling by 70%. Best of all, young children were able to start riding unaccompanied on a street that had previously scared off many adults.

Sadly, however, in the heat of the so-called "bikelash" engendered by that ill-conceived lawsuit, and abetted by tabloid editors, the Department of Transportation largely lost its appetite for creating Class I bike facilities. Despite the mountains of evidence that protected paths like those on Prospect Park West and 9th Avenue significantly improve safety, not only for cyclists but for pedestrians and drivers alike, the city has just not built enough of them.

Without more protected bike paths, and connected, extended neighborhood bike networks, especially in communities that are currently underserved, we have no chance of achieving Mayor de Blasio's goal of 6% bicycle mode share by 2020. Nor do we have any hope of achieving Vision Zero – no more traffic deaths – by 2024. Not one of the 18 cyclists killed in crashes this year, I need to note, was killed on a protected path.

We've come a long way as a bicycling city these past few years, to be sure, and the Department of Transportation has made great strides and clearly makes safety a top priority. But we have a long bike lane ahead before we will truly lead the way for bicycling. I urge this Committee to push hard on the Mayor and the DOT to ramp up the implementation of protected lanes and an expanded and connected bike network, and to be champions in your own districts and citywide for making New York a truly world-class city for biking.



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Thank you Chair Rodriguez and the members of the Transportation Committee for convening this important hearing. My name is Matt Berlin and I am the General Manager of New York City Bike Share, LLC, the operators of Citi Bike, New York's bikeshare system.

Background

Citi Bike launched in May 2013 with 6000 bikes at 332 stations. The program, though not without its issues, has quickly become part of the fabric New York and a vital part of the City's transportation network. Citi Bike currently has nearly 90,000 Annual Members and over 665,000 casual passes have been used to access the system. During the non-winter months we see an average of 34,000 daily trips, with peak days topping 40,000 trips.

We've rolled out this new piece of the transportation network in a relative blink of an eye. The fact that people have taken to it so quickly is a testament in part to the work of the NYCDOT to make streets safer and more attractive to people who want to ride bikes. It's a testament to the hard work of the 215 employees of New York City Bike Share with whom I work every day. It's a testament to the hard work of the advocacy and bicycling organizations in this room that have created such demand. It's also a testament to the fact that New Yorkers are hungry for more flexible, on-demand transportation options.

The beauty of it is that people are making bikeshare what they want it to be, whether it's to commute to work, to connect to a subway or just to go to a movie. Bike share puts the control in each person's hands. It reflects the way we want to live our lives today.

It used to be that we called public transit "mass transit." It was designed for the masses. If you had a job that wasn't a quote/un-quote "regular" 9 to 5; or if you didn't happen to



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commute from the boroughs into the CBD; you had to wait longer for a train or a bus, or you had to make several transfers to get there.

Today bikeshare is personalized transit. It is transit for the individual and it opens up a whole variety of trips and connects neighborhoods in a whole new way.

Expansion & Strengthening Citi Bike

And now we're going to have the opportunity to reach more New Yorkers than ever before as we double the size of the Citi Bike system. This expansion will begin in 2015 and will include more of Bed-Stuy, as well as Williamsburg, Greenpoint and Long Island City. These neighborhoods were planned as part of Citi Bike's initial roll-out but were delayed after a significant portion of our equipment was lost during Hurricane Sandy.

By the end of 2017 you'll be able to find Citi Bike stations as far north in Manhattan as Harlem; in Queens in Astoria and Long Island City; and in Brooklyn in DUMBO, Brooklyn Heights, Downtown Brooklyn, Ft. Greene, Clinton Hill, Greenpoint, Williamsburg, Bushwick, Prospect Heights, Crown Heights, Park Slope, Carroll Gardens, Boerum Hill, Cobble Hill, Red Hook, Gowanus and Bedford-Stuyvesant.

In order to expand we must first strengthen the Citi Bike system. This includes overhauling every bike over the winter and improving the technology that Citi Bike runs on. I am happy to say that for the first time ever, our parent company has a Vice President for Technology who is solely focused on this issue. He started 16 days ago, and while it is too soon for me to go into specifics I have confidence that we will be able to deliver a system that works better for annual members and casual members come spring. And our parent company is committed to ensuring we have better technology to manage and operate the system as well.



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Outreach and Affordability

As we grow we will continue our ongoing efforts to reach out beyond the “usual suspects” to invite more New Yorkers to try bicycling. In the past year alone we set up 11 “community ride clubs” that provide access to Citi Bikes via schools and community development centers in our service area to encourage ridership by all New Yorkers.

We also continue to offer a discounted membership of \$60 per year to New York City Housing Authority residents and members of participating Community Development Credit Unions.

We have worked closely with NYCHA and DOT promote this program including conducting helmet fitting events with DOT at all nine NYCHA developments adjacent to current Citi Bike stations. We have also placed information about the program in the NYCHA Journal, on NYCHA & Citi Bike websites, on NYCHA rent statements, in NYCHA and Citi Bike social media, and attended resident association meetings, development manager meetings and Family Day Events.

We are committed to continuing these outreach efforts as the system expands.

Jobs and the Bicycling Economy

The future of bicycling is also about new green jobs. During our peak season we employ over 200 people, over 95% of whom live within the five boroughs. These are jobs that didn't exist 3 years ago. This includes jobs for drivers, mechanics, technicians, customer service agents and salespeople. As we grow we expect to create more local jobs that pay living wage or above.



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Safety

The future of bicycling in New York City also looks safer. The City is doing it's part from the Vision Zero initiative, to reducing the speed limit, to installing more bike lanes and more protected bike lanes. We also have a unique opportunity to promote safety. We can communicate directly with tens of thousands of people as they begin to think about using a bike. It's a time when people are actively seeking this kind of information and are ready to learn.

Through our membership kits, our website, our station kiosks and even directly on the printed on the handlebars of the bikes themselves we share the four cardinal rules of bicycling in New York:

- Yield to pedestrians
- Stay off the sidewalk
- Obey traffic lights
- Ride with traffic

With our partners at Bike New York we offer Citi Bike Street Skills classes, designed to teach the rules of the road and give people the knowledge they need to be safe and confident on the streets. To date over 1000 people have taken this free class.

And we promote helmet use (and the local economy) with a \$10 discount coupon that every new Citi Bike member receives in their welcome kit. This coupon is good for seven different helmet brands and can be redeemed at any bike shop in the five boroughs. You can choose a helmet that fits your price point; but the coupon makes it

possible to get a safe helmet for as little as \$20. And you're more likely to wear it if it's comfortable and fits your style.



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Mainstreaming and Growing Bicycling

Bigger picture, it's really exciting to see how bikeshare is helping mainstream and grow bicycling. Not too long ago our collective mental image of bike riders in New York were either messengers or spandex-clad weekend warriors in the parks or headed up to the GW Bridge.

Today, thanks in part to Citi Bike, that's changing. You see men and women dressed for work pedaling at a sedate pace, avoiding breaking a sweat. You see people who never would have thought of owning their own bikes taking a Citi Bike to run an errand, a little faster than they could by walking.

One thing that's very important to us as a company and as New Yorkers is that the City continue its excellent work of expanding bicycling infrastructure as Citi Bike expands. A safe and well-connected bicycle network is essential to making our customers and all New Yorkers feel safe enough to make the decision to ride a bike to get them where they need to go.

In conclusion, I, and the entire team at New York City Bike Share, couldn't be more excited about the future of bicycling in New York City. With the expansion of Citi Bike we look forward to serving even more New Yorkers, being even more accessible to more neighborhoods, and continuing to invite more people to experience for themselves the bright present and future of bicycling in New York City.

Remarks for the New York City Council Committee on Transportation
“Oversight-Leading the Way for Bicycling in America:
Where is New York City Now and How Can We Improve?
Prepared by Will R Rogers
November 20 2014

Conclusions:

- NYC policy should embrace and encourage the transportation of biking citizens.
- NYC is undergoing a cultural shift in using bicycles as a legitimate and alternate means of transportation. I believe this change began post 9/11 and has gained momentum during times of interruptions in mass transportation.
- NYC DOT should form a marketing method of education and enforcement by creating a dedicated Bike Transportation Office within DOT. I suspect this is already in place
- A task force should review biking regulations and laws. Bicycles should have obligations and responsibilities in following traffic laws while on the street including yielding to pedestrians at all times.
- NYC DOT needs to continue developing modern traffic infrastructure that allows for safe biking, protects pedestrians from bikers, and also protects pedestrians and bikers from motorized traffic.
- A four - six year plan should be developed with NYPD and DOT adopting, and implementing an ongoing education and enforcement campaign. A well planned go slow campaign can change public perception, and cultural acceptance of the bike laws. A gradual implementation of real law enforcement is critical and must be accompanied with smart multi media campaigns.
- Many cities are undergoing the same Twenty First-Century culture shift in biking responsibility.
- Encouraging bicycles provides the opportunity for developing an environmentally responsible transportation network that is sustainable with evolving Climate Change.
- All US cities have the same bike law enforcement issues. The differences in level of severity, in my opinion are street design and population density.
- In New York, smart street design (Complete Street) will continue to not only have positive impact on bike safety and smooth bike traffic flow, but also pedestrian safety with fewer fatalities.
- New York is leading America for bicycling in most ways, but not all.
- York City can improve by designing and building more modern bike traffic infrastructure..

DOT mission statement:

- Provide safe, efficient, and environmentally responsible movement of pedestrians, goods, and vehicular traffic on the streets, highways, bridges, and waterways of the City's transportation network;
- Improve traffic mobility and reduce congestion throughout the City;
- Rehabilitate and maintain the City's infrastructure, including bridges, tunnels, streets, sidewalks, and highways;
- Encourage the use of mass transit and sustainable modes of transportation; and conduct traffic safety educational programs.

READING POINTS**Oversight -Leading the Way for Bicycling in America
Where is NYC Now and How Can We improve****Health / Obesity**

In China a recent study showed biking and walkable places are tied to less obesity.

<http://www.citylab.com/design/2014/11/how-urban-design-affects-walkability-and-obesity-in-chinas-booming-cities/382830/>

Obesity in China is a big problem, and it's growing. According to figures cited by the researchers, a recent study conducted in 10 Chinese provinces found that 34 percent of people between the ages of 20 and 69 are overweight, and it is estimated that one-fifth of all overweight or obese people in the world are now living in China.

The real estate development industry in China sees the benefits of building more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly communities, but government regulations and planning guidelines often prohibit such designs.

In US studies, cycling to work goes together with happiness. The percentage of cycling commuters is positively associated with levels of happiness and well being, which was measure via Gallup surveys (with correlation of .5).

<http://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2011/06/americas-top-cities-for-bike-commuting-happier-too/240265>

Boston has a new program that empowers Drs. To give low-income patients a cheap bike share program.

<http://www.citylab.com/commute/2014/04/want-healthier-city-prescribe-biking/8795/>

A program just launched by Boston is betting that low in-come patients represents a significant amount of riders. Prescribe-a-Bike, as it's being called, will allow doctors at Boston Medical Center to write low-income patients prescriptions for a one-year

membership to Hubway, the city's bike-sharing system, for just \$5. That's \$80 less than the usual charge for an annual subscription to the service.

Economics of Bike Share

<http://streetsblog.net/2014/11/17/the-difference-between-bike-share-and-bike-rental/>

Dallas is in the process of rolling out a “bike-share” system. According to the Dallas Morning News, the city installed the first two stations in a local park this week. The project got a boost from a \$125,000 grant, and the plan is to expand the system piece by piece.

But due to its pricing scheme and location, this type of bike share shouldn't be confused with large-scale systems in DC and New York, or even in Cincinnati. Patrick Kennedy writes in his column for D Magazine that Dallas's new system is more like bike rental.

The fundamental [requirements] of bike share to be a success: 1) It's in places of need — where people live and where they work 2) It gets people out of cars — meaning a healthier, energy and spatial efficient way to travel and 3) it is membership based. Making money is rarely a concern because the positive externalities are worth it. It is seen as an investment in transportation (for a decimal point for what the Trinity Toll Road is to cost) and increasingly it is seen as a necessary investment to attract college grads (at which Dallas is struggling).

The Dallas bike share system doesn't do any of that. It's for visitors to Fair Park to ride around a bit. And for that, it's a great asset, but as Paul Sims pointed out on Twitter that is bike rental. Not bike share. It is not transportation, but recreation. So we should call it that. The ambiguity could hurt the effort to scale the system up citywide.

Cleveland is trying to establish an economical bikeshare model... but is uncertain as to which model to launch.

NEW Technologies:

City bikeshare programs are ballooning across the country with a fairly simple concept — docked bikes that can be rented via credit card at the docking site or through an annual membership plan.

Patrick Hoffman, product manager for New York-based SoBi, looking to create a more flexible bikeshare that does not just get riders from A to B,

Can this model be improved? Social Bicycles (SoBi) certainly thinks so. Currently, SoBi has bikes online in 13 cities, with plans to add an additional four in 2015. Just like the bike itself, SoBi's bike numbers are leaner, with as few as 20 bikes in

Cadence, Nevada and as many as 750 bikes in Hamilton, Ontario are. Compare that to more than 2,500 Capital Bikeshare bikes in D.C. and 6,000 Citi Bikes in New York City.

Start-up costs are also half as much as traditional bikeshare programs due to fewer infrastructure and human-resource requirements. Lower price points make this system possible in smaller cities such as Topeka, Kansas and Boise, Idaho.

SoBi will enter an established bikeshare market for the first time when 100 bikes sponsored by American Express are brought online in New York City later this year.

Technology in GPS, docking stations, logistics, bike maintenance, social media, design, materials, and biking gear gives business to many in New York.

Culture change and neighborhoods

<http://urbanful.org/2014/11/17/do-bike-lanes-gentrify-neighborhoods/>

Bike lanes are meant to create a safe division between vehicular traffic and cycling traffic. But in many U.S. cities bike lanes may as well be a sign of socio-economic divisions: in some communities, they're seen simply as a pathway for gentrification.

Though cycling advocates are quick to point to the benefits of alternative transit for low-income populations, cities are slow to engage communities about biking (and for that matter, often don't work to break down some of the cultural and economic barriers that stand in the way).

What should municipalities be addressing? Does biking gentrify neighborhoods.

Many cyclists are white and wealthy. But not all of them are.

Statistics show that efforts in cities to attract "college educated intellectuals working in either the Super-Creative Core (designing new commercial or consumer goods, creating ideas or technologies on a daily basis) or knowledge-based industries (healthcare, finance, business, etc.)." like biking

Cities need to solicit input, listen and adjust plans to get community buy-in for things like bike lanes. NYC is doing this.

There are plenty of meetings about bike lanes, but not as many on how a neighborhood is changing.

That's the crux of the matter: imposing versus proposing. Cities need to solicit input, listen and adjust plans to get community buy-in for things like bike lanes.

I believe NYC is understanding and learning the importance of "consensus development". Thank You for today.

Selling Biking to the Public.

<http://www.citylab.com/cityfixer/2013/11/selling-public-biking-political-campaign-style/7544/>

Bike advocates are trying to figure out how to motivate people who would like to ride those neglected bikes, but perceive the streets as uncomfortable, unsafe, or downright terrifying. To that end, the national group People for Bikes recently surveyed registered voters in San Francisco and Portland, Oregon, teasing out their perceptions about bike safety and bike infrastructure.

The resulting report, "Selling Biking: A New Study on the 'Swing Voters' of the Street," shows that the perception that biking is unsafe remains a major stumbling block. But it also reveals just how appealing good bike infrastructure looks to the same people who are scared to ride on today's streets. And advocates think that gives them something concrete to work with.

According to the survey, advocates have a long way to go when it comes to perceptions of whether it's safe to ride. Among respondents in San Francisco, where fatal crashes involving cyclists made headlines around the time of the survey, 80 percent said riding in the city was "very" or "extremely" unsafe. Even in Portland, which had not seen a cycling fatality in the year prior, that number was 69 percent.

What would it take to change that?

Clearly marked and fully separated bicycle infrastructure helps do the trick. When survey subjects were shown images of brightly painted protected bike lanes, they had an overwhelmingly positive response. One picture of people riding bikes in a green-painted lane separated from cars by reflective poles got a favorable reaction from 90 percent of the people who saw it, all of whom were registered voters who own bikes but don't regularly ride.

Danger ahead?

As Boston Encourages Biking, More Suburban Cyclists Are Getting Struck

<http://www.citylab.com/commute/2014/10/as-boston-encourages-cycling-more-suburban-bikers-are-getting-struck/381440/>

Rapidly urbanizing areas of greater Boston—such as Somerville, where 100 cyclists were struck over just a two-year period—have benefited from the larger city's biking initiatives. Boston's expanded bike lanes offer its residents the ability to traverse the city

in a healthy, eco-friendly way. Ensuring safe bike travel beyond the city limits and into the suburban corridor needs to be the next priority.

Safety.

<http://www.citylab.com/commute/2013/05/bikers-dont-deserve-any-special-treatment/5565/>

Does obeying the law mean that you will reach your destination more slowly? Yes. Over long distances, it can even add a significant amount of time to your trip. Get over it. Plan for it.

Is it fair if bikers get tickets when motorists don't? Nope. You know what else isn't fair? Everything. Deal with it. There will never be a perfect solution. The best real solution is don't break the law.

There is a price to be paid for trying to move beyond the life-threatening rodeo days of cycling in major American cities. It's called civic responsibility. Playing by the rules. Here is where the marketing campaigns are needed to help with education and enforcement in changing the culture of bad biking... as well as the pedestrian's disdain for crazed bikers.

Capital Expenditure and a City's Resilient Future for Biking.

London plans a new \$965 million floating bike path.

<http://urbanful.org/2014/11/05/london-plans-new-965-million-floating-bike-path/>

London has a "far-fetched" proposal that is beginning to look distinctly feasible. The Thames Deckway would track the south bank of the river and stretch across the city with the Millennium Bridge functioning as its midpoint.

My point is that new thinking and innovative designs for bike transportation are occurring in other cities.

I question New York's innovative leadership and commitment.

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Apologies please excuse any grammatical or typo errors. All reflect lack of editing.



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Testimony 11/20/2014

Committee on Transportation

Leading the Way for Bicycling in America: Where is New York City Now and How Can We Improve

Hello Council members, thank you for the opportunity to speak before you today. My name is Rachel Albetski, and I am a current resident of Bushwick, Brooklyn. As an avid cycling advocate and daily bike commuter, I have experience navigating many types of city streets in my neighborhood and others. I'm here today to express the importance of continuing to increase bicycle infrastructure in all 5 boroughs of New York, with a focus on those neighborhoods previously lacking a proper bicycle network. This opinion is backed by the many New Yorkers who consistently vote in favor of bicycle lanes, as well as the increase in bicycle commuters, a number that doubled from 2009 to 2013. The influx in cyclists also leads to an increase in safety for all street users. As new infrastructure for bikes gets built car traffic slows down, assisting compliance with the new 25 mile per hour speed limits, drivers become more aware, and pedestrians become safer because cyclists cease to use sidewalks on previously unsafe roads. As we make advances to reducing the amount of traffic related deaths to zero we must focus on creating safer arterials, roads like Queens Boulevard and Atlantic Avenue. These large and intimidating streets only make up 15% of our road network but are the site of more than half of all fatalities. I would ask the committee to make redesigning these streets a priority. By doing so we can make huge advances towards Vision Zero, expand transportation options, and boost business opportunities. From my own neighborhood of Bushwick, I would like to acknowledge and thank Council Member Reynoso and Commissioner Polly Trottenberg for taking a walk through Bushwick and addressing present street safety issues. We appreciate you beginning what I hope to see become a successful bicycle network that works for and includes all members of the community, and look forward to future collaboration. Thank you for your time.

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Testimony, 11/20/14
City Council Hearing on Bicycling in NYC
Elena Santogade

I have lived in Prospect Heights, Brooklyn, for the past nine years, and I've been commuting by bicycle in New York City for as long. In this time I've seen tremendous changes happen on our streets, mostly for the better. I've watched the number of New Yorkers commuting by bike double between 2009 and 2013, and I've seen the network of streets that I consider safe enough to ride my bike on grow in swaths. These changes have felt like a gift, and have kept me healthier, happier and safer.

