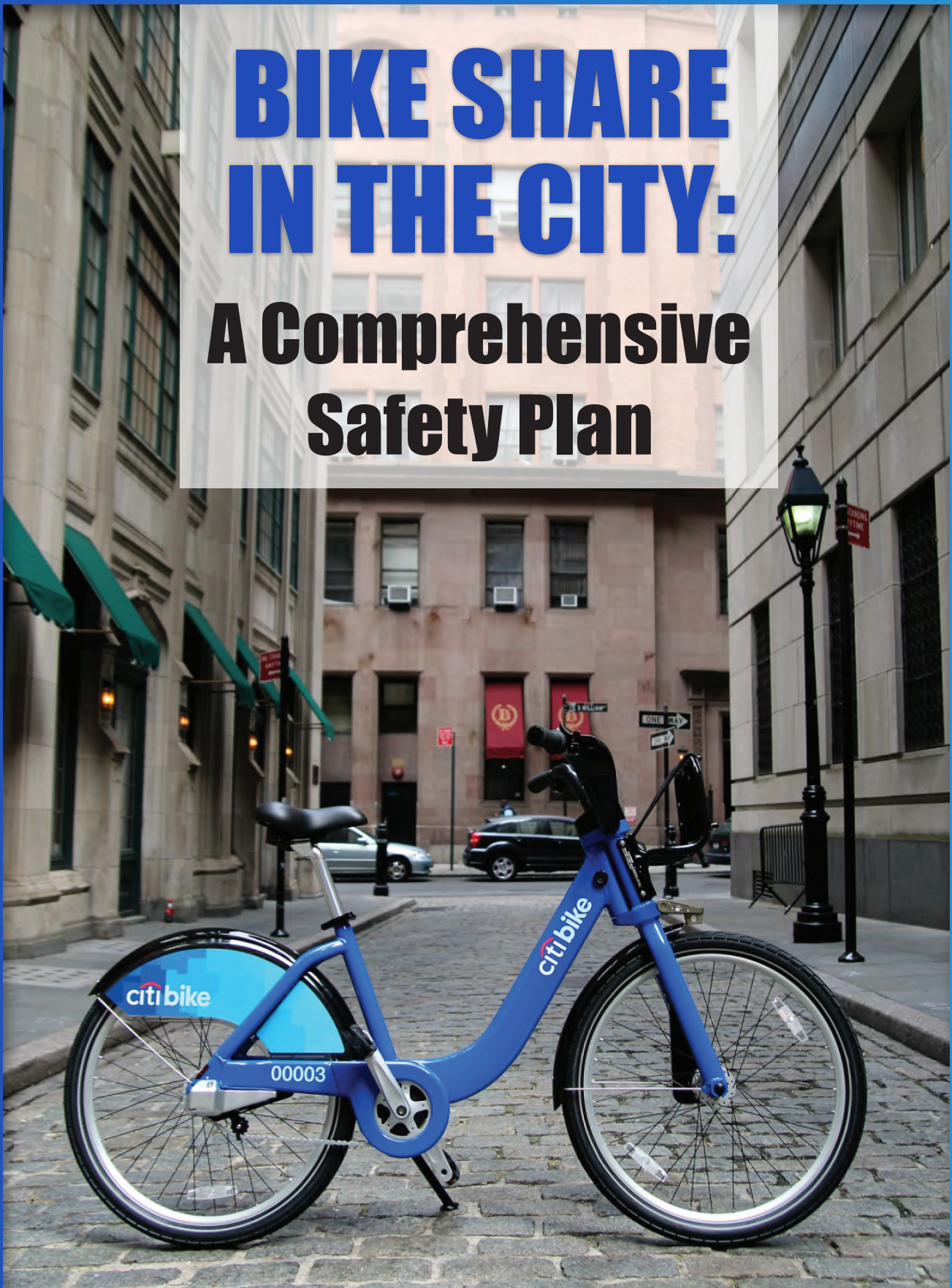


BIKE SHARE IN THE CITY:

