

Comprehensive Bicycle Program

The Comprehensive Bicycle Program is composed of four sections entitled *Encouragement*, *Education*, *Engineering*, and *Enforcement*. The overall aim of the Program is to encourage cycling in New York City through promotional literature and events (encouragement); the development and maintenance of appropriate facilities (engineering); enhancement of bicycle safety and respect for the cyclist's rightful place on the road (education); and the prevention of theft and policing of bicycle facilities (enforcement). Implementation of a comprehensive program is required if cycling is to become a significant component of the city's transportation system.

Encouragement

New York Cycling Map

In recognition of the complexities and resultant time required in implementing a city-wide network, the BND Project developed a city-wide map of recommended bicycle routes as a preliminary step in the effort to increase cycling. The *Map* serves two functions, as an aid for cyclists wishing to traverse the city on relatively "bicycle-friendly" streets, and as an opportunity to educate cyclists on bicycle laws, safety tips, and subway, train, bus and ferry access. The recommended routes are consistent with the routes identified in the network.

Bike Week

An annual spring event sponsored by Transportation Alternatives, city agencies and elected officials, *Bike Week* promotes commuting by bicycle by offering bicycle riding and repair workshops, free safety equipment and other free events.

Bike New York - The Five Boro Bike Tour

Sponsored by Hostelling International and DOT, this spring tour traverses 42 miles of streets which, during the tour, are closed to vehicular traffic. The 1996 tour recorded 34,000 cyclists, making *Bike New York* the largest cycling event in the country.



5 Boro Bike Tour

New York City Century

Sponsored by Transportation Alternatives, the Century Tour is a 100 mile route through low or no traffic areas, linking New York City's parks, bicycle paths and waterfront.

Additional tours

New York City is home to a growing number of bicycle tours and races, including the Tour of St. George in Staten Island and the Tour de Bronx; as well as such charity tours as the Advil Bike Tour for Multiple Sclerosis; American Diabetes Association Tour de Cure; and the New York City to Boston AIDS Bike Ride.

Community Policing Bicycle Patrol Program



NYPD officers on bicycles

The NYC Police Department's (NYPD) Community Policing Bicycle Patrol Program enhances patrol capacity by increasing accessibility of the beat areas. Participating precincts are equipped with at least ten bicycles and equipment, and funding for the program derives from private sources, such as area businesses or civic organizations.

The Program is an example of the unique efficiency and mobility afforded by the bicycle. As of the end of 1996, over half of the NYPD's precincts had implemented the Bicycle Patrol Program. In addition, uniformed officers on bicycles will patrol Yankee and Shea Stadiums. According to a recent Operations Order issued by the Police Commissioner, evaluations of the Community Policing Bicycle Patrol Program reveal that the Program "increases patrol visibility; provides positive interaction with citizens; improves beat officers' ability to respond to calls for service; and improves beat officers mobility and image in the community."

DOT Highway Quality Assurance Unit and Parking Control Unit

The Highway Quality Assurance unit of DOT successfully uses bicycles in Manhattan, Brooklyn and Queens to inspect construction and report potholes. A pilot program to use bicycles to issue parking summonses was started in June, 1996. Currently under evaluation, the programs appears to be successful.

Private Sector Initiatives

Given the proven positive impact that cycling to work can have on employees, such as improved health and heightened energy, employers could encourage cycling by providing bicycle training, secure storage and shower and changing facilities.

Institutionalization of Bicycle Planning

The following three initiatives have been developed to promote the institutionalization of bicycle planning.

All-Agency Bicycle Policy

The BND Project developed the All-Agency Bicycle Policy to guide the actions of City, State and regional agencies as they relate to the goal of encouraging cycling as a mode of transportation and a form of recreation. The four goals of the Policy are:

- Improve facilities
- Promote awareness
- Integrate with transit modes
- Improve safety

See Appendix D for the All-Agency Bicycle Policy.

Mayoral Bicycle / Pedestrian Advisory Council

Formed in July 1995, the Mayor's Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) is chaired by Rudy Washington, Deputy Mayor for Community Development and Business Services and is comprised of relevant city agencies and advocacy groups. The goals of the BPAC include:

- Interagency coordination in advancing the Network.
- Providing a forum for the cycling community to express its concerns.
- Incorporating bicycle facilities, where feasible and appropriate, in all future capital projects.
- Promoting enforcement of traffic rules.

New York Metropolitan Transportation Council Bicycle / Pedestrian Working Group

This organization, comprised of city, regional and state cycling advocates and government agencies, was instrumental in securing ISTEA funding for bicycle-related projects. In October, 1995, the Working Group became an official body of the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC). The Working Group provides NYMTC with technical assistance in the formation of the bicycle/pedestrian component of the region's Long Range Transportation Plan.

Engineering

Guidelines and Standards

The planning, design and implementation of all network facilities are guided by minimum standards. To guide the BND Project and other design professionals, a research library on

national and international bicycle planning and design standards was compiled. This library is currently housed at the Department of City Planning, Transportation Division, and is available for use by appointment. The planning methodologies described in Chapter 2 and the Design Guidelines described in Chapter 5 are the first step in developing a uniform set of standards for New York City.

Bicycle Parking

The lack of secure parking in New York City is a major disincentive to cycling. This has been shown consistently in the DOT and DCP surveys. Although in-door parking is needed for all-day bicycle commuters, outdoor bicycle rack parking is appropriate and needed for messengers and shoppers. Cyclists currently lock their bicycles to available street furniture, which offers limited, not always secure, options for cyclists and can clutter already crowded sidewalks.

Short Term Parking: The On-street Bicycle Parking Facilities program (*CITYRACKS*) will help encourage cycling for short trips and errands by providing much needed bicycle parking. The program, which is funded through the ISTEA Enhancement Program, installed approximately 150 bicycle racks throughout the city in June, 1996. Additional funding for *CityRacks* has been approved, and 2,200 additional racks will be installed by 1999.