I currently work out of an office in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, on Atlantic Avenue between Kingston and Albany avenues. I bike to and from this office a few times a week, and it has brought my attention to the need for a better street design on Atlantic Avenue. From July 2012 to the present, there have been thirteen deaths on Atlantic Avenue, and one thousand four hundred and nineteen crashes causing injury (not to mention the over six-thousand total crashes that have occurred on Atlantic Avenue in this time). Right now I go out of my way to avoid riding or walking on Atlantic, but with an office address right on the avenue I have to brave a couple of blocks of it either way. In doing so I see how much this thoroughway can benefit from the kind of street redesign that we've seen on 8th and 9th avenues in Manhattan, not only to keep me safe during my commute, but to benefit all street users - to ensure that the kids crossing from the C train to their school on my block can't get clipped by a turning truck, or that the bicyclists who would benefit from use of this street aren't contending with cars that speed ahead as the road widens.

A decade ago I would've thought that changes like these couldn't be possible in New York, but we've all seen that they can be made, and with enormously positive results for the safety and well-being of all New Yorkers.

Thank you for holding this hearing and for devoting resources to improving New York City's transportation options and street safety.

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The City Council has passed a great regulation requiring landlords to make buildings bike accessible. Presumably this regulation was to advantage the bike commuter who will want to bring their bikes into the city and want to leave them in buildings. Unfortunately, the advantage is not reaching the intended beneficiaries, because it is mediated by the tenants. The tenants of the building, i.e. corporations, businesses can themselves decide whether they are going to take advantage of this access, and many of them are not taking advantage of this access, so their employees and workers cannot bring their bikes into buildings. One of the biggest tenants in New York presumably is the City of New York. Unfortunately the City of New York does not have a uniform policy with regard to bringing bikes into buildings, and therefore many city employees themselves cannot themselves bring their bikes into buildings and are therefore are inhibited from riding their bikes to work. A uniform policy by the City of New York would allow all city employees to bike commute if they chose to by allowing them a secure place to leave their bikes, because by far the largest inhibiting factor for bike commuters is where do you leave your bike. Even if you find a place to lock it up outside, components such as your seat, even your handlebars, your lights can be taken off the bike. So bike security is paramount. Now if you make that a city policy, first of all the city becomes a leader, and setting the example that we let bikes in, so that encourages more bike commuting. More bike commuting means less congestion on our roads. Everybody who is on a bike is not driving a car. It means less congestion in our public transit system. Everybody who is on a bike is not cramming themselves onto the subway car or a bus. It means less wear and tear on our roads.

Furthermore, it has health benefits. The city pays for the health benefits. Bike commuters tend to be healthier, so you have less cost in health benefits because people are taking advantage of this every day of healthy activity.

And finally but not least it enhances New York City's public image as a bike friendly city, which makes it more and more attractive to tourists, to visitors and to the younger population moving here are going to fill our tech and modern industry jobs.

The City has also passed a regulation promoting bike commuting ostensibly for the purpose of promoting bike commuting by making it a requirement for parking garages and parking lots to provide biking access. Unfortunately there are no price controls and at the current time the cost for parking a bike for the day is almost that of parking a car, and that is rendering the regulation completely useless. Go look at a bike rack at any parking garage, and there are almost always empty. We would ask that there be pricing regulations for parking bikes in garages so that the bikers could actually use them. We would also urge that the biking regulation be less than a round trip commuter cost on public transportation because bikers have to maintain their bikes, so they have an overhead, over and above what a regular public transit commuter would have. Furthermore, with a monthly bike pass option in the parking garages, the administrative cost to the garage would be very low, so any type of cost less than a round trip commuter cost on the subways or busses would seem to be the proper price range.

Brian Van Nieuwenhoven

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Future Of Cycling In New York City

Testifying: Brian Van Nieuwenhoven

November 20, 2014

I would like to thank the Council, and transportation chair Ydanis Rodriguez, for hearing our voices today.

My name is Brian Van Nieuwenhoven. I am currently serving on Community Board 6 in Manhattan, and I am a current board member of the New York Cycle Club. I'm a bicycle commuter, an avid recreational cyclist, and a volunteer plus activist for bicycle safety, education, and participation, as well as for street safety, traffic reform, and Vision Zero.

Based on my observations and participation in activities in New York City regarding cycling, I have a set of very simple recommendations for the council in regard to cycling policy in this city:

- Streets need to be shared safely by all. Please continue to study all modes of transit and make personal observations about how the different modes interact with one another, particularly when collisions and casualties are involved.
- Do not give in to a "witch-hunt" mentality against cyclists. Cyclists are not a criminal syndicate that you need to "crack down on". Cyclists are citizens of this city with the same general mindset of the other transportation users. You should facilitate their safe passage, and you should direct their use of the road when it is clear that misuse is occurring.
- Do not let enforcement habits and priorities become the guideline to future policy, as much of the existing policy does not serve any real safety or coordination purpose in many situations. Please instead focus on facts, direct observations, and professional studies. There is a lot of flexibility in setting policy and designing traffic conditions when you step outside of archaic habits of road provisioning and policing. And particularly, use data, and not emotion or politics, to guide your focus.
- Dedicate more resources to encouraging cycling and supporting cycling-assisting facilities in the city. It's not about convincing more people to be cyclists. It's about taking the remaining 90% of cyclists in the city who are afraid to use the roads, afraid to park their bicycles, afraid of poor interactions between other road users on every stretch of road, pathway, or greenway in the city, and giving them conditions where they feel comfortable to engage in an already-learned skill. We've done a lot of work so far but there is much more that can be done.

I have faith that you can achieve much progress in encouraging safe cycling in New York City by heeding to these recommendations. I hope you'll consider them. Thank you.



Statement of Ken Podziba, CEO of Bike New York,
to New York City Council Transportation Committee Hearing

**Leading the Way for Bicycling in America
Where is New York City Now and How Can We Improve?**

Hello, my name is Ken Podziba. I'm the President and CEO of Bike New York. I want to thank the Transportation Committee for inviting me to testify at this hearing. Together, we've made New York City the #1 bike-friendly city in America. This is our opportunity to reflect on how we can raise the bar and show not just America, but the world, what it means to embrace and cultivate a pedal-powered community.

Bike education plays a critical role in building a bike-friendly city. For nearly a decade, Bike New York has been New York City's bike education leader and has developed the nation's largest urban bike education program.

In the past three years alone, we've held more than 1,000 free classes and programs, reaching more than 41,000 kids and adults throughout the five boroughs and growing the next generation of cyclists. Some programming highlights:

- 🚲 We've held 432 free youth and adult Learn to Ride classes attended by more than 9,200 people who learned to ride a bike for the first time. More than 75% of adult participants are women, a traditionally under-represented population among cyclists.
- 🚲 We've held over 150 adult classes that cover basic bike skills, traffic safety tips, and rules of the road. Since 2011, we've taught 2,100 adults and impressed upon them the importance of abiding by all traffic laws and conducting themselves in a responsible, courteous manner.
- 🚲 We partnered with Citi Bike to pilot the first-ever bike safety classes for an urban bike share program. Since Citi Bike's launch, we've held more than 50 classes and reached nearly 1,000 Citi Bikers.
- 🚲 Many New York City youths rarely leave their neighborhood, and many don't ride bikes at all. We're changing that with our summer camp and after-school programs. For three years, these programs (operating out of 12 different locations throughout the City) have provided more than 5,000 New York City summer campers and almost 1,300 after-school participants with opportunities to learn how to ride a bike, practice traffic safety skills, and participate in

recreational bike rides at no cost to the kids, their families, or participating organizations.

- 🚲 To prevent bike crashes involving children, Bike New York offers fun, free bike safety assemblies to any school – public or private – in New York City. In three years, our instructors have visited 87 schools and reached more than 18,000 students. Please encourage schools in your districts to contact us for a free bike safety assembly. (To request an assembly, contact Zoë Cheswick by phone at 212-870-2097 or by email at zcheswick@bikenewyork.org).
- 🚲 Bike New York has invested in New York City neighborhoods and parks by setting up 11 Community Bicycle Education Centers throughout the five boroughs, out of which we run our free classes and programs. This investment comprises nearly 400 bikes and almost 500 helmets for New Yorkers to use while they learn cycling skills.

We've made plenty of progress over the years, but we've still got a lot of work to do. To that end,

- 🚲 we ask that the Committee hear and approve Councilman Treyger's bills (#544-2014 and #545-2014). Prohibiting the use of cell phones while biking is one more step toward achieving the goals outlined in Mayor de Blasio's Vision Zero initiative. The proposed ticket diversion program is proof that this administration does not view summonses merely as moneymakers, but as opportunities to educate and empower the people of New York to do *their* part to ensure that our streets, greenways, sidewalks, and bike lanes are as safe as they can be.
- 🚲 We ask that the New York City Department of Education partner with Bike New York to establish a compulsory middle school bike skills and safety curriculum.
- 🚲 We ask that New York City Courts and Traffic Violations Bureaus require ticketed cyclists and drivers to take a traffic safety and laws class in addition to (or in lieu of) paying a fine. Highly-ranked Bicycle Friendly Communities like Portland, OR, and Tucson, AZ, have similar ticket diversion programs.

We are cultivating the next generation of cyclists, a generation that will view the bicycle not just as a plaything, but as a practical, sustainable, and healthy means of recreation and transportation. In addition to growing the cycling community, we're striving to change how the public perceives that community – the words "courteous" and "responsible" should no longer *describe* the conscientious cyclist, but *define* any individual that resolves to saddle up and join us in building a pedal-powered future.



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City Council Transportation Committee oversight hearing: Leading the Way for Bicycling in America: Where is New York City Now and How Can We Improve?

**Testimony by Paul Steely White, Executive Director, Transportation Alternatives
Thursday, November 20, 2014**

Thank you Chair Rodriguez and members of the Transportation committee. My name is Paul Steely White, and I'm the executive director of Transportation Alternatives.

I am here on behalf of Transportation Alternatives, a non-profit advocacy organization that has worked for over forty years to make New York City's streets safer and more equitable for all New Yorkers. We have more than 115,000 activists in our network, many of whom ride our streets every day and want to feel safe doing so. Almost a million New Yorkers ride a bike at least once a month¹. And even more want to bike but refrain from doing so because they are afraid – they recognize how dangerous our streets can be! We need the streets of New York to be calm and secure for all of us and to avoid tragedies like those shared with you earlier today.

Fortunately this can be achieved and future tragedies can be avoided if we use practices that we know work, and if you, the Council, put the political will and funding behind it. Making biking safer makes our streets safer for everyone; for the pedestrian and the driver, and for the young and old. We all benefit!

The visionary leadership of this Committee, Chair Rodriguez, the City Council and Administration has been exemplary and essential in making biking safety a priority for New York City. We have already benefited from smart policies: According to the DOT between 2007 and 2011 the number of people commuting by bicycle doubled, and between those same years the DOT found that the risk of serious bicyclist injury decreased by 73%. We know that there is safety in numbers: The more people who bike (and walk), the fewer fatalities and injuries occur.

But the work continues, and we must now double down on our efforts and commitment to achieving the goal of zero fatalities and serious injuries on our streets and surpass Mayor de Blasio's goal of increasing bicycling six-fold in the next six years.

To achieve these goals, Transportation Alternatives urges the City Council to commit to the following:

- **Transform our big and deadly arterial streets with protected bike lanes, pedestrian safety islands and dedicated bus lanes**
- **Drastically expand neighborhood bike networks to make bicycling safe and accessible for all New Yorkers**
- **Continue the five borough expansion of bike share into more communities**

Transform our big and deadly arterial streets

New York City has over 6,000 miles of roads, of which 1,000 miles are arterial streets. Accounting for just 15% of our road network these streets are responsible for nearly a staggering 60% of bicyclist and pedestrian fatalities and serious injuries. Most people killed in traffic die on these roads. And we know the reason why: Poor design. A simple reason made all the more tragic because we know how to fix it.

Transportation Alternatives urges the City Council to commit to transforming all 1,000 miles of arterial streets based on what we know works: making “complete streets” that incorporate protected bike lanes, pedestrian safety islands, dedicated bus lanes and other traffic calming measures. This commitment must be manifest in the City’s budget and Ten Year Capital Strategy this spring, and we call on the Council to make funding these improvements a priority.

Inaction will mean more tragedies every day. The economic cost is a small price to pay for the lives saved. Inaction is also costly economically: According to the Office of Management and Budget, traffic crashes cost the City’s economy \$4.29 billion annually. Arterial redesign will pay off in many ways. Transforming our big deadly arterial streets is absolutely essential and benefits pedestrians, bicyclists and drivers – it benefits all New Yorkers of all ages.

Drastically expand neighborhood bike networks

Dodging opened car doors and swerving to avoid a sudden right-hand turn from a 2-ton vehicle – this is not the way we should be biking in New York City! It is not how we make anyone feel safe. Protected bicycle lanes, as opposed to simply a striped bike lane, can help achieve this. In New York City, protected bike lanes can reduce bicyclist injury by up to 65%ⁱⁱ. And, though there have been an alarming eighteen New Yorkers killed riding bikes this year, not one has occurred in a bike lane, and only one occurred on a street *with* a bike lane.ⁱⁱⁱ In fact, a ten-year review of bicyclist safety by the city departments of health, police and transportation found that only one person was killed while riding in a bike lane (out of 225 bicycling fatalities from 1996 to 2005)^{iv}.

Bike lanes improve pedestrian safety and the walking environment as well. On average, streets with bike lanes have seen a 20% reduction in injury crashes and an 80% reduction in sidewalk bicycling (on some roads with protected bike lanes, injury crashes have been cut in half)^v. And the economic benefits to local businesses from bike lanes have been well documented: they calm traffic and make our neighborhoods nicer places to walk and spend time^{vi}.

When a cyclist rides on a sidewalk it is rarely out of convenience, it is usually because that cyclist fears for their safety, and because much of our street scape today is confusing to everyone, the cyclist, pedestrian and the driver. We need a drastic expansion of protected bike lanes in addition to standard bike lanes. And the public is behind such an expansion, with 67% of New Yorkers approving of protected bike lanes and pedestrian safety islands^{vii}.

Continue the five borough expansion of bike share

Citi Bike has been an overwhelming success story making many New Yorkers’ commute faster and easier. Citi Bike has also been a story of remarkable safety. Not one person has died on a NYC bike-share bicycle since its inception over a year ago. Out of 8.75 million trips there have been only about 100 crash reports according to Citi Bike and zero fatalities.^{viii}

We are happy to see the planned expansion of the program into more neighborhoods. We stood with the Council’s Progressive Caucus today to help ensure that New Yorkers in all our neighborhoods have the opportunity to participate in this success story, and we urge the entire City Council to join us. Our city’s subway and bus system is used by New Yorkers from all boroughs and backgrounds. There is no reason why we should not aim for our City’s bike-share program to play a similar role.

It is absolutely critical that the planned expansion of Citi Bike is accompanied by the necessary biking infrastructure of safe streets and protected bike lanes. As you can see from our map (attached), the current areas of Citi Bike operation have many of these safety features, yet many of the new areas do not. If we want Citi Bike to continue being the great safety and success story it has been, then the City must expand the bike network.

Conclusion

This City Council, under the leadership of Speaker Mark-Viverito and Transportation Committee Chair Rodriguez, has demonstrated admirable leadership in championing safer streets and more transportation choices for New Yorkers. The work this year to launch New York City into the forefront of Vision Zero and the discussion today are some of the most tangible examples of leadership that builds on proven innovations pioneered in New York City and growing public demand for better biking and walking.

All of these improvements will require political capital and real capital to realize, but the investments will be worth it, and we look forward to working with you to find the resources to continue to improve the city we all love.

And, though the temperatures are dropping, I would love to ride bikes with you. Let's continue our work together to improve city cycling.

Thank you.

ⁱ 900,000 New Yorkers ride a bike at least once a month according to the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's 2012 Community Health Survey

ⁱⁱ *Protected Bike Lanes in NYC*, NYC Department of Transportation, September 2014

ⁱⁱⁱ Matthew Brenner was killed on Sands Street in Brooklyn, but he was not riding in the bike lane there, <http://www.streetsblog.org/2014/07/16/matthew-brenner-29-killed-earlier-this-month-on-sands-street/>

^{iv} *Bicyclist Fatalities and Serious Injuries in New York City, 1996-2005*, NYC Departments of Health and Mental Hygiene, Parks and Recreation, Transportation and Police, 2006

^v Ibid ii

^{vi} *The Economic Benefits of Sustainable Streets*, Bennett Midland for NYC DOT, December 2013

^{vii} New York City voter opinion research conducted by Penn, Schoen Berland, September 2013

^{viii} Not One Person Has Died on an NYC Bike-Share Bike, http://www.slate.com/blogs/future_tense/2014/05/30/nyc_citi_bike_zero_fatalities_in_new_york_city_bike_share_program_s_first.html, May 30, 2014



New York City - Leading the Way for Bicycling in America

New York City has come a long way in making bicycling safe and accessible for the millions of New Yorkers who bike every year. **Riding bicycles has become a convenient, inexpensive, and safe way to navigate the city.** Bike share has become an integral part of our public transportation system¹ and protected lanes are now essential roadways for thousands of commuters. A lot more work remains to be done, but the facts remain that **biking in New York has never been safer or more popular.**

New Yorkers Support Bike Lanes

- Polls consistently show high public support for bike lanes. Last year, a New York Times poll found that **64 percent of New Yorkers approve of new bike lanes**²
- **Major bike lanes have been approved by local Community Boards**³, including the lanes on Prospect Park West and Flushing Avenue in Brooklyn
- This year, every Community Board on 5th and 6th Avenue in Manhattan urged the City to consider installing bike lanes on the streets⁴

Biking is Growing

- The number of **people commuting by bicycle doubled between 2007-2011**⁵
- Nearly one million New Yorkers ride a bike at least once a month⁶

Riding Bikes in New York City is Getting Safer

- Because of "**Safety in Numbers**," more bikes on the road means safer biking
- Despite rapid increases in the number of people riding bikes, **bike crashes and injuries are actually on the decline**
- DOT found the **risk of serious injury decreased 73% between 2000-2011**⁷

Bikes are Good for Business

- After a protected bike lane was installed on 9th Avenue, **local businesses saw a 49% increase in retail sales**, compared to just 3% across the borough⁸
- There were **half as many commercial vacancies after Union Square was redesigned with a bike lane and pedestrian space**, compared to 5% more vacancies borough-wide⁸

We Need More

- NYC has more than 6,000 miles of roads, but only around 400 miles of bike lanes
- **Most people killed in traffic die on large arterial streets**⁹. These streets need to be transformed to safely accommodate cyclists, pedestrians and transit riders

Citations

¹ CitiBike. "System Data." <http://www.citibikenyc.com/system-data>

² New York Times. "New Yorkers' Views on Their Mayor and His Programs."
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³ NYC Department of Transportation. "Prospect Park West Bicycle Path."
<http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2013/08/18/nyregion/new-yorkers-views-on-bloomberg-poll.html>

⁴ StreetsBlog. "Garodnick Endorses Complete Streets for Fifth and Sixth Avenues."
<http://www.streetsblog.org/2014/09/24/garodnick-endorses-complete-streets-for-fifth-and-sixth-avenues/>

⁵ United States Census Bureau. "Means of Transportation to Work."