A Comprehensive Safety Plan



NEW YORK CITY COMPTROLLER
JOHN C. LIU

JUNE 2012

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Published by the
**New York City
Comptroller's Office**

JOHN C. LIU
Comptroller

First Deputy Comptroller
Ricardo Morales

Deputy Comptroller for Public Affairs
Ari Hoffnung

Chief Economist
Frank Braconi

Special Assistant for Public Affairs
Jacqueline S. Gold

Director of Policy
Carolyn Karo

Rachel Bardin
John Berman
Doug Giuliano
Farid Heydarpour, Ph.D.
Tomas Hunt
Manny Kwan
Andrew McWilliam
Marcia Murphy
Albert Ng
Susan Scheer
Orlando Vasquez

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About the New York City Comptroller's Office

The New York City Comptroller, an independently elected official, is the Chief Financial Officer of the City of New York. The mission of the office is to ensure the financial health of New York City by advising the Mayor, the City Council, and the public of the City's financial condition. The Comptroller also makes recommendations on City programs and operations, fiscal policies, and financial transactions. In addition, the Comptroller manages the assets of the five New York City Pension Funds, performs budgetary analysis, keeps the City's accounts, audits City agencies, manages the City's debt issuance, and registers proposed contracts. His office employs a workforce of more than 700 professional staff members. These employees include accountants, attorneys, computer analysts, economists, engineers, budget, financial, and investment analysts, claim specialists, and researchers, in addition to clerical and administrative support staff.

A Global Trend

Bike share programs are appearing across the globe as municipalities realize their benefits. Bike shares increase the capacity of existing transportation networks, provide users more mobility options, generate clear health benefits, and are environmentally-friendly.

This summer, New York City will launch Citi Bike, a bike share program that, by yearend, will make 10,000 bicycles available for short-term use in Long Island City, Manhattan below 79th Street, and neighborhoods in western Brooklyn. Once launched, the self-service system will be the third-largest bike share in the world.¹ This program will literally change the face of New York City's streets by adding thousands of blue bikes to our existing rainbow of yellow cabs, white MTA buses, and brown UPS trucks.

LARGEST BIKE-SHARE SYSTEMS				
COUNTRY	CITY	SYSTEM NAME	# OF BIKES	STATIONS
China	Hangzhou	HZ Bike	50,000	2,050
France	Paris	Velib	17,000	1,201
USA	New York City	Citi Bike	10,000	600
United Kingdom	London	Barclay's Cycle Hire	8,000	570
Spain	Barcelona	Bicing	6,000	400
Canada	Montreal	Bixi	5,120	411
China	Guangzhou	GZ-Public Bicycle	4,840	50
France	Lyon	Velo v	4,000	350
Germany	Munich	nextbike	3,000	30
Spain	Sevilla	Cyclocity	2,500	250

Sources: Various Publications (see first footnote below)

The program, sponsored by Citibank, will be operated by NYC Bike Share, a subsidiary of Alta Bicycle Share (Alta). While Citi Bike will be privately operated, the New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) will provide administrative oversight. The City and NYC Bike Share have an agreement to share potential profits of Citi Bike.²

¹ Press, Elizabeth "The Biggest Baddest Bike Share in the World," *Streetfilms*, June 1, 2011; Antoniadis, Panos, "European Best Practices in Bike Sharing Systems," T.at. Project, June 2009; Riga, Andy, "Bixi Expands To Longueuil, Hikes Annual Fee to \$80.50," *The Montreal Gazette*, March 17, 2012; Davies, Catronia, "London Launches Ambitious Bike Sharing Scheme," CNN, July 30, 2010; Citi Bike website, accessed June 10, 2012. <http://citibikenyc.com/>; "Bike Sharing World Map," *International Bike Fund*, accessed June 12, 2012. <http://www.ibike.org/encouragement/freebike/directory/index.htm>.