In conjunction with the Art Commission, the Landmarks Preservation Commission and Transportation Alternatives, DOT has chosen to install a continuous, curve-type rack in three forms:

- An inverted "U" to hold 2 to 3 bicycles.
- A 2-loop rack for 5 bicycles.
- A 3-loop rack for 7 bicycles.

All racks are constructed of 2' 3/8" unpainted, hot-dipped galvanized steel, and are installed with surface flange mounts and in-ground cement. The sites are identified by DOT, city agencies and through a request process (See Appendix F). Locations include commercial centers, museums and universities. All sites must be consistent with DOT siting standards.



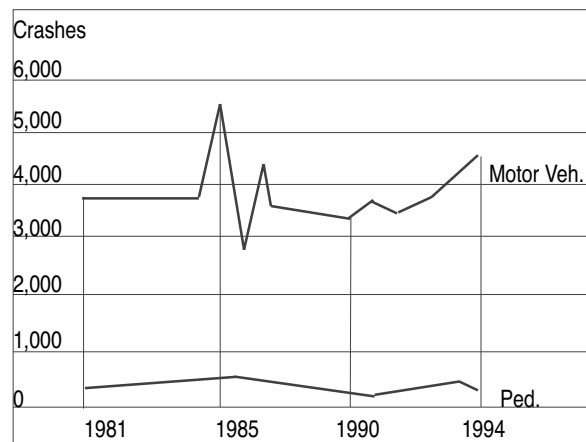
CITYRACKS

Long Term Storage: The restricted living and working spaces of many New Yorkers can preclude even owning a bicycle. Building storage can be established by designating a storage room, using space saving storage systems or by simply re-organizing existing space. The City's building code related to emergency access and the use of elevators, stairways and accessways can determine the availability of bicycle access and storage. Phase II of the BND project will address these issues.

Enforcement

A major disincentive to cycling is the number of cars and trucks on New York City streets, often driven with excessive speed and assertiveness. Statistics shows that the number of bicycle-motor vehicle accidents has increased since 1981 (see chart below). Enforcement of motor vehicle regulations, especially motor vehicle speeds and double parking in bicycle lanes, is needed to improve these conditions.

Likewise, enforcement of regulations is needed to improve bicycle-pedestrian conflict. Although pedestrian/bicycle accidents have decreased since 1981 (see chart below), cyclists are still sometimes considered a menace to pedestrians, as evidenced by the recent City Council legislation permitting the confiscation of bicycles being ridden on the sidewalks (see Appendix H). However, cyclists often ride illegally on the sidewalks to compensate for the lack of bicycle lanes and paths and to avoid congested streets. In addition, cyclists are often forced to weave to avoid pedestrians who unexpectedly step off the curb or are in the street, hailing cabs. Pedestrians and cyclists must be educated to respect each other's rights in the street.



Bicycle/Motor Vehicle and Bicycle/Pedestrian Crashes
Source: NYC DOT

Bicycle Theft

Theft is one of the greatest deterrents to cycling in New York City. 839 respondents to a 1992 Transportation Alternatives survey reported the theft of 860 bicycles, an average of 1.03 bicycles per person. According to DOT, bicycle recovery rates during the 1980s averaged only one in 45 - a mere 2.2%.

To help deter theft, the NYPD operates a voluntary bicycle registration program which allows cyclists to engrave an ID at their local precinct. Increased publicity of this program could increase the number of participants and help deter theft. Improved building access for bicycles and construction of bicycle lockers could also be significant theft deterrents.



Fifth Avenue bicycle lane, obstructed by motor vehicle

Education

The competition for space on New York City's streets requires cooperation among all competing modes - auto, pedestrian, in-line skater and bicycle. The best way to ensure this cooperation is through effective educational programs. New York State Education Law mandates instruction in safety education, including highway and traffic safety and bicycle safety for all students in both elementary and secondary education. Instruction at an early age on how to ride a bicycle, and how to operate one in traffic, can lead to increased, and more responsible, use of this mode. Early respect for cycling can also have a positive impact on the skills of future car drivers. The following educational initiatives are offered.

DOT Safety Education Program

The Safety Education Program operates a number of programs on traffic safety in the city's public schools and senior and community centers. The YES (Youth Education for Safety) Program coordinates traffic safety events and assemblies with speakers from DOT's Speakers Bureau and sponsors an annual citywide YES conference. The Safety Education Program also sponsors theater programs and puppet presentations to educate students about passenger, pedestrian and bicycle safety. The BND Project will work closely with the Safety Education Program in Part II of the Project.

Safety City

Established in 1989, Safety City focuses on teaching children how to safely cross streets, drive bicycles and ride in cars. Safety City provides third graders in School District 5 in Central Harlem with hands-on, interactive safety training both inside a classroom and outdoors in a simulated New York City street and intersection. The program has been hailed

as a success. According to Harlem Hospital's Pediatric Trauma Unit, there has been a 50% drop in the number of children admitted for motor-vehicle related injuries since Safety City's inception.

The Safety City Program was expanded in 1995 to include the Mobile Safety City Program, a joint City Volunteer Corps project which transported the NYC intersection to schools in Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island. In September 1996, a new Safety City was dedicated on Staten Island. This project is a cooperative effort between DOT, the NYC Board of Education and the NYPD. Funding is being sought to expand to all five boroughs.

Share the Road Safely

This recently initiated program is a joint DOT-NYPD effort to improve traffic safety. It focuses on planning and designing pedestrian improvements and has sponsored public service announcements on the radio on safe cycling. The BND Project recommends that this program be expanded to include bus and subway posters.