⁶ NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. "EpiQuery Survey 2012 – Rode bicycle in past year"

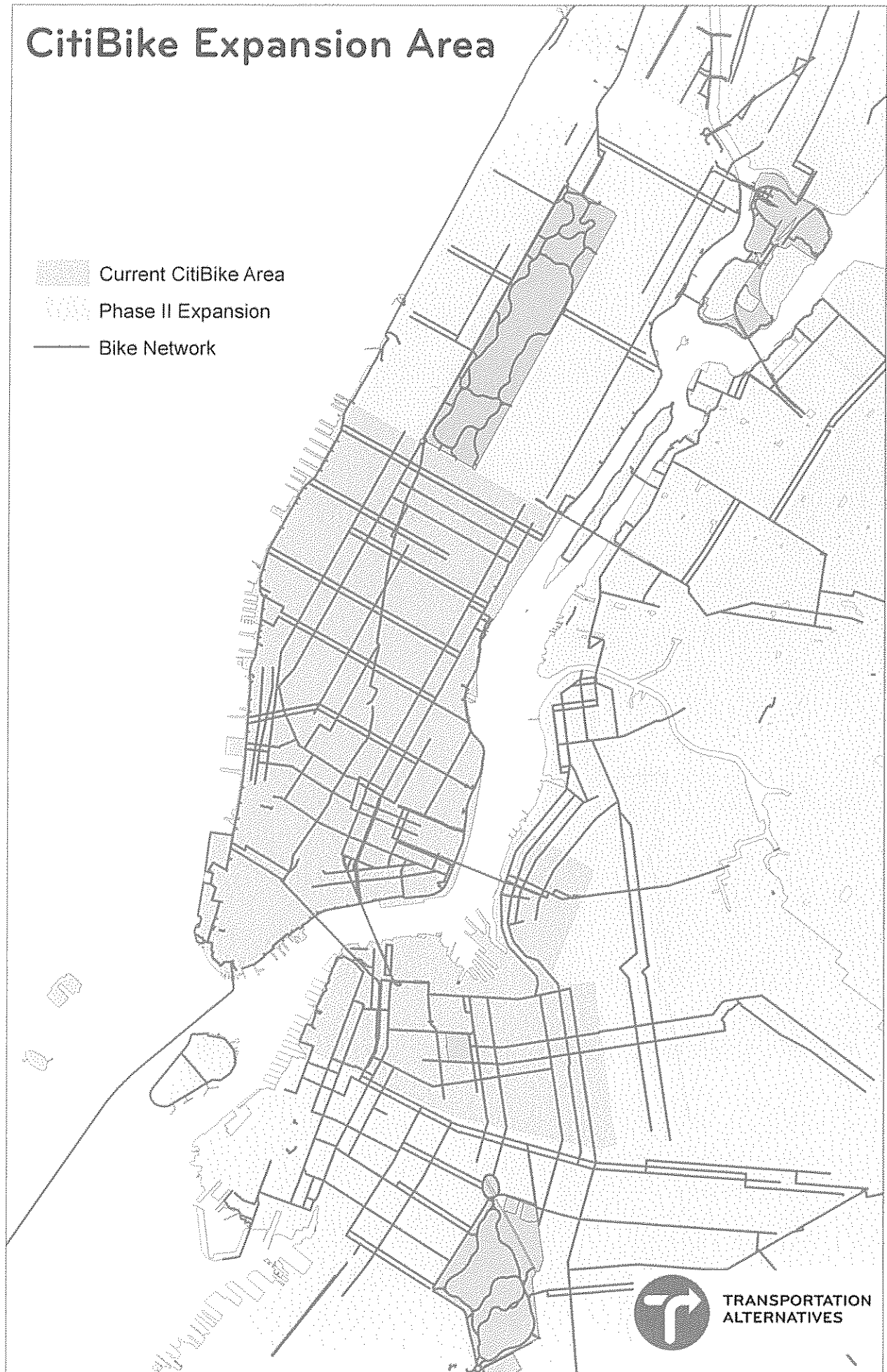
⁷ NYC Department of Transportation. "Bicyclist Network and Statistics."

⁸ NYC Department of Transportation. "Measuring the Street."

⁹ NYC Department of Transportation. "The New York City Pedestrian Safety Study & Action Plan."

CitiBike Expansion Area

-  Current CitiBike Area
-  Phase II Expansion
-  Bike Network



TRANSPORTATION
ALTERNATIVES



Testimony by Chris Wogas, President-Bike and Roll New York City
Oversight Hearing - Leading the Way for Bicycling in America
New York City Council Committee on Transportation
November 20, 2014

Thank you Chairman Rodriguez and members of the Committee on Transportation for the opportunity to testify here today regarding the cycling experience in New York City.

My name is Chris Wogas, and I am the President of Bike and Roll New York City. We are New York City's largest bike tour and rental company providing a variety of guided tours and rentals accommodating all ages and different skill levels. We have ten locations in Manhattan, Brooklyn and North Jersey and hope to expand to other locations in the future.

The focus of my testimony today will be on bike safety and how it relates to an ongoing situation at our cornerstone location at Central Park-Columbus Circle where we are the exclusive concessionaire to the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation to provide bike rentals at that location. Since we began operations in 2008, the presence of illegal bike vendors at this location has undermined the City's efforts, and ours, to promote bicycle safety. In addition to harassing tourists and threatening my staff on a daily basis, these rogue vendors:

- Illegally solicit rentals on Parks property with minimal and inconsistent enforcement. It is important to note that we share revenues with the City.
- Rent out stolen equipment that are not properly maintained and typically don't include necessary safety equipment such as bells and helmets.
- Attempt to damage our own equipment, which we mitigate by our own inspections of each bicycle before they are rented out.
- Operate without liability insurance. If a cyclist is injured, the City could be held liable.
- Undermine the City's ambitious Vision Zero initiative as the City Council previously outlined in a letter to Mayor de Blasio on Bike and Roll's behalf a few months ago.
- Harass Citi Bike employees as well near their docks in the vicinity along Central Park South. We are currently waiting for a response to a letter we jointly wrote to Deputy Mayor Alicia Glen.



- Fight amongst each other over bike rentals and contribute to the deteriorating quality of life that currently exists at the gateway to Central Park. Bike and Roll staff have called 911 nearly 175 times since March of this year in addition to frequent phone calls to NYPD. We also spend over \$100,000 per year for two bodyguards because our employees do not feel safe working at Central Park-Columbus Circle. We have been sharing detailed activity logs with the City Council, NYPD and the Comptroller's office on a daily basis since early August.
- And lastly, these rogue vendors partner with local bike shops in the Central Park-Columbus Circle area to solicit bike rentals for commissions, likely paid off-book and tax-free, which contributes to the hundreds of thousands of dollars the city loses in revenue each year that could be used to promote cycling in city parks. I have also brought with me today a packet that includes all media coverage the illegal vending situation has received to date for your reference along with copies of the letters I referenced earlier that went to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

Bicycle safety is Bike and Roll New York City's highest priority. When our customers rent a bike or take a tour, our employees are required to provide an overview of best cycling practices, an explanation of all rules and regulations which we can provide in 15 different languages for our non-English speaking customers and handouts with maps which I've also brought with me today. We also enjoy a close working relationship with the City, including a helmet rental partnership with Citi Bike where we offer helmet rentals to any Citi Bike customer for a minimal cost. We also provide the equipment for Bike New York's free cycling education programs.

In conclusion, Bike and Roll is grateful for the support we have received from the City Council to-date, including from you Chairman Rodriguez and Council Members Dan Garodnick, Corey Johnson, Mark Levine, and Helen Rosenthal. We look forward to continuing our work with you in not only promoting bicycle safety, but ensuring that Vision Zero becomes reality. But until the City can develop a long-term and permanent solution to the illegal vending activity at Central Park-Columbus Circle and protect a legitimate concessionaire, there will be no Vision Zero. Thank you for the opportunity to testify here today, and happy to answer any questions you might have.

###



September 2, 2014

The Honorable Alicia Glen
Deputy Mayor for Housing and Economic Development
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Dear Deputy Mayor Glen:

On behalf of New York City Bike Share (NYCBS) and Bike and Roll New York City, we are writing you today to request your immediate assistance regarding the onslaught of aggressive, and too often violent, unauthorized bike vendors that harass not only our staffs, but virtually every resident and visitor unlucky enough to venture in or around Central Park between Sixth Avenue and Columbus Circle. We are forced to deal in an incredibly hostile environment on a daily basis that negatively impacts the area's quality of life.

As background, our organizations contend with dozens of unauthorized vendors near Citi Bike's station at Central Park South and Sixth Avenue and at Bike and Roll's Columbus Circle location. These illegal vendors, numbering as high as 80 on summer days, unlawfully solicit bike rentals in the Central Park-Columbus Circle area using aggressive and intimidating tactics. This has been an ongoing issue since NYCBS' inception and since Bike and Roll became the official concessionaire to the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation to provide bike rentals at Columbus Circle over five years ago.

These vendors provide false information to customers and threaten staff who call 911 or ask them to leave. In fact, two previous Bike and Roll managers were forced to obtain restraining orders because of death threats for calling 911, with a third restraining order currently in process. NYCBS female employees are also subject to sexual obscenities and unwanted advances.

New York City is also losing hundreds of thousands of dollars in revenue from such unauthorized vending activity since both our organizations share a percentage of our revenues with the city.

These unauthorized vendors are not licensed or insured, typically only take cash as payment and will ask for passports, credit cards or hotel room keys to hold as collateral to ensure the renter returns.

Furthermore, the cycling products being illegally rented are typically stolen and unsafe because they are not properly maintained and do not usually include legally required safety equipment such as bells and front and rear lights. The equipment these unauthorized vendors are renting to unsuspecting customers is completely out-of-tune with the spirit of Vision Zero, an initiative both our organizations wholeheartedly support and endorse.

Despite numerous meetings with the Police Department, the Department of Parks and Recreation, the Department of Transportation, NYC & Company, several council members and other community stakeholders, we still continue to experience these same issues.



Because this unsolvable issue to date impacts several mayoral agencies, we feel strongly that it needs to rise to the Deputy Mayor level for any meaningful multi-agency action. We respectfully request a meeting with you to discuss this matter further. Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "CWogas".

Chris Wogas
President
Bike & Roll New York City
cwogas@bikenewyorkcity.com
212.260.0400

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dani Simons".

Dani Simons
Director of External Affairs
NYC Bike Share, Operators of Citi Bike
danisimons@nycbicycleshare.com
347-916-0215

Enclosures: Press Packet

CC: Anthony Shorris- First Deputy Mayor, City of New York
Melissa Mark-Viverito- Speaker, New York City Council
Bill Bratton- Commissioner, New York City Police Department
Mitchell Silver- Commissioner, New York City Department of Parks and Recreation
Polly Trottenberg- Commissioner, New York City Department of Transportation
Fred Dixon- President and CEO, NYC & Company



THE COUNCIL OF
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

September 25, 2014

The Honorable Bill de Blasio
Mayor, City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor de Blasio:

We are writing to strongly express our concern about reports of unauthorized bike vendor activity at Central Park-Columbus Circle and the hostile atmosphere that both locals and visitors from all over the world are forced to contend with on a daily basis.

These unauthorized vendors use aggressive tactics to intimidate the only licensed vendor for Central Park-Columbus Circle, Bike and Roll New York City, and manipulate unsuspecting tourists into renting a bicycle that in many cases is stolen, unsafe, uninsured and typically doesn't include necessary safety equipment such as bells, helmets and locks. The equipment these unauthorized vendors use is completely out-of-tune with the spirit of Vision Zero.

We are told this has been an ongoing problem long before Bike and Roll became the exclusive concessionaire to the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation in 2008. Since then, two Bike and Roll managers have taken out restraining orders with a third one currently in process and other staff facing threats of violence every time the police or 911 are called.

It is estimated that the City is losing revenues in excess of over \$100,000 per year since Bike and Roll is sharing revenues with the City under its current concession agreement. These are monies that could be used to maintain, improve and expand our city's rich parks system while simultaneously supporting the mission of Vision Zero. Most of these unauthorized vendors conduct off-book, cash-only transactions and ask for passports, credit cards or hotel room keys as collateral.

Finally, we understand several multi-agency meetings have taken place between NYPD, the Department of Parks and Recreation, NYC & Company and other community stakeholders and to-date those meetings have failed to produce a long-term solution to a worsening situation.

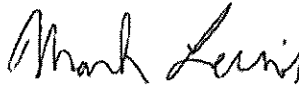
We will continue to monitor current events in the area, and we urge you to help foster a solution that not only protects the integrity of our city contracts, but also provides a safe and hassle-free environment for anyone enjoying a walk or taking a leisurely bike ride through Central Park.

Thank you for your attention on this matter, and we look forward to working with you in resolving this critical quality-of-life issue.

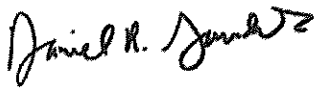
Sincerely,



Ydanis Rodriguez
Council Member
Chair, Transportation Committee



Mark Levine
Council Member
Chair, Parks and Recreation Committee



Daniel Garodnick
Council Member
4th Council District



Corey Johnson
Council Member
3rd Council District



Helen Rosenthal
Council Member
6th Council District

CC: Alicia Glen- Deputy Mayor for Housing and Economic Development
Bill Bratton- Commissioner, New York City Police Department
Mitchell Silver- Commissioner, New York City Department of Parks and Recreation
Polly Trottenberg- Commissioner, New York City Department of Transportation
Julie Menin- Commissioner, New York City Department of Consumer Affairs
Fred Dixon- President and CEO, NYC & Company



**Summary of
Media Coverage on Illegal Bike Vending at
Central Park-Columbus Circle**

**Prepared for the New York City Council
Committee on Transportation**

Prepared by

**nicholas
& lence**
COMMUNICATIONS

November 20, 2014



OPINION

ROGUE BIKE VENDORS

It is encouraging to hear that the vendor situation at Battery Park has improved following your April 28 article "In Battery Park, a cruise ship tour de farce." I applaud Police Commissioner Bill Bratton, the NYPD and the Parks Department for enforcing the illegal-vending rules downtown and eagerly await a similar crackdown uptown.

Bike and Roll New York City is the official operator of bike rentals in Central Park, with locations just north of Columbus Circle. If you have entered the park via Columbus Circle you are familiar with the aggressive bike-rental hawkers who consistently harass visitors.

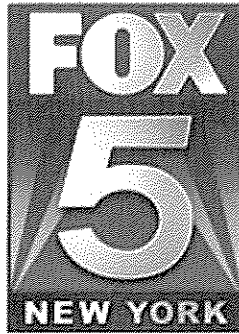
They are operating illegally and do not have a concession with the city. New York is losing money when these operators steal customers from Bike and Roll, and the vendors are creating an unsafe environment for residents and tourists. Our staff has been physically threatened several times by these vendors, and they create a hostile and uninviting atmosphere that reflects poorly on the city.

With the summer tourism season imminent, I look forward to the Parks Department and NYPD policing this situation in and around Central Park as they've done in Battery Park.

—CHRIS WOGAS

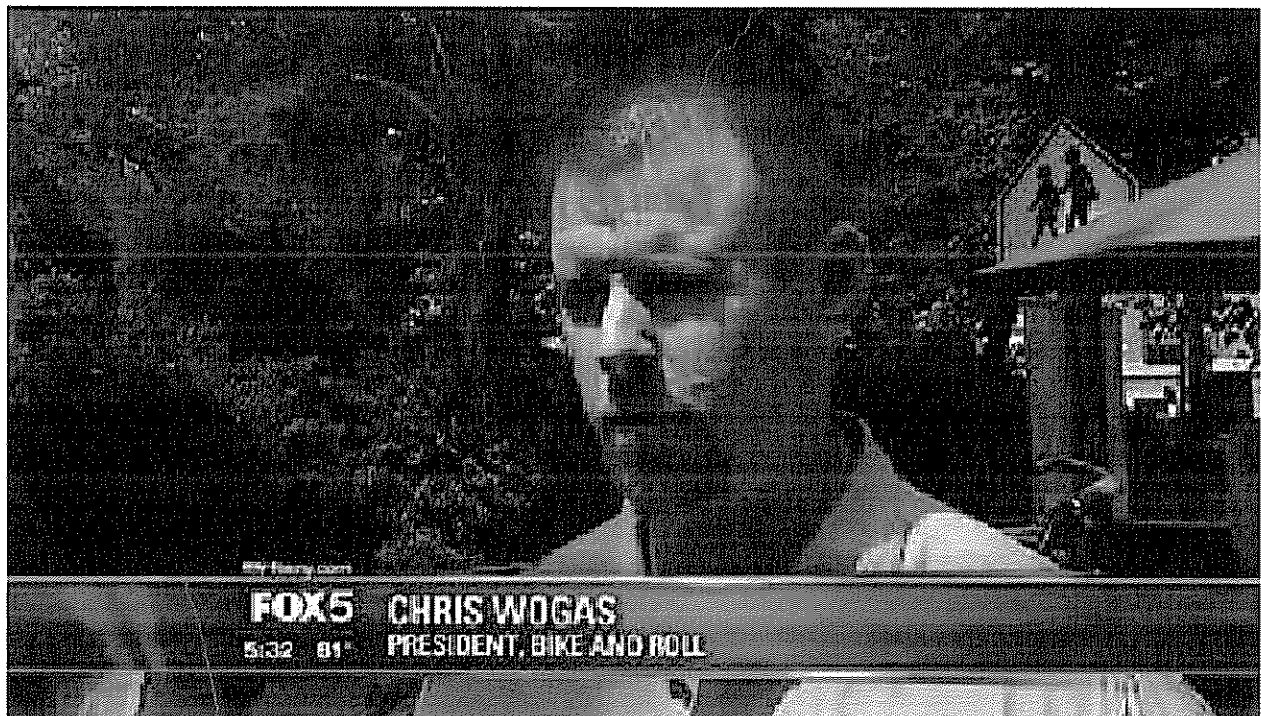
President

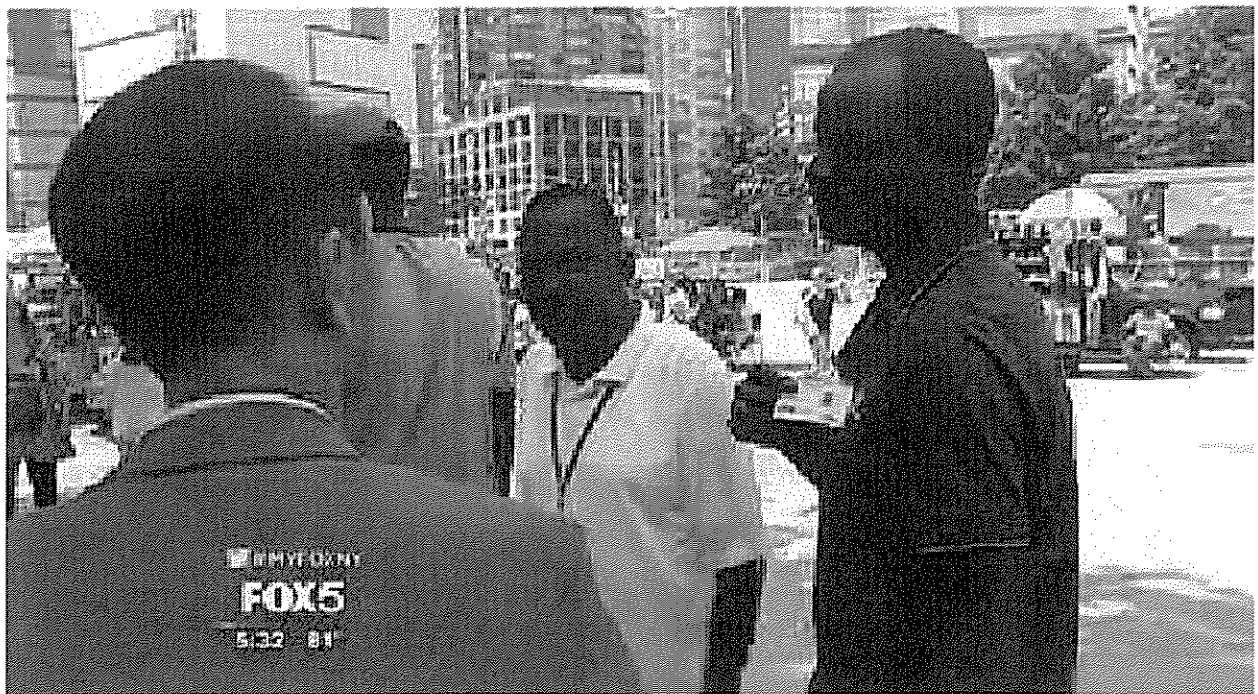
Bike and Roll New York City



Fox 5 News at 5
Viewership: 77,497
WNYW- July 21, 2014

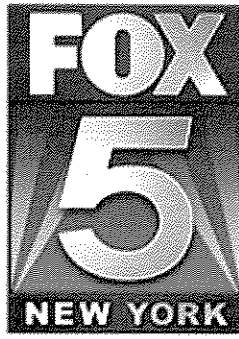












UVPM: 4,461,765

Central Park bike rental war

Jul 21, 2014

By TI-HUA CHANG, Fox 5 News Reporter



NEW YORK (MYFOXNY) - A bicycle rental war is being waged in Central Park by Columbus Circle. Bike and Roll is a Parks Department-sanctioned bike rental with rental booths in the park complete with helmets and bouncer-size security guards. Bike and Roll's president says his employees are being threatened and harassed by non-licensed illegal vendors in the park while they hawk to tourists.