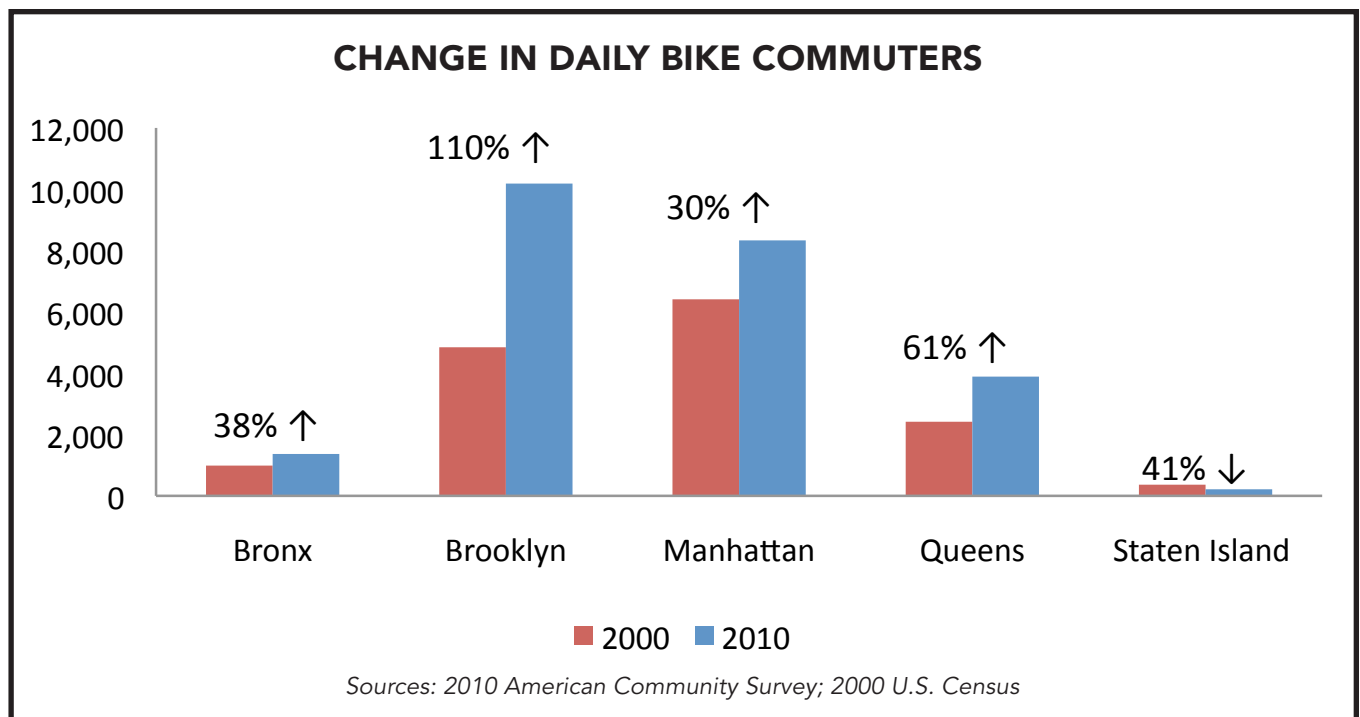
² New York City Department of Transportation, "NYC DOT Announces Selection of Alta to Launch Privately Funded Bike Share System," *New York City Department of Transportation press release*, September 14, 2011. http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/html/pr2011/pr11_75.shtml.



10,000 More Bikes in New York City – and Counting

Citi Bike will add 10,000 more bicycles to New York City’s streets. By far, this is the largest influx of bicycles the City has ever seen, though overall cycling, according to multiple sources, has been increasing consistently over the past decade.

The transportation advocacy organization Transportation Alternatives estimated that between 2001 and 2010 there was an increase of more than 227 percent in the number of overall cyclists in New York City, from 66,000 bikers to 216,000 bikers, respectively.³ The organization also indicates that commercial cyclists, including food delivery personnel and messengers, represent about a 5 percent share of miles ridden. DOT reported that the average number of cyclists entering Manhattan daily increased from 12,800 in 2000 to 34,600 in 2011 (a 170 percent increase).⁴ Finally, the 2010 American Community Survey revealed that, among commuters, cycling increased an average 60 percent between 2000 and 2010.⁵



Department of Transportation projects to improve bicycle infrastructure have played a significant role in the overall increase in cyclists.⁶ Since 2007, DOT installed more than 250 miles of bike lanes and carried out new initiatives to promote cycling and increase bicycle infrastructure throughout the City, including increased outdoor public bicycle parking and supporting legislation requiring bicycle parking in certain buildings. But with the arrival of 10,000 bikes through the Citi Bike program and the City’s

³ “NYC Bicycling Estimates of Volumes and Miles,” Charles Komanoff for Transportation Alternatives, January 25, 2011.