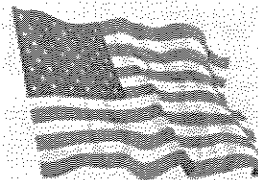
The individual vendors, who appeared to be trying to rent out bicycles using pedicab licenses, were not friendly to us, either.

Bike and Roll believes the individual bike renters pay no taxes on cash sales and that some individuals steal bikes to rent out.

A third group is in the mix. Sales people across the street from Central Park work for the company Bike Rental Central Park. It has a shop two blocks away with cheaper prices than Bike and Roll. They, too, call the individual bike renters illegal vendors.

The executive director of the bicycle advocacy group Transportation Alternatives says Bike and Roll pays taxes and fees for the right to rent bikes out of Central Park and no other vendor does. He says

We contacted the NYPD, Parks Department, and Consumer Affairs. By air time, only the NYPD called us back noting they had arrested some individuals with pedicab licenses for illegally trying to rent out bicycles. But it noted officers can only arrest for harassment when they actually see the harassment.



NEW YORK POST

MONDAY, JULY 21, 2014

Partly sunny, 84°

Weather p. 18

LATE CITY FINAL

nypost.com

Circulation: 477,314

Cycle of violence in park

The illegal bike hawkers who have been duping tourists into renting stolen bikes in Columbus Circle have waged war on the only legitimate bike rental company, violently harassing its workers.

Bike and Roll New York City, the only Central Park bike renter sanctioned by the city, told The Post that the illegal hawkers are so vicious they have threatened to decapitate Bike and Roll's employees.

"They've made threats to follow our staff home, to cut them, to cut their heads off. To hurt them," said marketing manager Nicole Mylonas.

In the past month, staff members have had to call the police at least 20 times on the unruly bike hucksters.

Bike and Roll had to put up one worker in a hotel — where he has been staying for more than a week — after vendors threatened to kill him and then showed up in his neighborhood.

The illegal vendors also circulated his photo around to the other shady bike renters. Since then, the worker has been too terrified to return home.

The harassment has gotten so bad that Bike and Roll has spent \$100,000 on security guards.

"They show pictures of knives, or show pictures of them on a shooting range and say, 'This is what's going to happen to you,'" said Chris Wogas, the company's president.

Larry Celona,
Kevin Fasick
and Rebecca Harshbarger

Threats of 'decapitation' in Central Park bike war

By Larry Celona, Kevin Fasick and Rebecca Harshbarger

July 21, 2014



The illegal bike hawkers that have been duping tourists into renting stolen bikes in Columbus Circle have waged war on the only legitimate bike rental company, violently harassing its workers.

Bike and Roll New York City, the only contractor sanctioned by the city to rent out bikes in Central Park, told the Post that the illegal hawkers are so vicious that they have threatened to decapitate their employees.

"They've made threats to follow our staff home, to cut them, to cut their heads off. To hurt them," said marketing manager Nicole Mylonas. In the past month, staff members have had to call the police at least 20 times on the unruly bike hucksters.

Bike and Roll has even had to put up one worker in a hotel — where he's been staying for more than a week — after vendors threatened to kill him and then showed up in his neighborhood.

The illegal vendors also circulated his photo around to the other shady bike renters. Since then, the worker has been too terrified to return home.

The harassment has gotten so bad that Bike and Roll has spent \$100,000 on security guards to protect their staff.

"They show pictures of knives, or show pictures of them on a shooting range and say, 'this is what's going to happen to you'," said Chris Wogas, the company's president.

On a warm day, there can be as many as 50 illegal vendors menacing workers and tourists, employees said.

Sometimes they even steal bikes from Bike and Roll and try to rent those illegally, Wogas added.

Last year, the Parks Department did an informal survey on how much business Bike and Roll is losing to the illegal vendors — and it estimated they lost \$500,000 a year, according to Wogas.

Virtually every person who goes through the area is asked to rent a bike by a mob of illegal vendors. The vendors harass — whether they work for Bike and Roll, are dressed in a suit, or even have their own bike.

The illegal sellers often create disorder in Columbus Circle by fighting and cursing among each other for business.

"It's awkward and uncomfortable," said Yvonne Norton, 51, a tourist from Canada who didn't want to rent a bike from the group. "I understand people have to make a living, but no should mean no."

One man trying to rent out a bike told a Post reporter that money for bike rentals will be used to help people in West Africa.

"My company is to help the poor," he said, flashing a laminated card with a picture of a horse carriage, pedicab and bicycle.

Tourists told the Post the aggressive vendors take away from the city's friendly vibe.

"You're taking away from what makes the city great, the camaraderie," said Cathie Smythe, 50, also of Canada.

PIX 11 NEWS

PIX 11 News at 5
Viewership: 67,897
WPIX- July 21, 2014



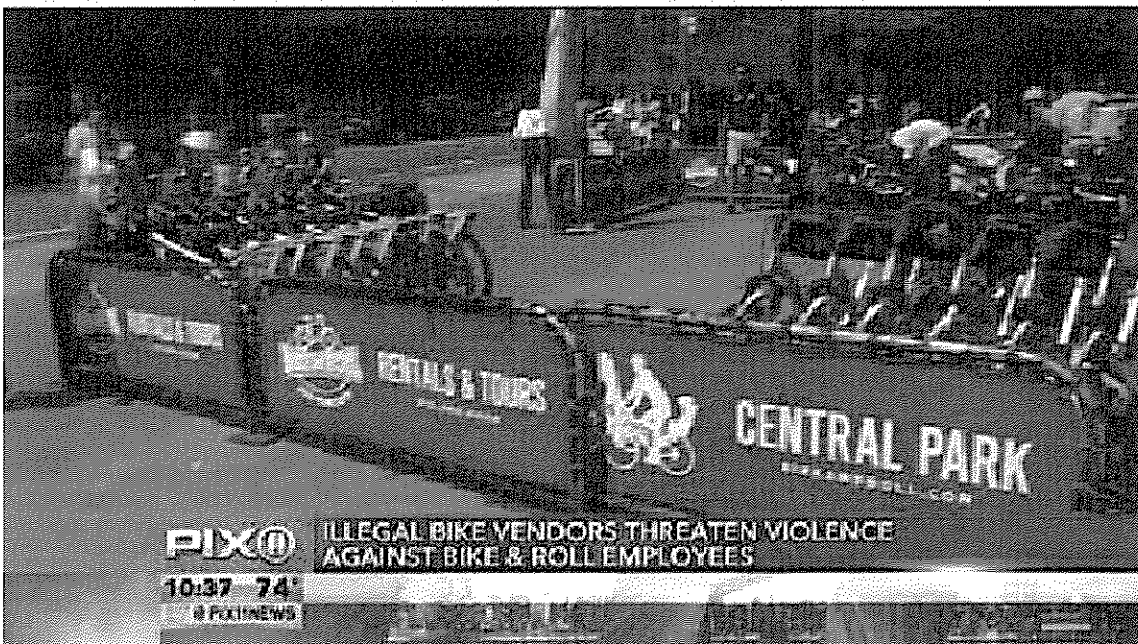






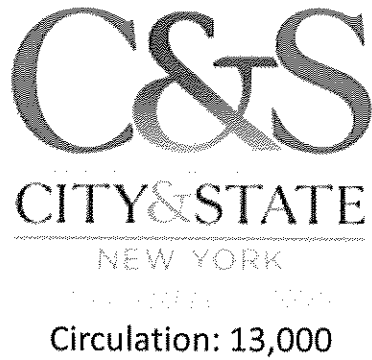
PIX11 NEWS

PIX News at 10
Viewership: 91,777
WPIX- July 21, 2014









MONDAY, JULY 21, 2014

* Illegal bike hawkers have been duping tourists into renting stolen bikes in Columbus Circle and have waged war on the only legitimate bike rental company, violently harassing its workers and costing the city hundreds of thousands of dollars in additional revenue, the New York Post reports:
<http://goo.gl/DbN8qK>

1010 WINS

Cume: 2,351,500

Bike War Brewing In Columbus Circle

July 21, 2014



Bike and roll back in Columbus Circle. (credit: Roger Stern/1010 WINS)

NEW YORK (CBSNewYork) – The operator of bicycle renting kiosks in Columbus Circle claims its employees are routinely being threatened by illegal bike vendors who lease what may be stolen bikes to tourists.

Chris Wogas, president of Bike and Roll New York City, said the illegal bike renters have been physically harassing, intimidating and "following our staff on lunch, trying to get them to send business to them for a kickback."

He claims the threats against his workers keep getting worse.

"Our manager there has been threatened this year alone to be killed numerous times; our head security guard has been threatened with decapitation," Wogas told 1010 WINS' Roger Stern.

<http://goo.gl/qTGCic>

THIS IS HOW NEW YORK WORKS

CAPITAL

UVPM: 213,779

Bratton: 'No change at all' in Broken Windows

By Azi Paybarah

Jul. 22, 2014

The death of Eric Garner while he was being arrested on Staten Island could lead to a retraining of the city's 35,000 officers, police commissioner Bill Bratton said this afternoon.

Garner's death is also likely to bring a federal investigation by the U.S. Attorney's office said Bratton, who disclosed he met with F.B.I. officials in New York to discuss the Garner case.

But Bratton said the NYPD's philosophy of cracking down on quality-of-life and low-level crimes would not change.

"Nope, there is no change in that focus at all," Bratton said when asked about the so-called Broken Windows Theory during a press conference today at police headquarters. "That's a key part of what we're doing."

Bratton said the low-level arrests help deter larger crimes, citing a number of recent complaints about “illegal” bike-rental operations in Central Park.

“I can guarantee if we were not to address, for example, that issue in Central Park, you won’t be able to get in that park in a couple of weeks because there’ll be so many other illegal vendors operating there,” he said.

Bratton also spoke about the NYPD’s “Summer All Out” program, meant to curb violence in a handful of problematic neighborhoods where crime has spiked. Ten precincts throughout the city will get additional patrols: four in the Bronx, five in Brooklyn and one in Queens, an NYPD official told reporters.

The goal for the department right now, Bratton said, is to strike a “balance” between the “intensified focus” in those high-crime areas while also helping the “other areas of the city that are still very concerned with quality-of-life or Broken Windows-type of activities. If left undeterred, [they] raise concerns, and tend to proliferate.”

Bratton focused much of his remarks on the potential re-training.

“How do our officers train to take people down? How do we take them into custody? I want to see that first-hand,” Bratton said. He’ll receive a demonstration on that training material next week, he said.

The commissioner described what’s in store as a “top-to-bottom review of all of our training,” saying there will be “a lot of emphasis on officers understanding the discretion they have.”

"I'm not looking for arrests. I'm not looking for summonses. I'm not looking for 250, stop-question-and-frisk reports. What I'm looking for is quality, not quantity. And by quality, I mean having a problem successfully addressed. If it requires an arrest, fine. But if it only requires an admonish[ment]—'move along, you can't do that'—well, I want to ensure our officers that they're given great powers of discretion and I'm not measuring success by numbers of arrests. I'm measuring success by whether crime goes down. Are corners cleared of complaints? ... Those are the measures the training will be designed to achieve."

Critics have said Garner's death should lead to a "reexamination" of Broken Windows, and this afternoon, several City Council members suggested that strategy of policing contributed to Garner's harsh treatment, along with the fact that he was black.

"I personally don't think that race was a factor," Bratton said in response to those remarks.

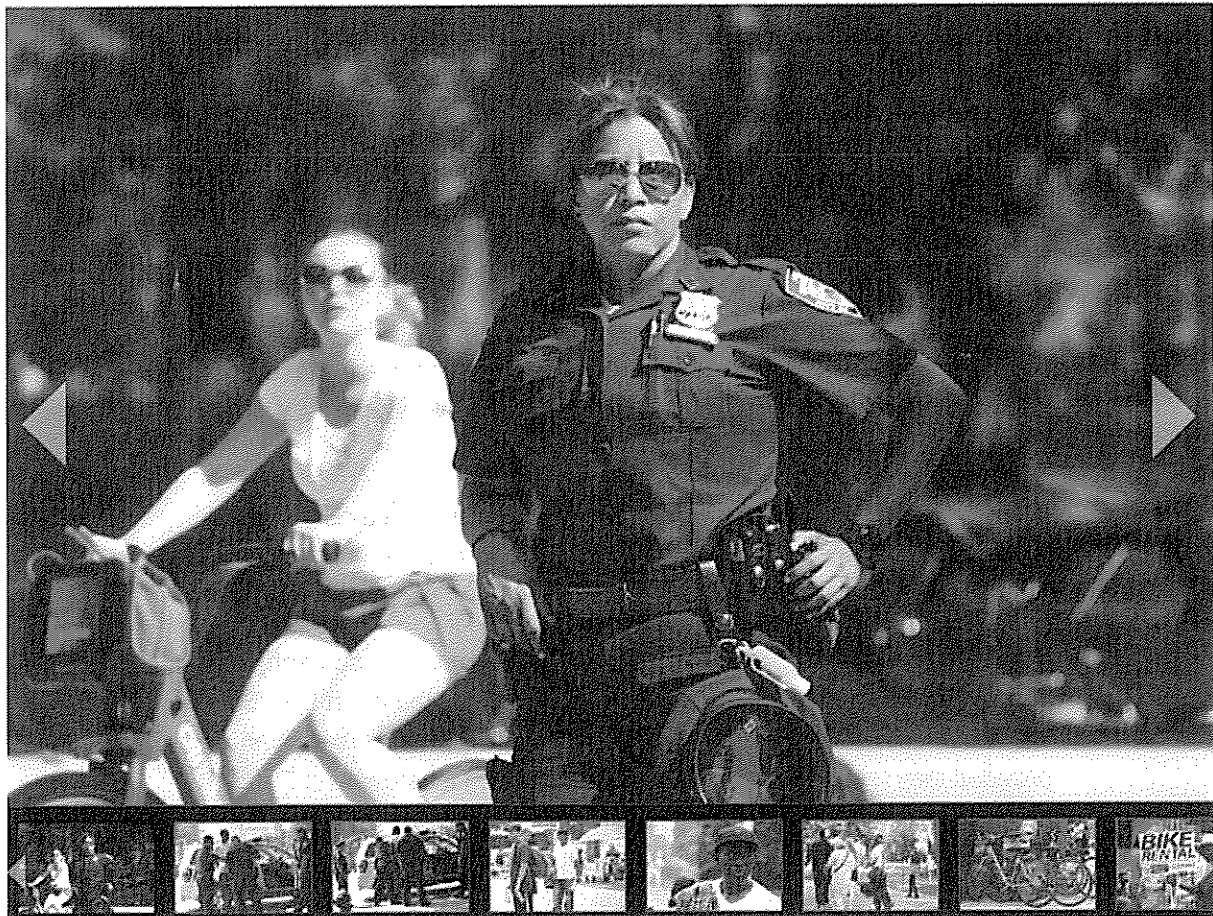
UVPM: 1,013,879

Tensions High as Bike Vendors Battle for Turf at Central Park

Licensed bike vendors at Columbus Circle face threats by roaming vendors who can be desperate to win customers

By Brendon Fallon, Epoch Times | July 25, 2014

Last Updated: July 24, 2014 7:41 pm



NEW YORK—Chances are, if you've worn a backpack, carried a camera, or opened a collapsible map while walking Columbus Circle's gritty pavement on a summer day, you've been intercepted by at least one roaming bicycle or pedicab vendor intent on securing your patronage.

At the bustling gateway to Central Park, more than 40 roaming bike renters of varying age, temperament, and ethnicity compete to flaunt their brightly lettered signs and pamphlets.

On Monday a New York Post article reported that "illegal bike hawkers" were threatening the employees of licensed bike renter, Bike and Roll. Epoch Times set out to investigate the claim.

Bike and Roll's President Chris Wogas confirmed the company's general manager is presently seeking a restraining order against one particular vendor who threatened to follow him home. The vendor has threatened Bike and Roll's GM on numerous occasions according to company spokesman Joshua Knoller. He added that restraining orders were also enacted for the company's two previous GMs in response to the threatening behavior from two roaming vendors.

The Department of Parks and Recreation also confirmed Bike and Roll is the only bicycle vending company licensed to operate at Columbus Circle. The company's licensing arrangement came into effect in 2012 and extends to 2016. Bike and Roll pays a minimum of \$17,000 per year, or up to 15 percent of its revenue to rent bikes there.

Yet, on visiting the Columbus Circle entrance to Central Park, it becomes apparent that the division between legal and illegal bike vendor is less than distinct.

The majority of roaming vendors are paid on commission by Bike Rental Central Park, located on West 57th Street, two blocks from the hub of vendor activity.

Operating like scouts, Bike Rental Central Park's vendors approach, engage, and escort patrons from Columbus Circle to the West 57th Street outlet. This is legal, said the outlet's 24-year-old manager, Jose Payano, provided they remain on the park's perimeter. The Department of Parks and Recreation, as detailed in its Prohibited Uses regulations, holds a different view. From the regulations the department's understanding is that any commercial activity or solicitation of money, without permit is prohibited within the Department's jurisdiction, which extends to the Park's paved entrance bordering Columbus Circle.

Be that as it may, unlicensed vending continues, largely unimpeded and often in full view of NYPD officers. According to one Bike Rental Central Park vendor who identified himself only as Tom, police target unlicensed vendors intermittently as a token measure. The 39-year-old, who said that he's been arrested on misdemeanor and violation of local law charges, added that judges are not interested in prosecuting unauthorized bike renters. "They let the cop get the arrest for his stats," he said, but the charges are dismissed in court because judges don't want to "clog up" jails with bike vendors.

Threats?

Wogas said the NYPD under Police Commissioner William Bratton has improved its responsiveness to threats against his staff, although it appears to be intermittent. The number of threats has also risen, he said, adding it "seems to be a bee sting that gets them [those making threats] riled up even more."

The NYPD did not return requests for comment about illegal bike vending at Columbus Circle.

A Bike Rental Central Park vendor known only as Ivory, said the allegations of widespread threats against Bike and Roll staff were hard to believe. "Most of the people doing this are not harassing nobody," said Ivory, who has vended at Columbus Circle since 2009.

"We were here before them," Ivory said of Bike and Roll. When Bike and Roll came, the police began more stringently enforcing anti-solicitation regulations, he added.

Congenial exchanges were observed between some Bike and Roll staff and roaming vendors. In general, the various Columbus Circle crews seem to coexist in relative harmony.

Tom, vending beside Ivory, said that some Bike and Roll staff and roaming vendors are "friends." "But it's business," he added, which brings tensions.

Central Park tour guide, Steve Howson said that it is "not the norm" for roaming bike vendors to make threats against Bike and Roll staff, "but it only takes one or two bad apples to give everyone a bad rap."

Howson, who said that he had worked for Bike and Roll as its first Columbus Circle manager for three years, added that Bike and Roll had taken business away from the area's original vendors. At the same time he acknowledged that he and other staff had been on the receiving end of threats during his tenure as manager. "We had police security when we started because of intimidation issues." We had high school kids working for us over the summer, he said, "it bothered them, which bothered me."

Pedicabs

Stationed along the first 100 yards of the Central Park driveway entrance at Columbus Circle exists a third faction of Columbus Circle vendors: Pedicab permit holders.

The members of this group are known for sometimes vying aggressively with one another for customers. On Tuesday five to six permit holders were seen crowding four elderly female tourists and arguing intently over whose pedicab the women should patronize. Eventually the women walked away, while imploring the men to stop fighting.

"I don't feel safe walking through there," said fellow pedicab vendor Michael Alvarez of the Central Park Driveway entrance. Alvarez, a 19-year-old Columbia University student, operates a pedicab over the summer break. "They're happy if they make \$200 a day," he said. "I'm happy if I make \$100. For me it's just a summer job; for them, it's milk—they just want to buy milk for their kids."

At 11:40 a.m. on Tuesday just beside Bike and Roll's Columbus Circle West outlet, a young man in the company of other roaming vendors was seen being apprehended by police. He was identified by a police spokeswoman as 21-year-old Mahamadou Soukoua, charged with "violating local law." The police arrested Soukoua, the spokeswoman said, when they observed him unlawfully soliciting bicycles and pedicabs without a Department of Consumer Affairs license.

Veteran roaming vendor Ivory said police had put him in lock up on several occasions. "I've been applying for jobs for about a year, but nothing's come up," he said. "Most guys out here don't have jobs—It's a way to make a couple of bucks to make ends meet."

Additional reporting by David Ahern

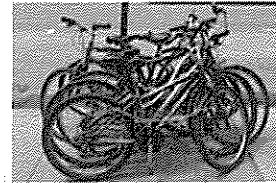
NATIONAL REVIEW ONLINE

UVPM: 6,760,252

De Blasio's NYC: Illegal Bike-Rental Thugs Threaten to Decapitate the Competition

Via New York Post:

The illegal bike hawkers who have been duping tourists into renting stolen bikes in Columbus Circle have waged war on the only legitimate bike rental company, violently harassing its workers.

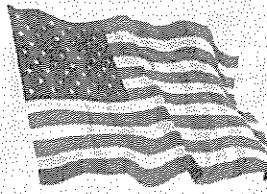


Bike and Roll New York City, the only Central Park bike renter sanctioned by the city, told The Post that the illegal hawkers are so vicious, they have threatened to decapitate Bike and Roll's employees.

"They've made threats to follow our staff home, to cut them, to cut their heads off. To hurt them," said marketing manager Nicole Mylonas.

In the past month, staff members have had to call the police at least 20 times on the unruly bike hucksters. . .

We'll hear, "Rudy Giuliani for Mayor" soon enough. - Greg Pollowitz



Circulation: 477,314

Bike wars get uglier at Central Park

By REBECCA HARSHBARGER
Transit Reporter

Rogue bike vendors continue to menace Columbus Circle — as a series of disturbing new videos has captured them brawling, battling and even assaulting cops.

Months after a Post exposé prompted authorities to start cracking down on the unlicensed bicycle renters, the new footage shows little progress has been made toward fully stopping the two-wheeled menaces near Central Park.

One video, made on Oct. 5, captures a brazen hawker scuffling with a Parks Department officer — whom the thug puts in a headlock before NYPD officers arrive and make an arrest.

In a second video, an illegal bike renter slugs another across the face. The victim falls to the ground and is smacked back down as he tries to get up.

A third video shows the same man who was beaten in the second video getting into yet another scuffle. Blood can be seen flowing down his face.

The cellphone videos were made by staff of Bike and Roll NYC, which has a legal contract that allows it to be the only company to rent out bicycles in the area.

"They're fighting for business," said Chris Wogas, the company's president.

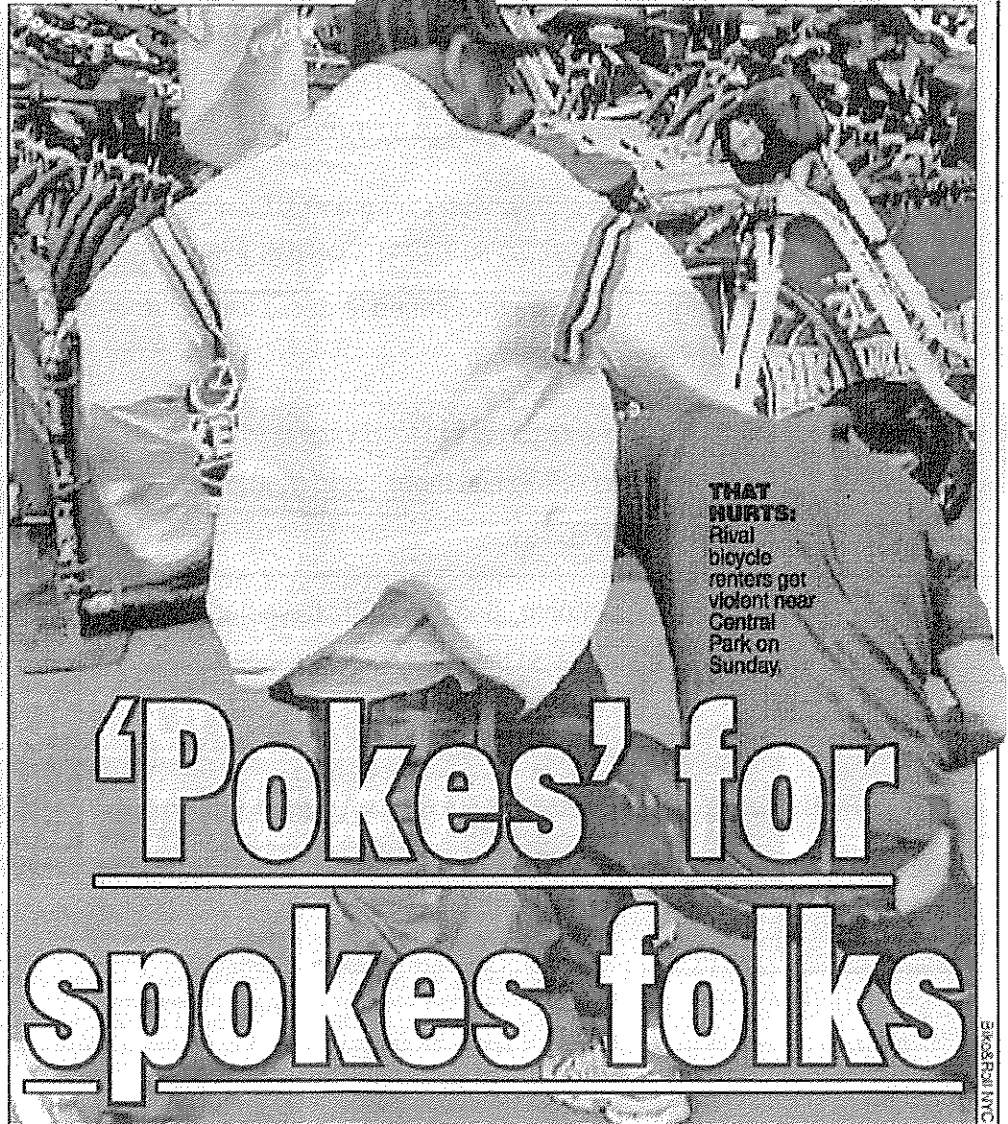
Police sources told The Post that the bicycle-renting hucksters aren't only unlicensed, the are vending stolen bikes.

"They fight, they push, they yell in front of each other in front of everyone in Columbus Circle — whether it's a local walking home or a tourist," Wogas said.

After the Post reported in July on how violent the vendors are, the Parks Department and NYPD stepped up enforcement against illegal activity in Columbus Circle.

There is now usually at least one Parks Department officer during the daytime to shoo away illegal vendors, according to Wogas. Also, more of the illegal vendors have been seen getting tickets.

But, the bike hustlers have still not been fully deterred from



THAT HURTS: Rival bicycle renters got violent near Central Park on Sunday.

'Pokes' for spokes folks

showing up and making trouble as they try to get cash from unsuspecting tourists.

"Unless you're there 24/7, they turn into an angry mob," Wogas said. "They constantly keep trying to come back. They've not given up. We'd love to see the problem gone."

Wogas' company spends about \$100,000 a year on security guards

to protect its staffers from the illegal vendors, who have threatened to kill them.

The Post first revealed how the illegal vendors have menaced legit workers by showing them pictures of weapons — and threatening to cut off their heads.

The company says it has caught hawkers stealing Bike and Roll bikes

and trying to rent them illegally.

The rogue vendors target out-of-towners, using customers' IDs as collateral and offering an hourly rate that is typically haggled.

"It goes to the image that people think New York is rough," said Wogas. "It's hard when that's what they see."

rharshbarger@nypost.com

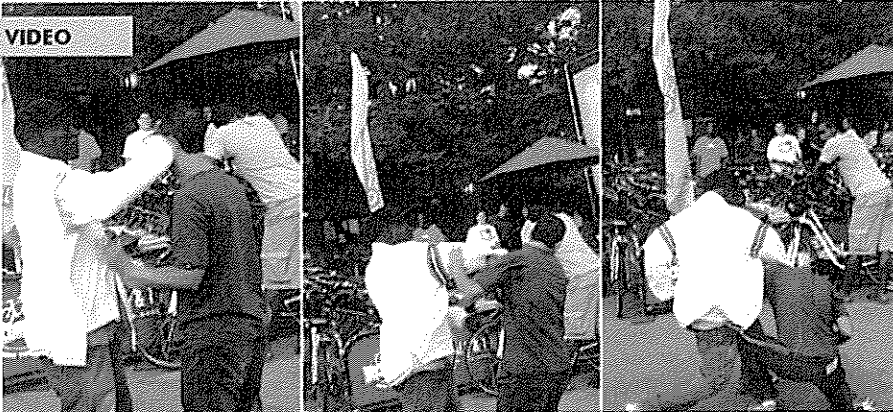
NEW YORK POST®

UVPM: 12,937,285

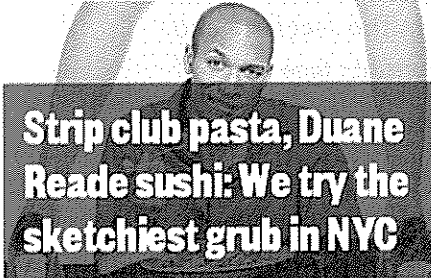
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VIDEO




Central Park's brawling bike vendors



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UVPM: 12,937,285

Central Park's brawling bike vendors

By Rebecca Marshbarger

October 20, 2014

Rogue bike vendors continue to menace Columbus Circle — and a series of disturbing new videos has captured them brawling, battling and even assaulting cops.

Months after a Post exposé prompted authorities to start cracking down on the unlicensed bicycle renters, the new footage shows little progress has been made toward fully stopping the two-wheeled menaces near Central Park.

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In a second video, one illegal bike renter slugs another in the face. The victim falls to the ground and is smacked back down as he tries to get up.

A shocking third video shows the same man who was beaten in the second video getting into yet another scuffle. Blood can be seen flowing down his face.

The violent cellphone videos were taken by staff of a company called Bike and Roll NYC, which has a contract that allows it to be the only company to rent out bicycles in the area.

"They're fighting for business," said Chris Wogas, the company's president.

Police sources told The Post that the bicycle-renting hucksters aren't only unlicensed, they are vending stolen bikes.

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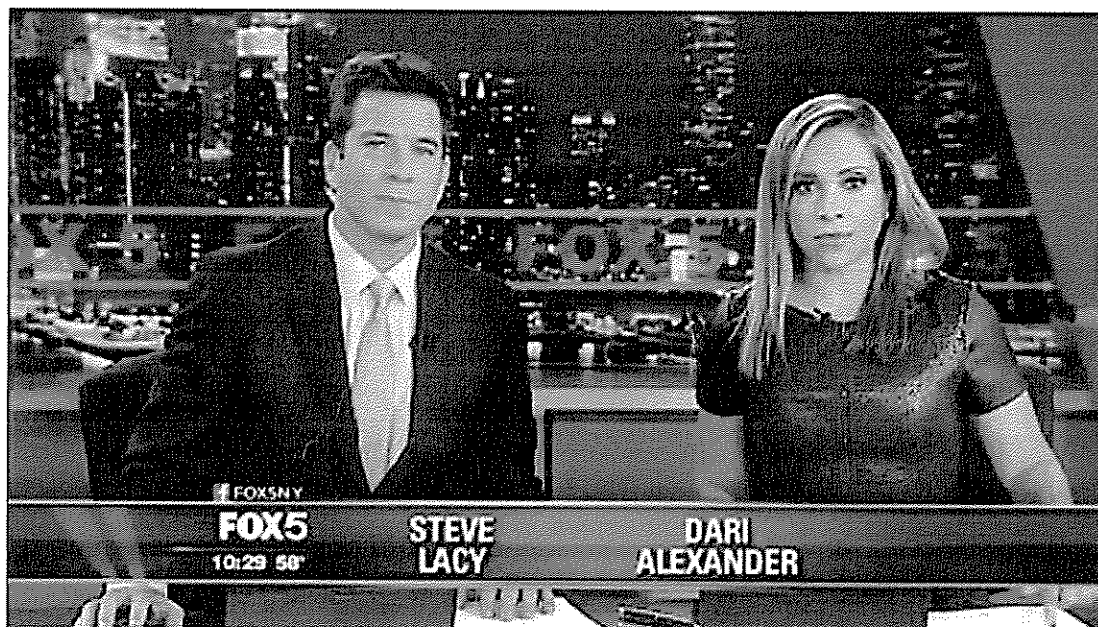


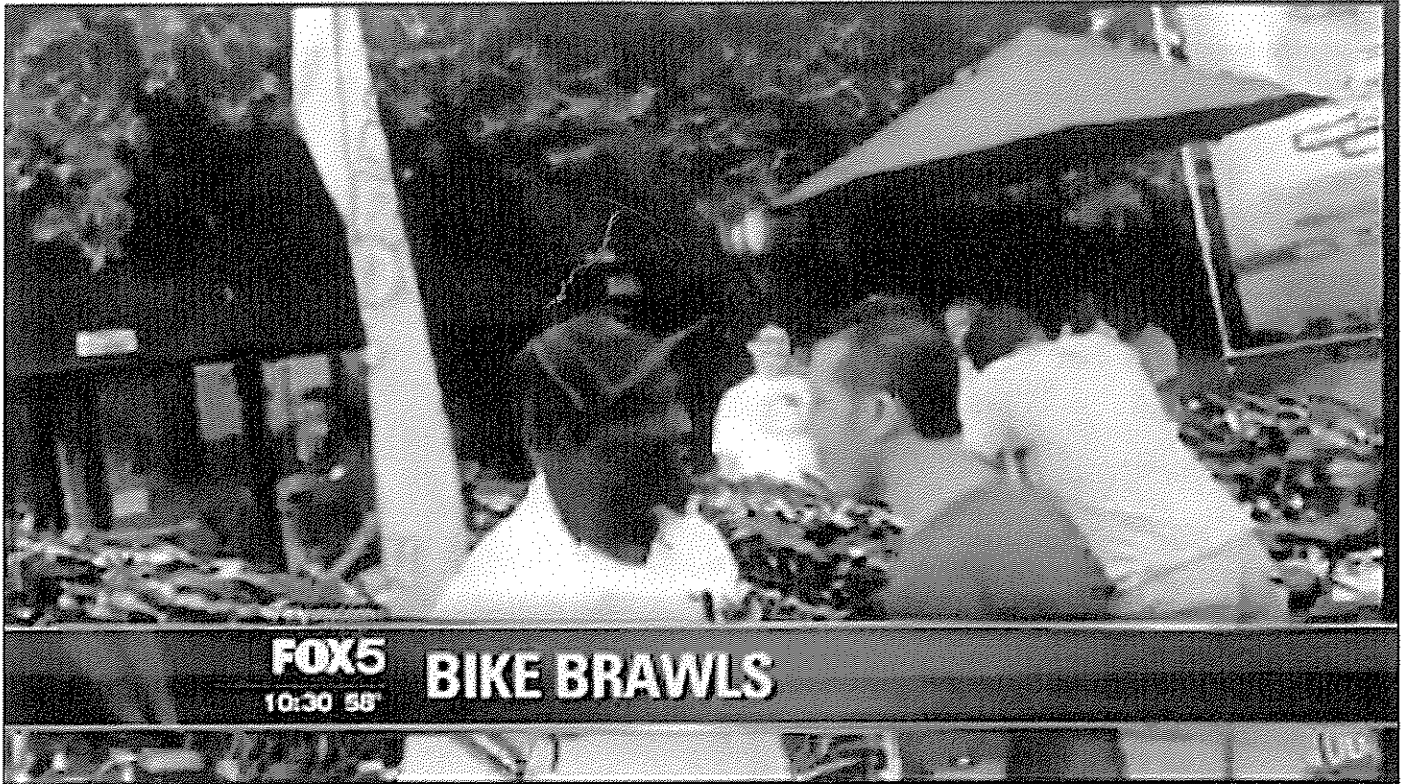
These bikes may be stolen. Thieves lock them up and rent them to tourists.