⁴ “Bicycle Screenline Counts,” New York City Department of Transportation, <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/html/bicyclists/nycbicyclescrct.shtml>, accessed on May 30th 2012.

⁵ “2006-2010 Five-Year Estimates, Commuting to Work Data,” U.S. Census American Community Survey, 2010; 2000 U.S. Census, Commuting to Work Data.

⁶ “Bicycle Route Project, by Calendar Year,” New York City Department of Transportation, <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/html/bicyclists/past-route-projects.shtml>, accessed June 8th, 2012.



aggressive push to increase bicycle ridership across the board, New Yorkers face an unprecedented number of bikes competing for limited space on the City’s streets.

Pedestrians and motor vehicles in New York City are generally acclimated to sharing space, but many New Yorkers are still surprised by cyclists. It is critical that cyclists are safe and that all road users are interacting in a safe cycling environment. This is especially important for new users and tourists who are not familiar with the City’s system of bike lanes.

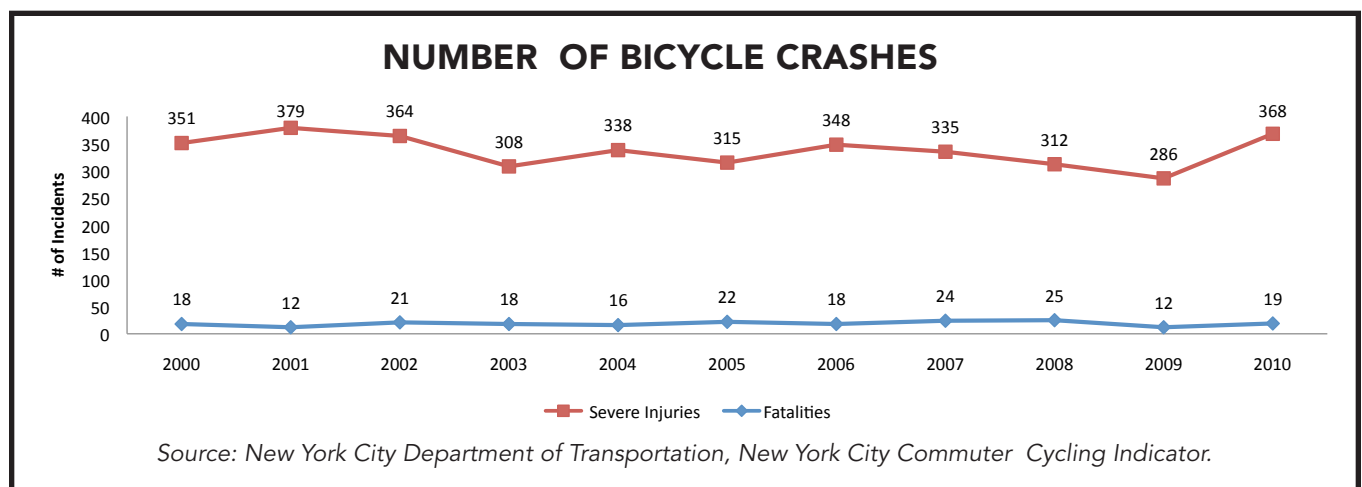
The health and environmental benefits associated with bicycling are significant. But there are also risks attached to having many more bikes on the street. To mitigate these risks, the City must do everything it can to: (1) support safe cyclists and a safe cycling environment; (2) educate all road users; (3) enforce the rules of the road; (4) mitigate the City’s liability; and, (5) increase data collection, reporting, and publishing.