Photo: James Messerschmidt



WNYW-TV Fox 5 News at 10
Viewership: 265,089
October 20, 2014- 10:29PM

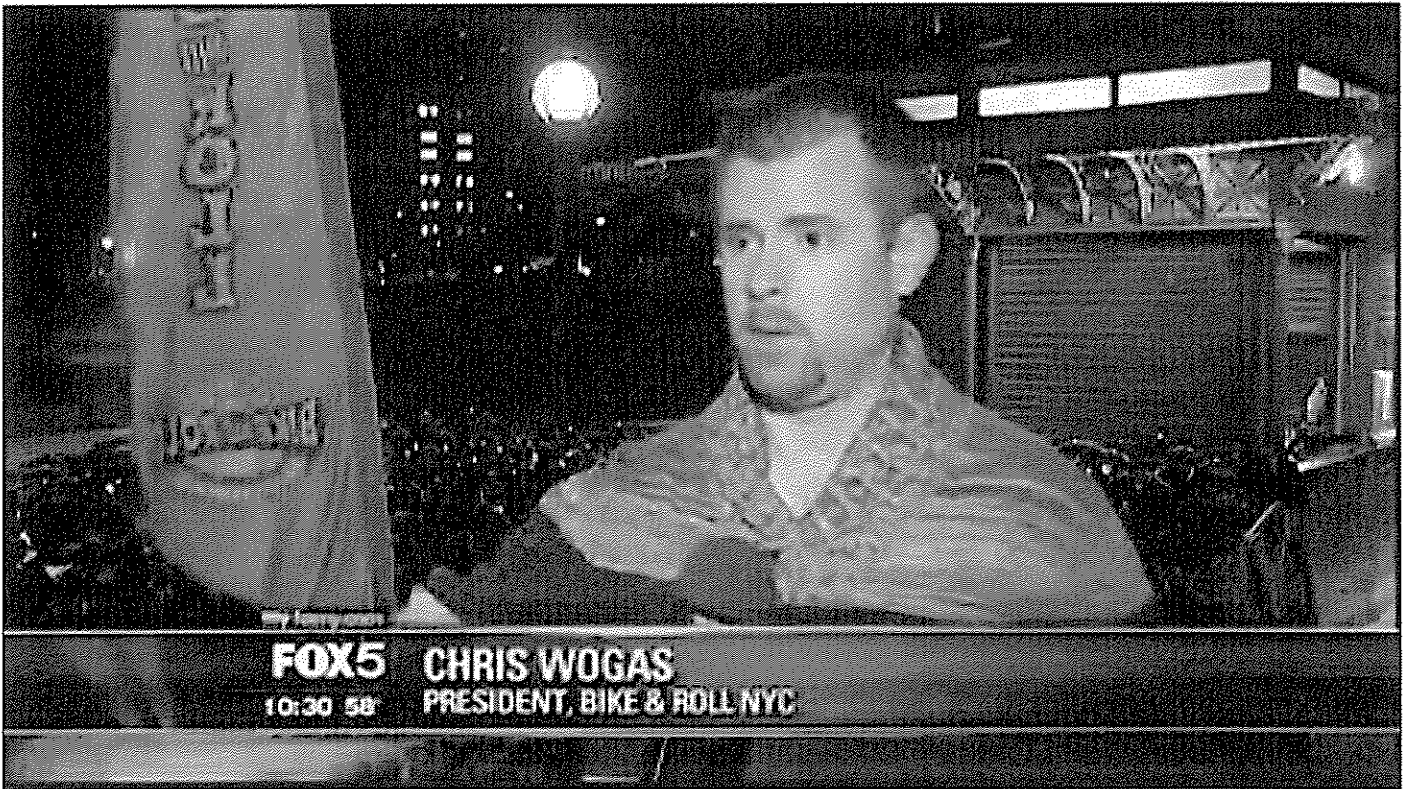




FOX5

10:30 58°

BIKE BRAWLS

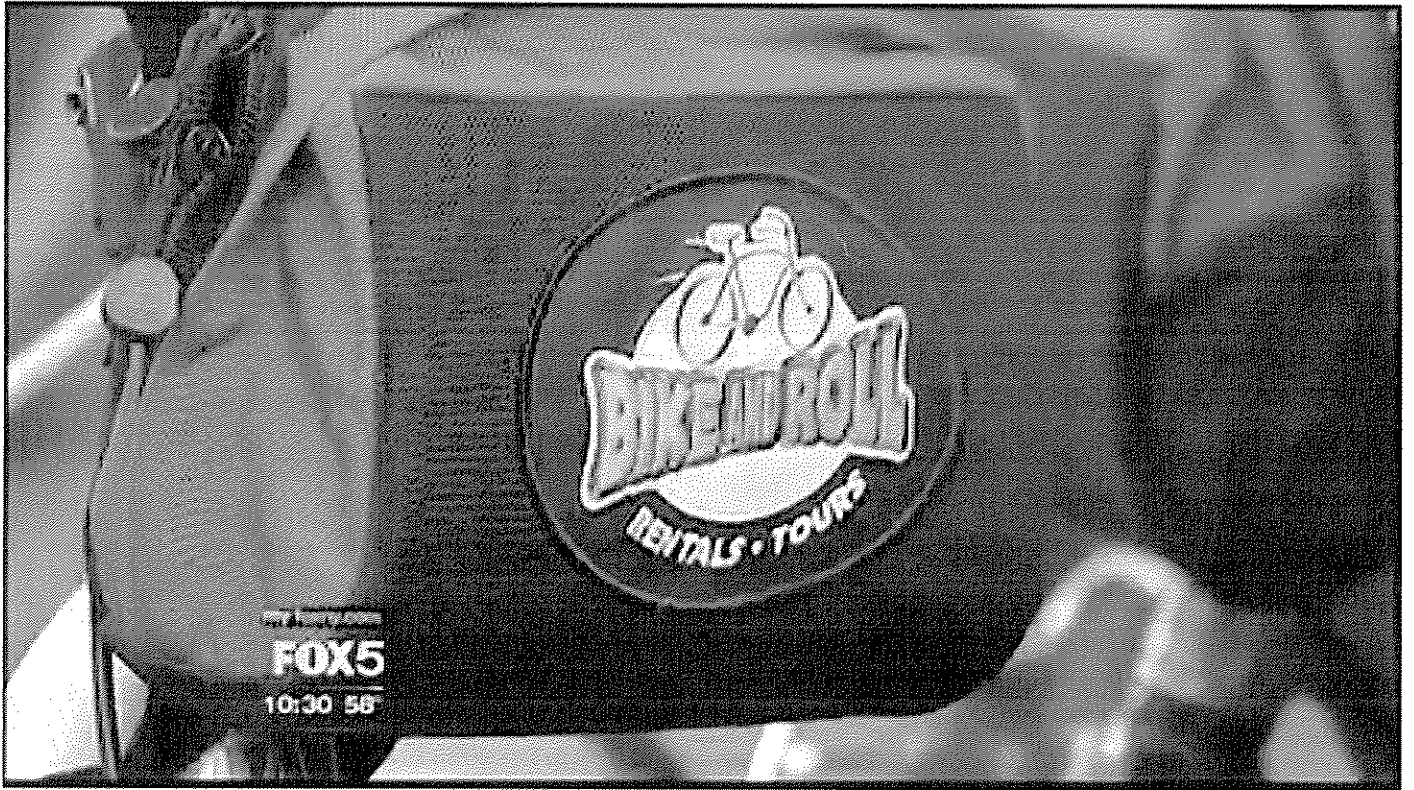


FOX5

10:30 58°

CHRIS WOGAS

PRESIDENT, BIKE & ROLL NYC





UVPM: 908,483

Central Park bike rental vendors brawl

Oct 20, 2014

By ARTHUR CHI'EN

NEW YORK (MYFOXNY) - New York City isn't a stranger to hustles. Of the latest to come up, illegal bike rentals in Columbus Circle might have gone unnoticed if not for how ugly it has gotten. The word ugly might even be too light to describe it. Criminal at times, the illegal bike rental hustles have led to beat downs, in some cases drawing blood.



Even a Parks Department enforcement officer was placed in a headlock in one scuffle involving an illegal vendor.

Bike and Roll NYC is the only company allowed to rent bikes in Central Park. As we were getting ready to interview Chris Wogas, Bike and Roll's president, some guy offered us a bike rental.

Wogas and others out told us the illegal vendors are sometimes disguised as pedicab salesmen, offering tourists bikes if they turn down pedicabs. Their bikes are stashed in bunches a few blocks away.

Promoters didn't want to talk to us about what they're up to. At least two dozen were out there Monday lying low from a visible number of Parks Department officers on hand to watch over them.

But the underneath the peace here the threats continue.

Wogas said someone even followed one of his employees home.

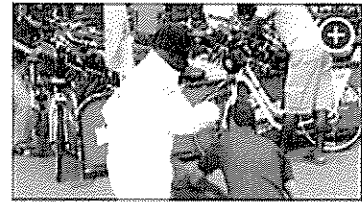
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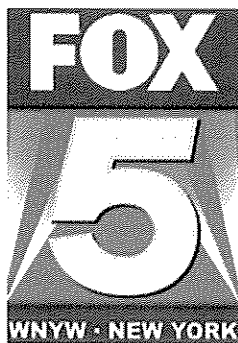
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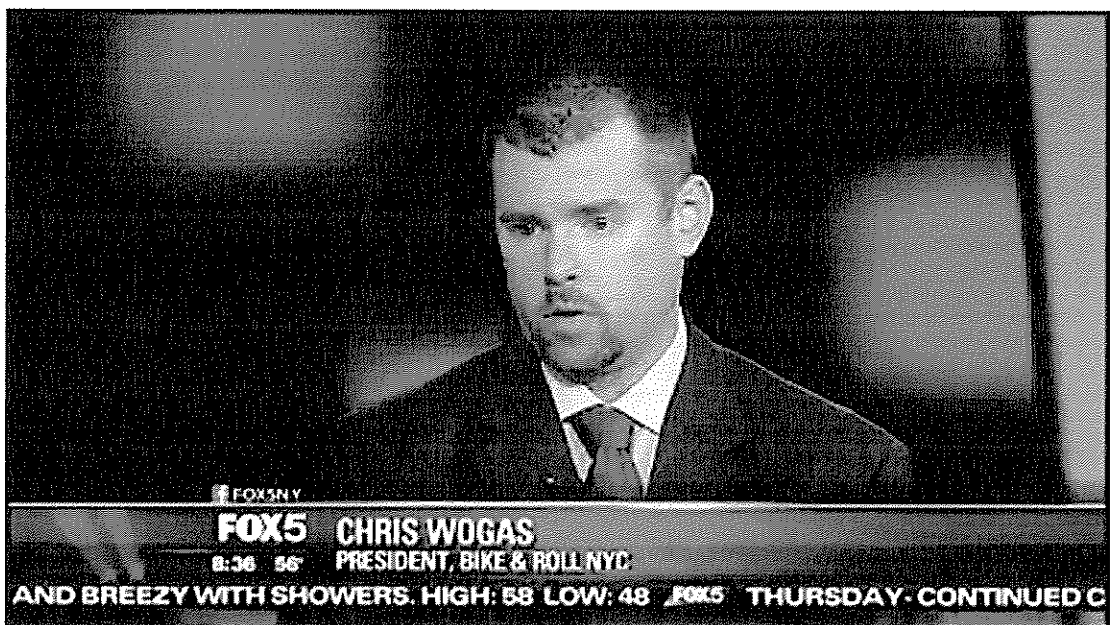
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WNYW-TV Good Day New York

Viewership: 55,480

October 21, 2014- 8:36 AM

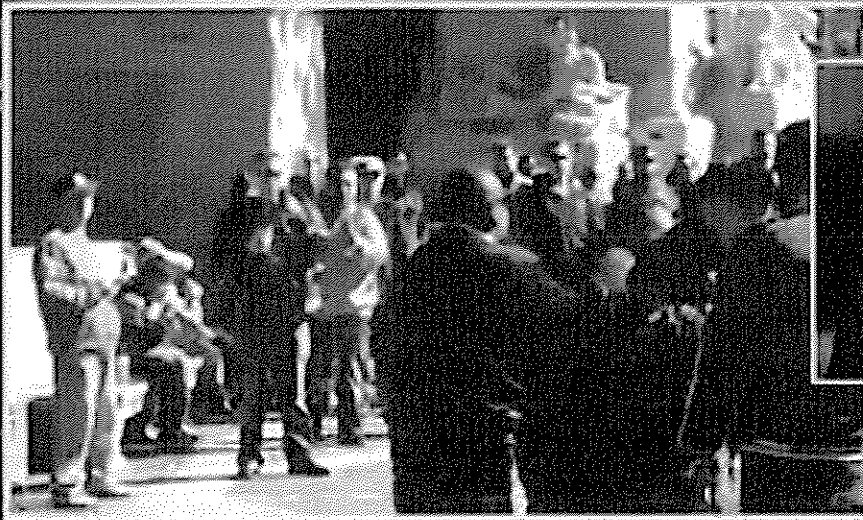




FOX5 **BIKE BRAWLS**

8:36 56°

CONTINUED CLOUDY AND COOL WITH SHOWERS. HIGH: 58 LOW: 51 FOX5 FRIDAY-CL

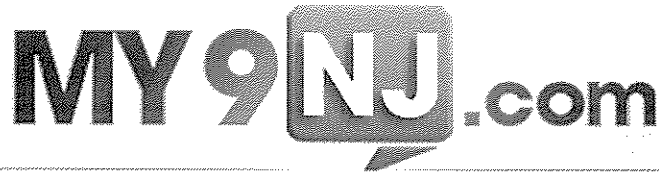


FOX5NY

FOX5 **UNLICENSED BIKE RENTERS**
ACCUSED OF STARTING FIGHTS

8:37 56°

DEATH RULED HOMICIDE FOX5 NYPD WILL DISTRIBUTE PHOTOS OF SUSPECTS IN



UVPM: 83,152

Bike wars in Central Park

By Bill Anderson

Oct 23, 2014

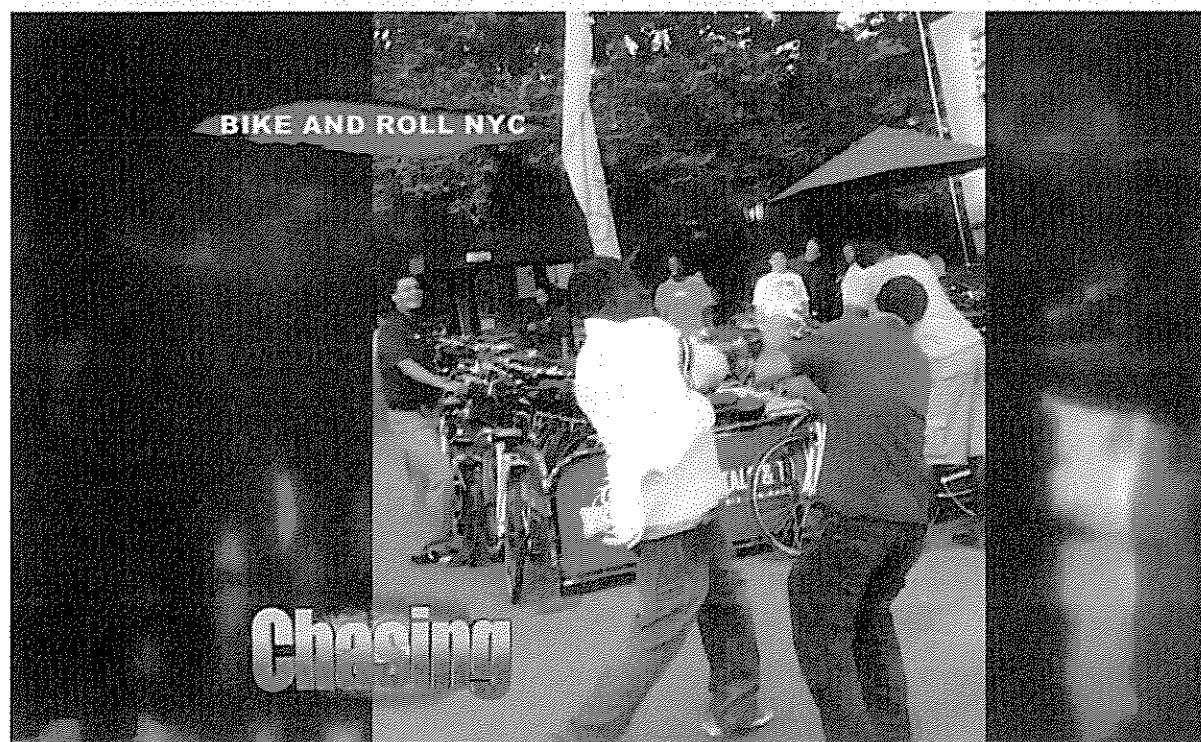
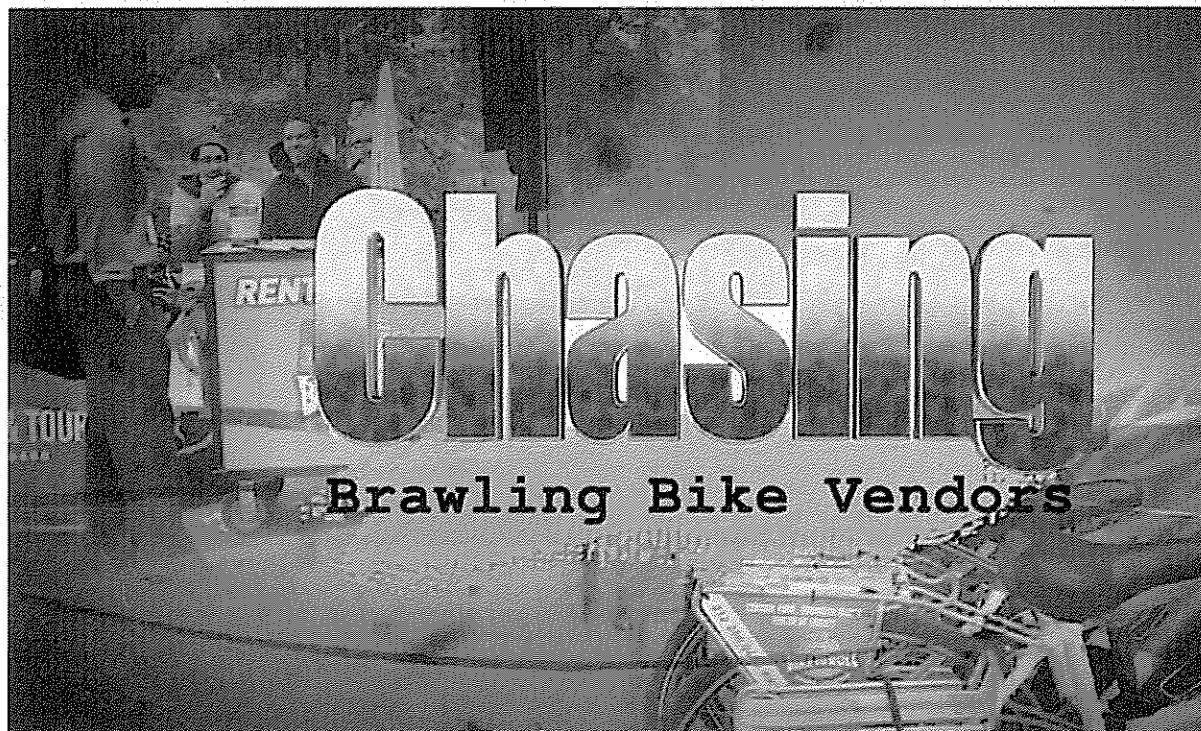
New York, New York (My9NJ) - There's a turf war going on around Central Park in Manhattan, it involves fights and cash profit but contrary to what everyone may be thinking its not over drugs or even gangs; it's over bike rentals.

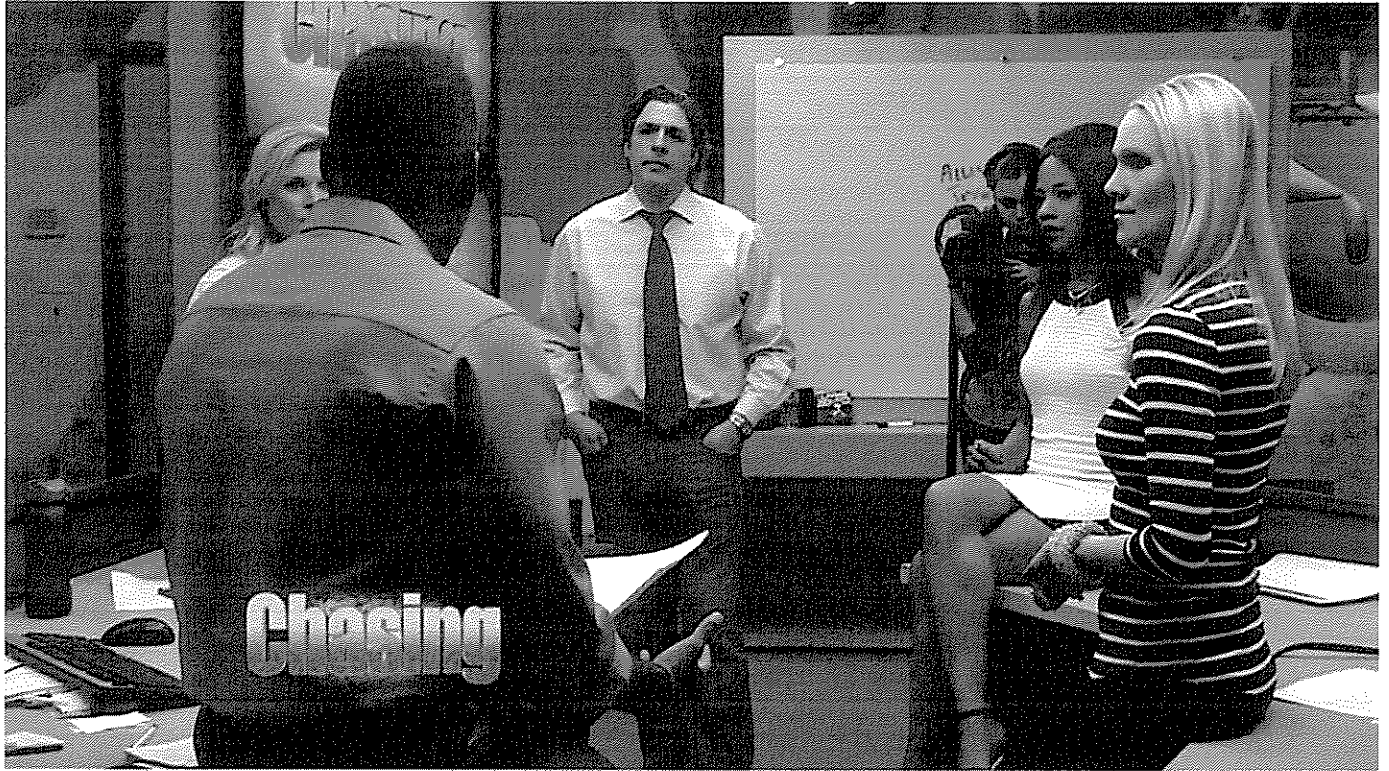
Illegal vendors have been caught on camera fighting with each other over territory. Its gotten so bad that the illegal companies are on every corner, openly competing with the one licensed company Bike & Roll whose president says they regularly have to deal with serious violent threats.

During the time I was there the illegal rental companies boldly approached everyone who walked by. They have no insurance or safety equipment and are rumored to be renting stolen bikes. I asked Bike and Roll's owner why has bike rental gotten so serious, he said the illegal vendors may not be dealing drugs but some are making similar profits.