The following recommendations will help the City achieve these objectives:

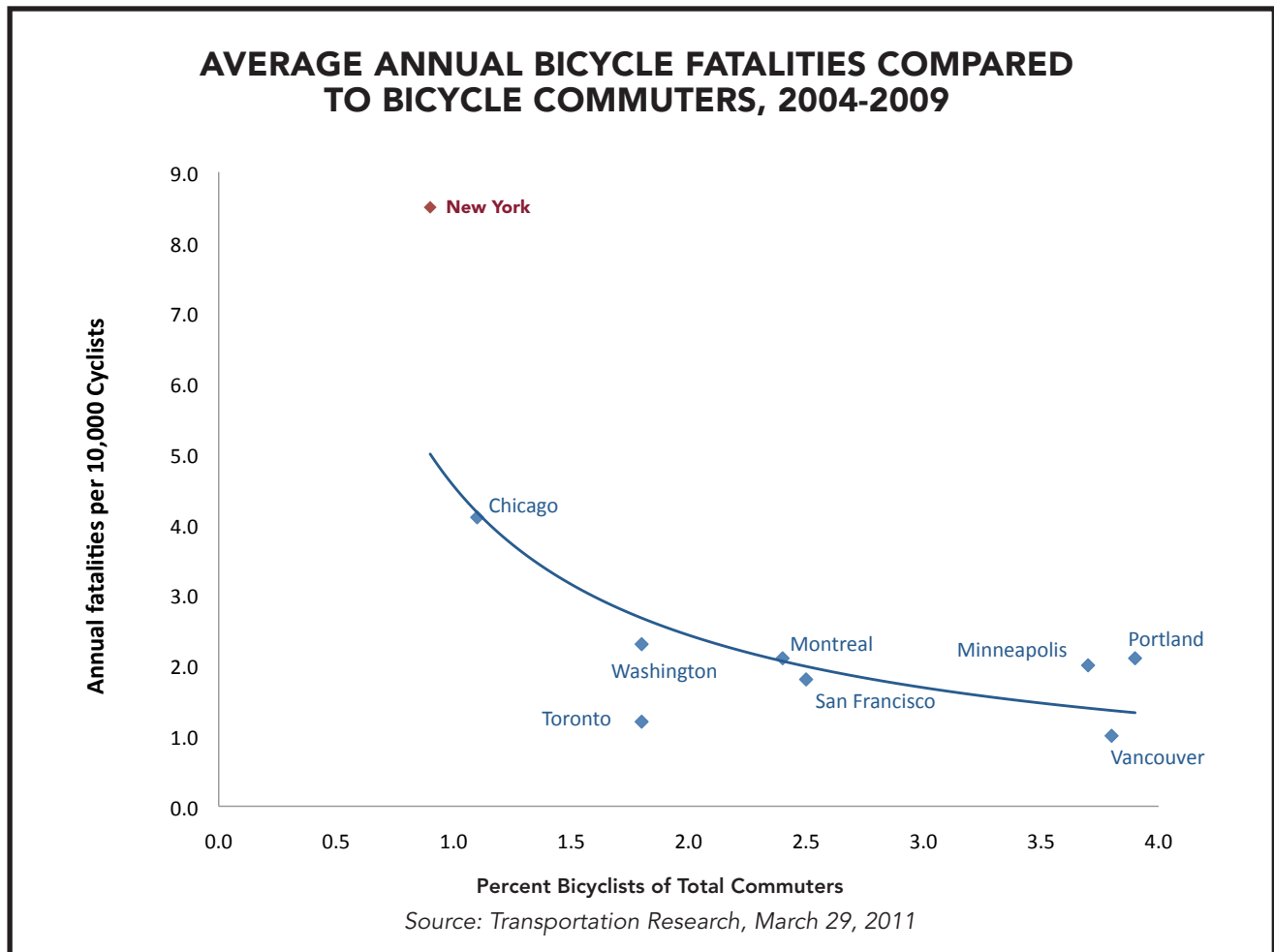
1. Support a Safe Cycling Environment

Bicycle advocates argue that there is safety in numbers. The rationale is that when there are more cyclists on the road, drivers and pedestrians learn to share the road responsibly, leading to a reduction in the rate of accidents.

The chart below demonstrates the number of fatalities and severe injuries reported for the years 2000 through 2010. In comparison to the increase in bicycle riders, it shows that bicycling is becoming relatively safer. While that is certainly good news, there are clearly fatalities and severe injuries that could be avoided.



The graph on the following page demonstrates that as a city’s share of bicycle commuters increases, the rate of fatality per cyclist decreases. Still, the graph also reveals that current conditions for cyclists in New York City are relatively more dangerous than in other North American Cities. New York City’s cyclist fatality rate of 8 per 10,000 is twice as high as Chicago and four times as high as Washington, D.C.



There is insufficient data regarding non-fatal accidents (an issue addressed in this report), but the limited information that is available reveals that more than 2,000 New York City pedestrians were injured after colliding with cyclists between 2007 and 2010.⁷ The table on the following page shows the number of pedestrians hit by cyclists who wound up visiting a hospital. Of particular concern is the disproportionate number of New York City residents age 55 and older who have been admitted as in-patients (51.8% of all in-patients) and the high number of children under 10 who were hit by bicycles relative to their share of the City’s population.

⁷ Peter Tuckel and William Milczarcki, “Pedestrian-Cyclist Accidents in New York State: 2007-2010,” Hunter College, *Department of Sociology and Urban Planning*, September, 2011.



NYC PEDESTRIANS HIT BY CYCLISTS, 2007-2010*

Age	Hospital Visits						Population (%) of New York City Residents
	Out-Patient		In-Patient		Totals		
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	
Less than 10	456	22%	21	9%	477	21%	12%
10 to 20	365	18%	15	6%	380	17%	12%
21 to 39	549	27%	39	16%	588	26%	32%
40 to 55	339	17%	44	18%	383	17%	21%
55 thru highest	323	16%	128	52%	451	20%	23%
Total	2,032	100%	247	100%	2,279	100%	100%

Source: *Pedestrian-Cyclist Accidents in New York State: 2007-2010*
 *Omits 28 cases in which the zip code was incomplete or unknown.
 Note: In-Patient care is care given upon admittance to a hospital.

Make Helmets Mandatory

According to a report published by DOT, bicyclists were not wearing a helmet in 97 percent of fatal accidents in New York City.⁸ Helmets must be mandatory, and recent legislation was introduced in the City Council supporting this view.⁹

The DOT has argued that requiring helmets for bike share users is not practical, but there are new innovations that ought to be explored. One idea comes from students at MIT who created HelmetHub, a vending machine that dispenses \$8 bike helmets.¹⁰ HelmutHub will pilot 20 units in Boston this summer, with plans to sell 500 units to other municipalities by 2013.¹¹



Photo courtesy of Helmet Hub

In the absence of a mandatory helmet law, the City must do all that it can to promote helmet use. Citi Bike could offer financial incentives, such as a membership discount, to bike share users that wear a helmet and work to increase the availability of helmets by partnering with popular retailers like Duane Reade or Starbucks. For instance, in Boston, drug-store retailers such as CVS and Walgreens now sell helmets. DOT should also expand its successful “GET FIT-TED” safety awareness campaign that provides New Yorkers with free helmets.

8 Among the fatalities with documented helmet use, 97 percent of the bicyclists were not wearing a helmet at the time of the crash. Only 4 bicyclists who died (3%) were wearing a helmet. All child or teen bicyclists who died were not wearing helmets. Helmet usage is required by law for all children under 14 in New York. “Bicyclist Fatalities and Serious Injuries in New York City, 1996-2005,” a Joint Report from the New York City Departments of Health and Mental Hygiene, Parks and Recreation, Transportation, and the New York City Police Department, 2005.

9 New York City Council, Int 0869-2012, accessed on June 6, 2012. <http://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=1134064&GUID=881F275B-EC8C-424A-96D2-5A794CB99A0C&Options=&Search>,

10 Brad Aaron, “Rental Helmets, Coming Soon to a Bike Share Station Near You,” Streetsblog, February 29, 2012, accessed on June 10, 2012.