Obviously the illegal vendors didn't want to answer questions but after I was done interviewing Bike & Roll's owner a young illegal vendor came up and asked why what he was doing was illegal. He listened to the explanation but directed back to work.

Bike and Roll pays significant insurance costs and tax revenue to the city but told me that unless something changes they can't keep paying six figures in security costs along with all the other legitimate business fees to be in the middle of a violent turf war and they may actually be the ones to pack up and leave.







Good afternoon Council Members, my name is Neile Weissman, President of New York Cycle Club. Two items I would bring to the Council's attention:

Issue #1 - Putnam Trail

First is the effort by the Parks Department, the Bronx TA Activist Committee, New York Cycle Club, and advocates from around the city to connect the Bronx greenway system to the North-South County Trailway -- a flat, traffic-free, forty six mile, shared use path that winds south through Putnam and Westchester through parks, wetlands and nature preserves and reservoirs -- before dead-ending at the muddy remnant of the Putnam Railway in Van Cortlandt Park.

As is, the path is encroached with chemically treated railroad ties and is unride-able after a storm. But there's no other way for average cyclists to access the Trailway from the Bronx. The access roads in Yonkers are hilly and high traffic.

The Parks plan would open up this incredible facility to cyclists of all skill levels as well as wheelchair users, parents with strollers, walkers and runners. Combined with initiatives in Yonkers led by Groundwork Hudson Valley, the Putnam Trail will truly serve as the backbone of strong, accessible bicycle connections between the city and our neighbors to the north and comprise an amenity for the entire region.

Issue #2 - George Washington Bridge

- Over the coming decade, Port Authority will replace all 592 suspender cables. Because the existing paths will have to be ripped out and reinstalled to access the anchors, we have a once-in-a-lifespan opportunity to expand the 6' 9" paths into a facility compliant with national guidelines for a high use. One capable of sustaining growth of regional bicycle travel throughout the century.

- The GWB is the sole bike-able connector between North Jersey and New York City; together projected to invest \$2 billion dollars over the next 20 years in their respective bike networks.

- The facility connects the two most heavily cycled roads in the country: Hudson Greenway and Route 9W and attracts cyclist from around the region.

- It is incredibly crowded. Traffic counts are already above five hundred users per hour. These are East River numbers and well above the three hundred user per hour threshold for high use.

- For Port Authority to create a dual 14' facility is entirely consistent with guidance from Federal Highways Administration, US Department of Transportation, American Association of State and Highway Traffic Officers -- even Port Authority's own Bicycle Master Plan.

- If it is not done, cyclists will wind up with a single 6.75 path, which will inevitable degrade to a walk-only status, effectively crippling the growth of bi-state cycling through the rest of the century.

I therefore urge this Council to support both initiatives. Thank you.

Neile Weissman,
President, New York Cycle Club
neileweissman@gmail.com

Putnam Trail

North-South County Trailway

<http://parks.westchestergov.com/trailways>

Plan would give Bronx Park more spark - NY Daily News

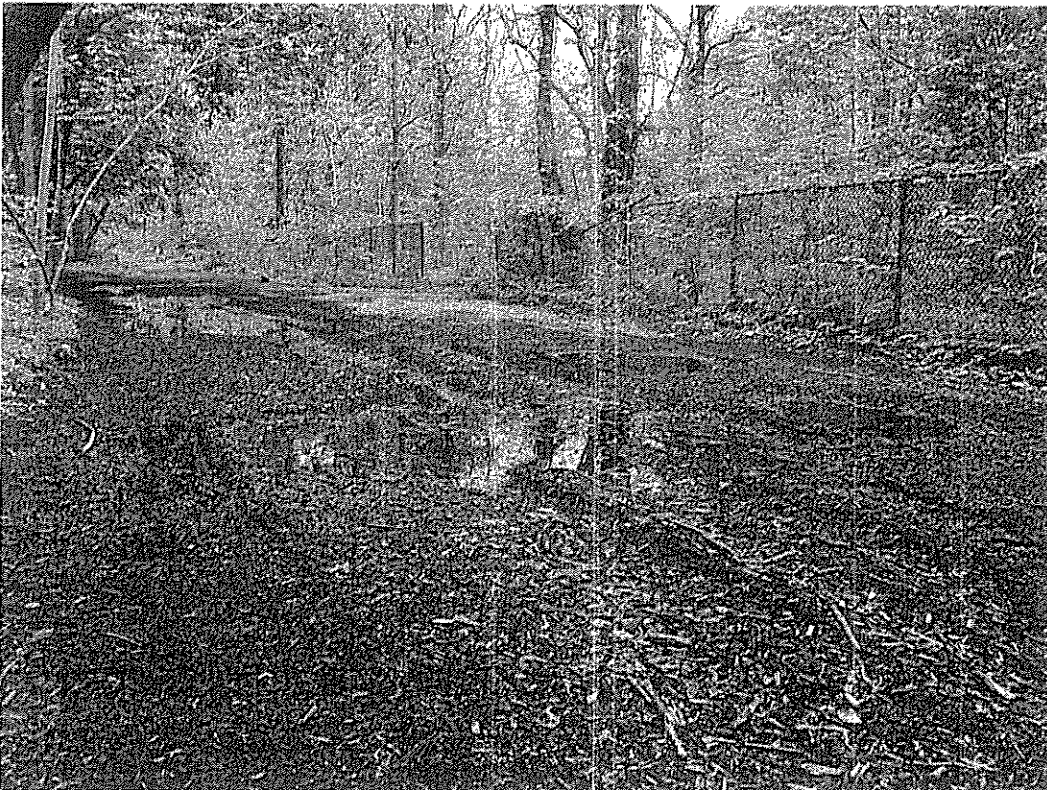
<http://nydn.us/QKDsSW>

Van Cortlandt Park Master Plan

<http://www.nycgovparks.org/park-facilities/van-cortlandt-park/master-plan>



North County Trailway at Yorktown Heights.



Existing Putnam Trail in Van Cortlandt Park after a rain storm.

George Washington Bridge

Needs - applying FHWA criteria to grade current-proposed GWB facilities over 10-25-40 years
<http://completegeorge.org/needs/>

Benefits - benefits to the region, organized along US DOT TIGER criteria
<http://completegeorge.org/benefits/>

USDOT - US Department of Transportation guidance to traffic agencies on biking and walking
<http://completegeorge.org/needs/1014-dot/>

Half the Road - non-motorists pay half the cost of roads -- whether we get to use them or not!
<http://completegeorge.org/needs/1114-half-the-road/>

A Controversial Planned GWB Pedestrian Lane Attracts Critics - Bergen Record
<http://tinyurl.com/pf179u>



Port Authority rendering of the South Path would look like. 6.75' between the cables.



Williamsburg Bridge. Two 14' paths. One for cyclists on North. One for pedestrians on the South.

Joanna Oltman Smith
646-279-9160
jo@nycsmith.com

Testimony Before New York City Council Transportation Committee
Leading the Way for Bicycling
November 20, 2014

As New Yorkers, we are fortunate to have many transportation options. I personally choose to make as many trips a week as I can on my bike, because it is convenient, healthy, affordable, fun, and efficient. When I leave my house on my bike, I know what time I will arrive at my destination — no service delays, traffic jams, or even natural disasters can delay me for long. My bike is the ultimate resiliency tool! Unfortunately, however, there are many variables that disrupt my bike travels that the Council could address. Our main priority should be tackling issues that endanger those who currently travel by bike and prevent others who fear for their safety from even trying it.

First, we need more Class I fully-protected bike lanes — tons more! Simply put, if we continue to build infrastructure that removes road use conflicts, *all* road users will benefit, while the *lack* of this infrastructure continues to be a hurdle for many potential bicyclists. A recent report by the NYC Health Department's Center for Health Equity found that less than 1% of kids who live within a mile of school are riding to school, and the main reason is that parents know conditions are unsafe.¹ For example, sixth graders are forced to ride in the street before their cognitive judgment abilities make this a viable option. We need to vastly expand protected bike lanes so that riders of *all* ages and abilities have a safe way to go about their daily business.

¹ "Getting to School," New York Department of Health, Center for Health Equity, 2014: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/dpho/getting-to-school.pdf>

Next, we must get much more serious about enforcing dangerous vehicular moving violations on our streets. While strides have been made, NYPD should establish incentives and/or consequences for precincts that fail to enforce in any meaningful way speeding, failure to yield, improper turns, and obstruction of Class 2 bike lanes — which many drivers view as “free parking.” We know that data-driven enforcement *works*, that focusing on these riskiest behaviors — the contributing factors in the *most* collisions — is the *best* use of our public money, yet many precincts continue to ignore this reality, instead carrying out anecdotal enforcement based solely upon complaints lodged by whomever shows up to that month’s Community Council meeting. Most, if not all, still prioritize their CompStat statistics over TrafficStat. Because traffic is the #1 killer of kids in New York City,² this cannot stand, and Council has a role to play in encouraging NYPD to take traffic enforcement seriously throughout the department.

We also need to tackle more systematically poor roadway conditions. On an average ride, I encounter numerous roadway defects that would jeopardize my life if I did not anticipate them ahead of time. Others see them, and think, “No way would I ride on those streets!” These range from run-of-the-mill potholes to more extreme situations such as running into messy, lazy patch jobs by unscrupulous contractors. For example Chrystie Street, a major access route for bike commuters using the Manhattan Bridge, is riddled with heaving pavement, faded bike lane markings, and deep holes and ruts. Unfortunately, even when DOT does repave surfaces, the agency has no clear procedure for re-striping essential safety markings afterwards,

² “Understanding Child Injury Deaths,” New York City Department of Health, 2013: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/ip/ip-nyc-inj-child-fatality-report13.pdf>

as occurred in Boerum Hill this year when many months lapsed before our crosswalks, bike lanes, and neighborhood slow zone markings were replaced. Any of these roadway shortcomings could be the difference between someone getting to work or home to give their kids dinner...or the unthinkable. If we can't maintain our existing essential bike network, what hope do we have for encouraging riders in neighborhoods that lack even the basics? Council can encourage DOT to undertake *much* more frequent, systematic surveys and expedite roadway repairs to protect our safety.

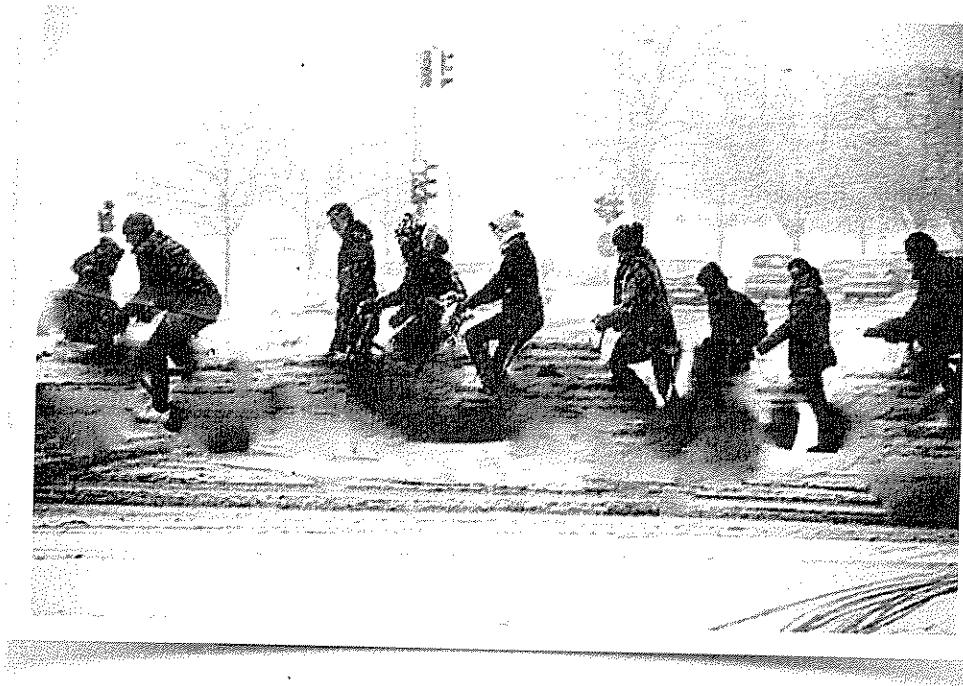
A final simple step we can take is allowing cyclists to utilize traffic signalization that gives pedestrians priority lead-times at dangerous intersections. I've attached an image to show how the average, law-abiding person on a bike is as vulnerable as the average pedestrian. With careful adherence to pedestrian right-of-way, people on bikes could be allowed to proceed on pedestrian green lights. Further steps could be taken to allow for proceeding after a full-stop on red (particularly at T-intersections and right turns,) and installing more green wave signal patterns along certain corridors that prioritize average bicycle speed. By decriminalizing these basic bicycling maneuvers, adherence to other important traffic rules and overall numbers of bicyclists would increase, providing proven safety-in-numbers benefits.³

The very fact that the Council is proactively looking for ways to improve this vital transportation mode is a sign of how far we've come, but much remains to be done to make bicycling a workable transportation choice for all New Yorkers. With continued attention and oversight from the Council, New York can expand its world-class cycling city status with all its

³ P.L. Jacobsen, "Safety in Numbers: More Walkers and Bicyclists, Safer Walking and Bicycling," 2003: <http://injuryprevention.bmj.com/content/9/3/205.full>

Joanna Oltman Smith
646-279-9160
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proven competitive, economic, health, and environmental benefits. It is City Council's responsibility to forward this agenda, the most practical one imaginable; one that ensures the well-being of all our citizens and our city's future as a whole.





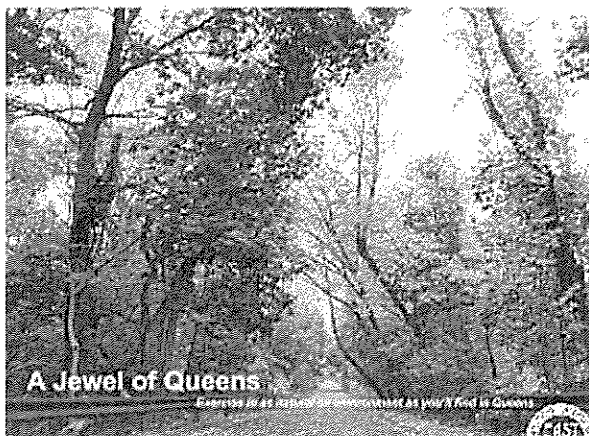
FOR THE RECORD

Improving Biking in Eastern Queens
Joby Jacob, Ph.D., Founder Motor Parkway East

November 20th 2014

I would like to thank Council Member Rodriguez and the other members of the Council for holding this hearing. I would also like to thank fellow cyclist and neighbor Council Member Mark Weprin for all he's done so far on making the streets safer for pedestrians and cyclists.

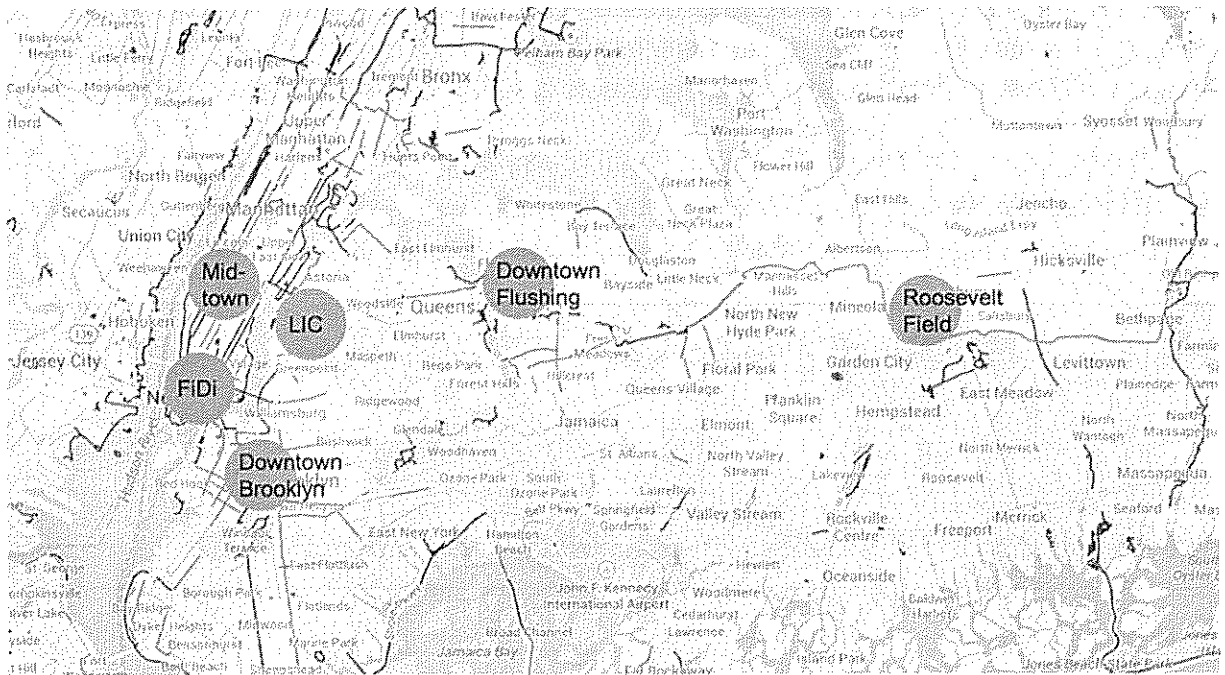
My name is Joby Jacob, I live in Hollis Hills a few blocks from the Vanderbilt Motor Parkway. The Vanderbilt is probably the crown-jewel of the NYC bike network - an abandoned highway that serves as a 3 mile bike & pedestrian trail and is part of the Brooklyn Queens Greenway.



One of the great things about North Eastern Queens are our greenways - like the Vanderbilt, they offer some of the best recreational biking in the city - but leave a lot to be desired for transportation. As great as our greenways are, once you are off the greenway and need to get to your destination, things change rapidly. Getting from Joe Michaels' Mile to Douglaston Parkway, you have to either break the law and ride on the sidewalk, or ride in traffic on Northern Blvd. In Flushing there's a section of the Brooklyn Queens Greenway where you have to ride on Booth Memorial Ave, (this is where Assemblywoman Young was struck and seriously injured by a motorist while riding her bike.) I've been tailgated by cars on 75th Ave in Fresh Meadows getting to the Motor Parkway. The Vanderbilt Motor Parkway ends abruptly at Winchester Blvd, and if you wish to go east of Winchester, there is no sidewalk and there is no bike lane, your only option is to walk on the dirt alongside Creedmoor Hospital or ride your bike on a very busy

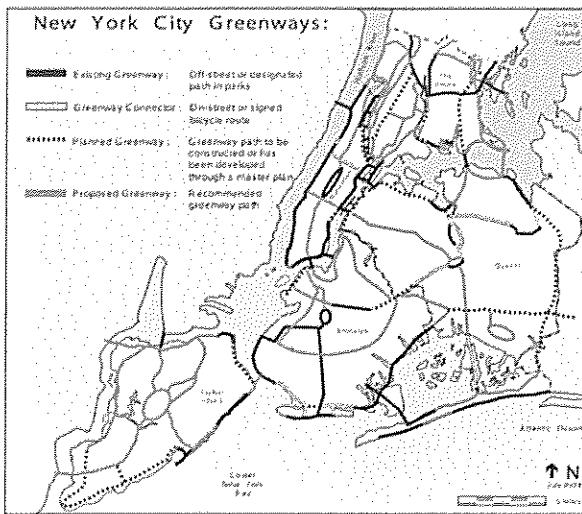
section of Union Turnpike. So for many novices sadly, they have to drive their bikes to the greenways to use them. So the first thing we need to do is make getting to the greenways safer.

Speaking of which, I'm working on a project that would connect our section of the Vanderbilt to the 22 mile long greenway Nassau is building along their section of the Vanderbilt. In the process, this simple 2 mile extension would mean that neighborhoods in Eastern Queens like Glen Oaks that are currently cut off from the city's Bike & Greenway System would now have access to it, and also link them to Nassau's new trail. This would create a bicycle superhighway for NYC & Long Island.