11 More details and an interview with the founder can be found at “Helmet Hub Moves Forward,” *Bike Lane Living*, May, 2012, <http://www.bikelaneliving.com/helmet-hub-moves-forward>

Maintain Signage, Bike Lanes, and Safe Intersections

Signage that directs cyclists to bike lanes, bike paths, and other safe cycling routes must be well-marked and highly visible. Additionally, road signage must also be used to alert drivers to be cautious of cyclists, especially on heavily-used bicycle routes.



Photo: Smottron/Flickr

Clearly painted bike lanes direct bicyclists to safe routes and create awareness for vehicle operators.

Intersections are particularly hazardous to cyclists, as most fatalities and serious injuries occur there. Eighty-nine percent of fatalities and 70 percent of serious injuries occurred at, or near, an intersection.¹² The Department of Transportation should ensure that intersections with a high share of bicyclists are designed in a way that optimizes safety.

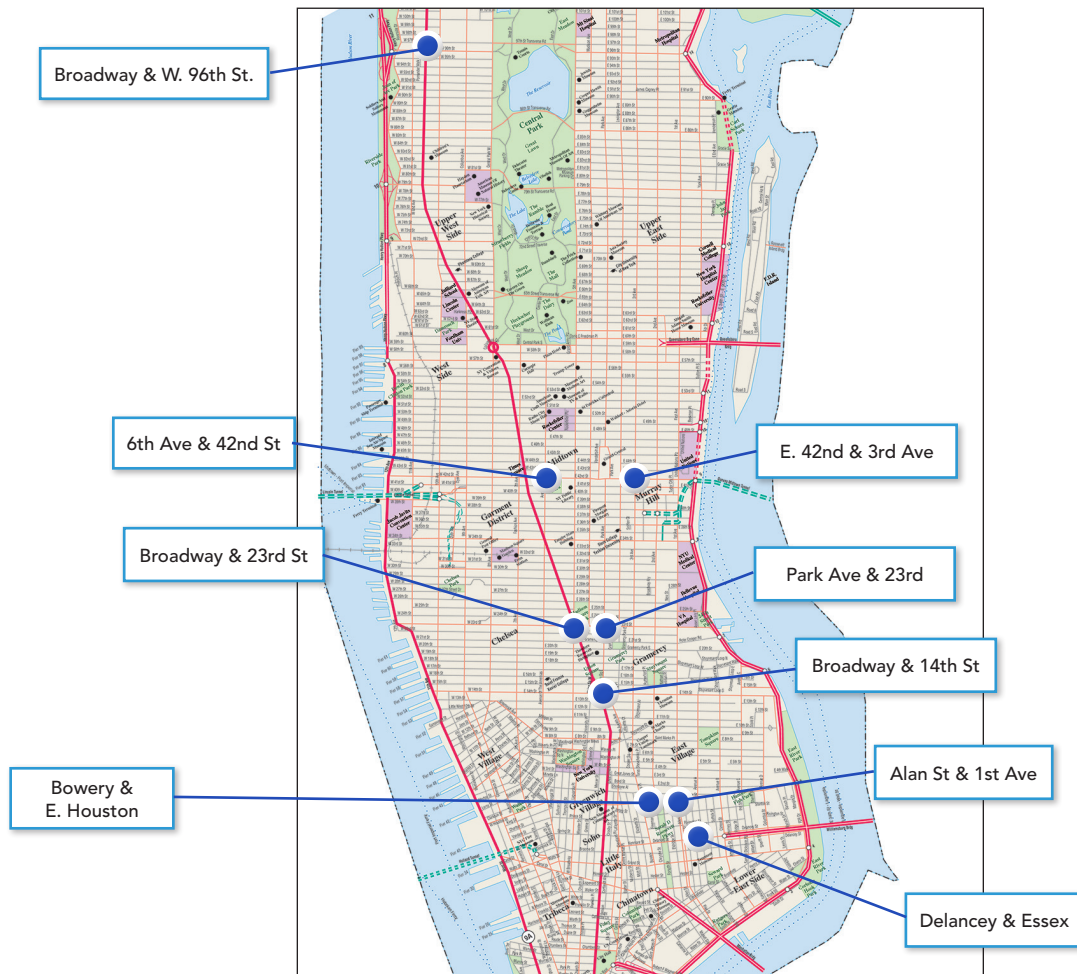
Intersections With Highest # of Motor Vehicle/Cyclist Crashes (1995-2009)		
BOROUGH	INTERSECTION	CRASHES
Manhattan	Bowery & E Houston	40
Manhattan	Delancey St & Essex St	36
Manhattan	Alan St & 1st Ave	34
Brooklyn	Tillary & Adams St	30
Manhattan	Broadway & E 14th St	29
Manhattan	5th Ave & W 23rd St	28
Manhattan	6th Ave & W 42nd St	26
Manhattan	E 42nd St & 3rd Ave	25
Manhattan	Broadway & W 96th St	25
Manhattan	Park Ave S & E 23rd St	24