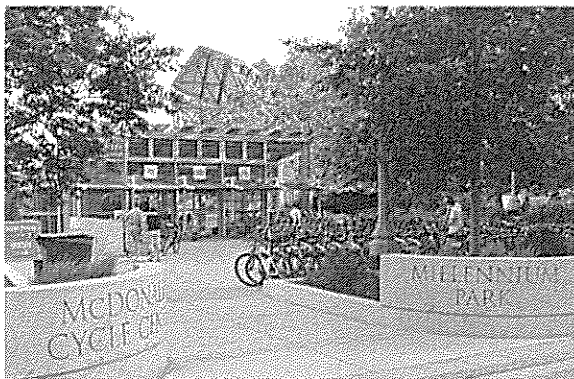
Core Business Districts in red bubbles. NYC Greenways indicated in Dark Green, On street-Paths Indicated in Light Green, Nassau County Motor Parkway Greenway indicated in Red, Motor Parkway East proposal indicated in Purple. - Map Credit: Google Maps.

Secondly, we think the council should appropriate funds to finish the greenway system first proposed in 1993. Greenways provide a safe off-street path for novice level cyclists and ways around high traffic areas that novices would otherwise avoid. While many of the greenways have been built, unfortunately areas like Southeast Queens have been neglected.



Greenways were planned for Southeast Queens but were never built - exacerbating the lack of bike infrastructure in this area

Lastly, we think the council should consider **building bike centers** that allow commuters to ride the Brooklyn Queens Greenway to Flushing Meadows Corona Park, park their bikes, shower, and walk to work, or hop on the 7 train or LIRR. Facilities like this exist in Europe as well as in [Chicago](#). This would help relieve congestion on a lot of the buses that go into downtown Flushing.



Bike parking facilities near transit makes getting to the train easier

Statement of Steve Vaccaro to New York City Council Transportation Committee, November 20, 2014

Thank you for the opportunity to speak. Our city is doing a great many things right when it comes to encouraging cycling and making us a national and international leader in sustainable, healthy transportation. Others will speak to what we're doing right, and the best way to fine tune the infrastructure and education. Thank you so much to the members of this committee and your colleagues in the council who have done so much to build on the successes of the Bloomberg administration's cycling policies.

I'm going to focus my comments on the role of law enforcement in making and keeping New York City the national leader in making cycling safe and popular means of transportation. And I'll say that probably the biggest threat to our leadership in this area is arbitrary, heavy-handed summoning and downright harassment of cyclists by NYPD.

People who know me or have heard me speak on this topic know that while I represent cyclists for a living, and I'm a strong advocate for cycling, I'm not an advocate for cyclists breaking the law. Our law office receives probably ten to twenty calls a week from cyclists who've gotten a traffic ticket. We tell these people well, did you go through the red light? Did you ride on the sidewalk? If you broke the law, you have to pay! I have very little sympathy for cyclists who think traffic rules are for someone else.

In 1978, when I first began cycling for transportation in the city, that's how it was. There were so few cyclists, you could do whatever you pleased, it was like you were invisible to the police. Now we have hundreds of thousands of daily cyclists in New York, we've come of age as a transportation mode, and yes, cyclists have to follow the traffic rules not only for safety but also fairness to our fellow New Yorkers in traffic.

But what we find is that the way the police enforce the traffic rules against cyclists is too often unfair, arbitrary and counterproductive. My very first legal work on behalf of cyclists back in 2006 concerned NYPD policing of group bicycle rides. Police were using discriminatory enforcement as a tool to shut down particular group rides. The cyclists and the bike clubs sued in federal and state court and the city ended up paying just under a million dollars in damages.¹ Links to that and the other things I'll be discussing are in the footnotes to my written statement.

And what I learned in that litigation was that everything a police officer learns about bicycling at the police academy, fits on about one page, and it goes like this: look out for cyclists, because they are often working as lookouts for gangs or couriers for drug dealers. When we did our discovery in 2007, 2008 we didn't receive one piece of paper to suggest that NYPD officers were trained to view cycling as a legitimate alternative means of transportation, or to teach them about the traffic laws that apply to cyclists.

And unfortunately, the NYPD experience with Critical Mass for the period from 2004 through the present has only created more misunderstanding and antagonism between cyclists and police. Many of the cyclists who participated in those rides are just as much to blame for that as the police. These enormous excessive critical mass details the NYPD sets up each month, where police outnumber cyclists two-to-one and chase them around the city was the hallmark of the Bloomberg administration's enforcement approach towards cyclists.

Thousands of police officers were in essence trained to resent and arbitrarily summons cyclists during these monthly confrontations, and that was 99% of the training and experience these officers had with cyclists, and as the need for cycling traffic law enforcement grew, many of these thousands of officers took what they learned at critical mass and applied it to their everyday traffic interaction with, and their general attitudes towards cyclists. And it cost many millions of dollars of unnecessary police overtime pay to instill that antagonism.

And the antagonism spilled over into all of the NYPD-cyclist interactions, not just once a month at Critical Mass. In the later Bloomberg years, cyclists were saying "this is a schizophrenic administration when it comes to

¹ New York times, "Bike Riders in New York Win Settlement,"
http://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/19/nyregion/19critical.html?_r=0

bikes: on the one hand DoT wants to give us this beautiful safe infrastructure, on the other hand the NYPD is harassing us with garbage summonses every day."

As a result, nowadays when you have police law enforcement activity concerning cyclists, you have not so much police enforcing the laws, as police acting out those negative attitudes and misunderstandings about cycling. In the last month alone, I was alerted to two different cycling traffic law enforcement efforts by police, both of which were entirely illegitimate.

In one, officers of Midtown South Precinct were writing summonses to cyclists riding on the left side of 5th avenue in midtown, which is perfectly legal. Day in, day out they were writing these summonses to every cyclist on the left side of the street. The officers were relying on a state law that New York City has superseded. It doesn't apply here. But no one is teaching police officers that the City and the State bicycle traffic rules aren't the same.²

To the credit of Midtown South, I raised the issue with them, they admitted their mistake and they voided all of the summonses they had written within the previous day. But there were still numerous cyclists who had received these garbage summonses the previous week, who have to go to traffic court.

Something very similar happened the day after the tragic death of Jill Tarlov in Central Park, struck by a cyclist while on foot. The Central Park Precinct was out in force the next day ticketing cyclists, including criminal court summonses for the misdemeanor of "reckless driving." Now who thinks reckless driving applies to cyclists? It doesn't. It requires operation of a motor vehicle. But no one told the officers that before they sent them out to "go do law enforcement on cyclists." To her credit the Central Park Precinct Commander admitted the mistake, and tried to have the summons voided. But it was too late. I have a client facing a trial in criminal court next month.³

In all the calls that come into our office what we hear again and again is that police are issuing criminal court summonses to cyclists when they should be writing traffic tickets, that the enforcement is focused on Latino and Asian delivery cyclists and in black neighborhoods, and that the summonses aren't targeted at unsafe or reckless cycling. Rather these fish in the barrel situations where most of the cyclists are breaking the same traffic rule the same way in the same spot because this safe to do so and there is no danger or conflict being created.

On this issue of targeting working class cyclists, I raised it at a meeting held earlier this week by Councilmember Kallos to address cycling issues in his district. I commend him for holding that meeting it was very helpful. We had a dialogue including most of the stakeholders, including the NYPD. But my question was, how is it that I live on the Upper East Side since 2001, I ride a bike about 20 miles every day just to commute along the length of Manhattan, and I've never gotten a ticket even though my local precinct—the 19th—gives out more cycling summonses than any other precinct?

And the response from the police was "you're the first guy I've ever heard who said 'give me a traffic ticket.'" Now that's not exactly what I said. I told them you have to do it even-handedly. You can't cover delivery cyclists in a blizzard of summonses and then ignore commuter and recreational cyclists. And it's not just a problem on the Upper East Side, we get calls at our office from Central Brooklyn, parts of the Bronx, and other neighborhoods with excessive ticketing of black and Latino cyclists. More often than not it is a criminal court summons for a misdemeanor for riding on the sidewalk. That's that police academy training--cyclists are likely to be drug couriers and gang lookouts. It's giving too many young people a criminal record when at the most they should have gotten a traffic ticket. And it's because of a lack of training, antagonism toward cyclists, and the attitude that a criminal summons is more appropriate because bikes aren't a legitimate form of traffic, so why give a traffic ticket?

Now I don't lay all the blame for this on police, because the traffic laws that apply to cyclists are much more complicated than anyone gives them credit for. I have a chart that I use when I give talks to cyclists about cycling law. Even before you get to the issue of what does a particular bicycle traffic law or rule mean, there are 14 steps you have to go through before you can even know which law or rule applies. There are state and local statutes,

² Gothamist: "Cops Ticketing Cyclists For Biking On The Left Side Of The Road,"

http://gothamist.com/2014/11/05/nypd_ticket_cyclists_nyc.php

³ Streetsblog, "Sanity Prevails as Advocates and Officials Discuss Central Park Safety Issues,"

<http://www.streetsblog.org/category/special-features/street-justice/>

and there are state and local rules. Some of the local rules supersede the state laws, others just supplement them. Sometimes the default rule that bikes follow the same rules as cars applies, but many times it does not. Fourteen questions to answer before you even know what rule applies.

And then many officers use these cheat sheets⁴ that have just the title of the rule without any explanation of what the rule actually provides. They work off the cheat sheets, not the text of the law. That's how one cyclist got a ticket for "carrying articles" while bicycling, because she had a bag with her on her bike. The traffic infraction of "carrying articles" requires that the cyclist be carrying something so large that they can't keep at least one hand on the handlebar. But the police have the cheat sheet, all it says is "carrying articles", so they ticket someone with a handbag who has both hands on the handlebars.⁵

I'll comment briefly on Councilmember Treyger's bill about cycling while using portable electronic devices. The bill is well-intentioned, but I think it could create more trouble than it solves. For all the hundreds of cyclists our firm has represented and the thousands of inquiries we've received, our firm has never heard a crash where the cyclist was using a cellphone. So the first issue is, is there really a problem that requires addressing.

Second, the bill as proposed is ambiguous at best when it comes to the devices cyclists use as speedometers and for navigation. As I read the law, even if a cyclist has an electronic computer stationary on the handlebars, if the device has a push button that the cyclist uses while riding, it's not in "hands free mode" and you've committed a violation under this legislation. So that's a huge problem with this bill.

And look at what NYPD is doing already with cellphone use and cycling. They write hundreds of tickets a year even though it isn't even illegal yet!⁶ What can we expect of it does become illegal? I'll be getting calls from cyclists ticketed for pushing a button on a stationary handlebar mount speedometer or other device. I also predict it's going to become a very popular summons in working class neighborhoods.

"Oh look, there's a kid in front of the bodega, on the sidewalk, not riding but sitting on the bike, and he has a phone in his hands. Maybe it's a drug courier or a gang lookout on a bike. Let's send him to criminal court for sidewalk cycling and a traffic ticket for texting while cycling while we're at it. Two birds with one stone."

So my message is keep it simple. Police should enforce the rules against cyclists failing to yield to pedestrians, riding on the sidewalk and riding against the flow of traffic. Enforce those laws even-handedly for delivery, commuter, and recreational cyclists. End the schizophrenic approach of the Bloomberg administration. And when you do enforce it, don't turn it into a criminal charge when it's really just a traffic violation. You have the support of the vast majority of cyclists if you keep it simple and stick to that law enforcement approach. By adding new laws you're more likely to add confusion and error, than safety or order.

But if you really feel the need to add a new law to the mix, if the legislator in you is just bursting out uncontrollably to legislate in this area, there is a much bigger and more important loophole in the bicycling laws that you should address: bicycling while drunk. There is no law against that. And I'll be the first to tell you that cycling while drunk has caused numerous injuries and worse. That is a subject worthy of careful legislative action after doing some fact-finding and speaking to the leaders of the cycling community. You can prevent crashes and save lives.

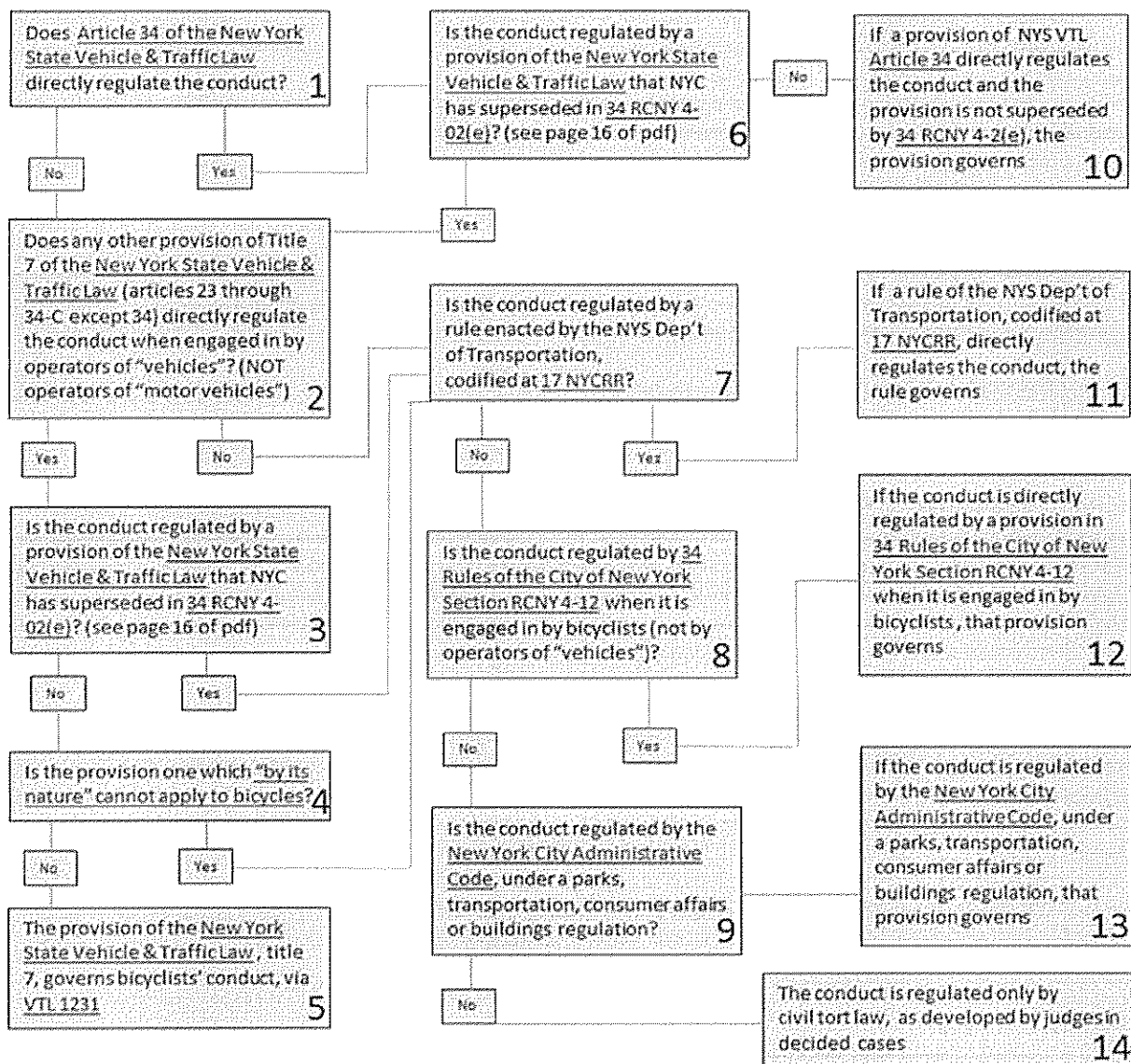
But this ill-conceived texting while cycling bill that has rushed onto the scene without broad consultation with the cycling community is just going to leave us mired even more deeply in the flawed law enforcement paradigm we should be trying to escape. I urge you to table it and maintain New York's leadership as the best cycling city in North America by focusing on police training and reform of law enforcement practices concerning cyclists.

⁴ Gothamist, "In Cyclist Crackdown, Cops Told To Enforce Laws That Don't Apply In NYC," http://gothamist.com/2011/05/09/in_cyclist_crackdown_cops_told_to_e.php

⁵ New York Post, "'Scandal' bars bike bust," <http://nypost.com/2011/04/15/scandalbars-bike-bust/>

⁶ AM New York, "Council to consider bicycle cellphone ban," <http://www.amny.com/transit/bicycle-cellphone-ban-will-be-considered-by-new-york-city-council-1.9614949>

Fourteen Steps to Determining Which Bike Law Applies



**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ELENA SANTOGADE

Address: 766 WASHINGTON AVE, BROOKLYN 11238

I represent: myself

Address: _____

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/20/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Rachel Alhetski

Address: _____

I represent: Transportation Alternatives

Address: _____

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Michael J. Moses

Address: 402 Ocean Parkway, Bklyn, NY 11218

I represent: bicycle riders

Address: _____

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Matt Berlin

Address: _____

I represent: NYC Bike Share, Operator of Citi Bike

Address: _____

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

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Date: 11-10-14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: PO John Frost

Address: DOT

I represent: _____

Address: _____

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

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Date: 11-10-14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: PO Joshua Benson

Address: DOT

I represent: _____

Address: _____

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11-20-14

(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: Polly Trottenberg

Address: DOT

I represent: _____

Address: _____

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/20/14

(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: Mary Beth Kelly

Address: _____

I represent: Families for Safe Streets

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: FABRICIO AROYO (translator

Address: DAHLIA Goldenberg)

I represent: MAKE the ROAD New York

Address: _____

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◆

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Martina Bravo

Address: NY

I represent: International Immigrant Movement

Address: + Women in Movement - WE Bike

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Joby Jacob

Address: _____

I represent: Motor Parkway East

Address: _____

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/20/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: PAUL STEELY WHITE

Address: _____

I represent: TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

Address: _____

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 10/20/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Thomas DeVito

Address: 28-110 41st Street

I represent: Brad Taylor, Harlem Resident

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/2/2014

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Brad Conover

Address: 116 Pinchuck Ave, NY NY

I represent: Bike Upper Manhattan

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/20/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: David Darton

Address: 240 1st Ave NYC 10009

I represent: self

Address: _____

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**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 544 Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☒ in opposition

Date: 11/20/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: CAROL WAASER

Address: 345 W. 58 ST. NEW YORK, NY 10019

I represent: NEW YORK CYCLE CLUB

Address: WWW.NYCC.ORG

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/20

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kerigan Stephan

Address: VACCARO & WHITE, 175 Battery Place,

I represent: RIGHT OF WAY

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/20/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Steve Vaccaro

Address: Vaccaro & White, 175 Battery Pl. #204

I represent: Cyclists & Streets PAC 1004

Address: same as above

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/20/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Neile Weissman - New York Cycle Club

Address: _____

I represent: New York Cycle Club

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/20/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: JOANNA OLTMAN SMITH

Address: 829 President St.

I represent: Safe Streets Advocate

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. BKING Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/20/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ERIC MCGURE

Address: 423 4TH STREET, BROOKLYN 11215

I represent: STREETSPAC/PARK SLOPE NEIGHBORS

Address: SAME

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/20/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Anthony Griffith
Address: PO BOX 490 Glen Oaks NY 11004
I represent: AW Griffith Transportation Consulting
Address: Bus Industry Safety Council

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Appearance Card

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/20/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ken Podziba
Address: 475 Riverside Dr Rm 1300 NY 10115
I represent: Bike New York
Address: same address

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/20/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Chris Woods / Josh Knoller
Address: 140 W. 31st St Suite SE 10001
I represent: Bike & Roll NYC
Address: _____

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Brian Van Nieuwenhoven

Address: 399 First Ave #5 NY NY 10010

I represent: - self -

Address: _____

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Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Peter Frisvold

Address: 303 W 103 NYC 10028

I represent: Streets PAC

Address: _____

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: HILDA COHEN

Address: 215 CUMBERLAND STREET #1 BKLYN 11205

I represent: KIDICAL MASS NYC: MAKE BROOKLYN SAFER

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Alex Zamudio

Address: 350 W 31st 4th Fl NY NY

I represent: self

Address: _____

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