Source: Transportation Alternatives

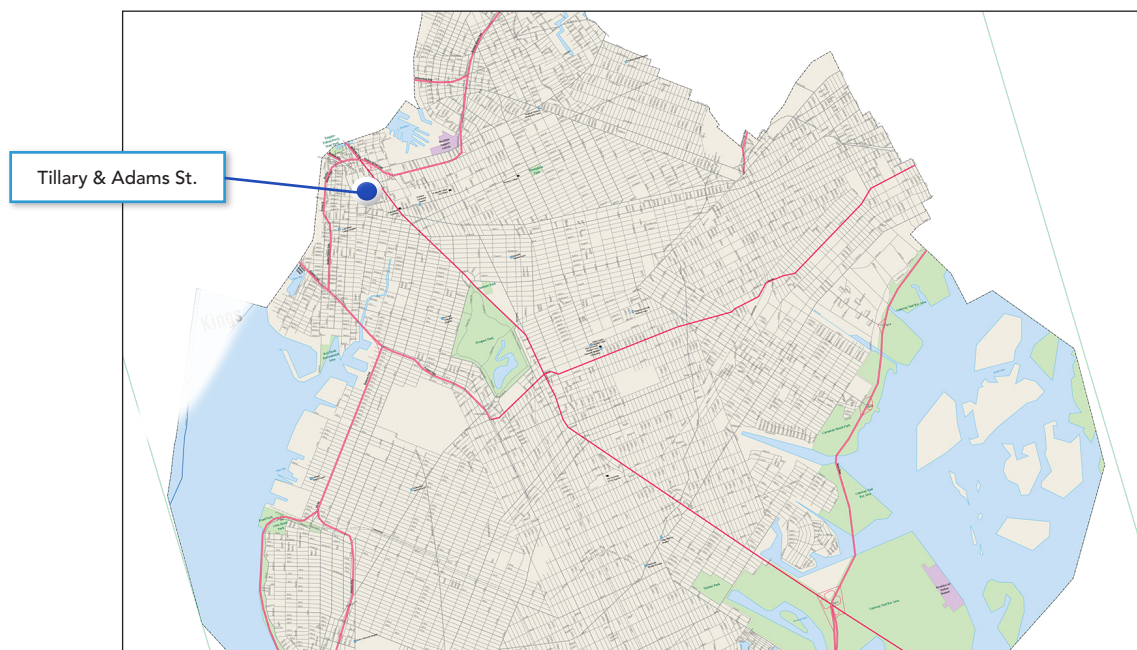
¹² John Pucher, Lewis Thorwaldson, Ralph Buehler, and Nicholas Klein, "Cycling in New York: Innovative Policies at the Urban Frontier," *World Transport Policy and Practice*, Vol. 16, Summer 2010.

Particular attention should be paid to intersections with a history of crashes. The maps below show the intersections with the greatest number of collisions between motor vehicles and bicycles. Nine out of ten of those are within the bike share network.

MOST DANGEROUS INTERSECTIONS IN NEW YORK CITY (MANHATTAN)*



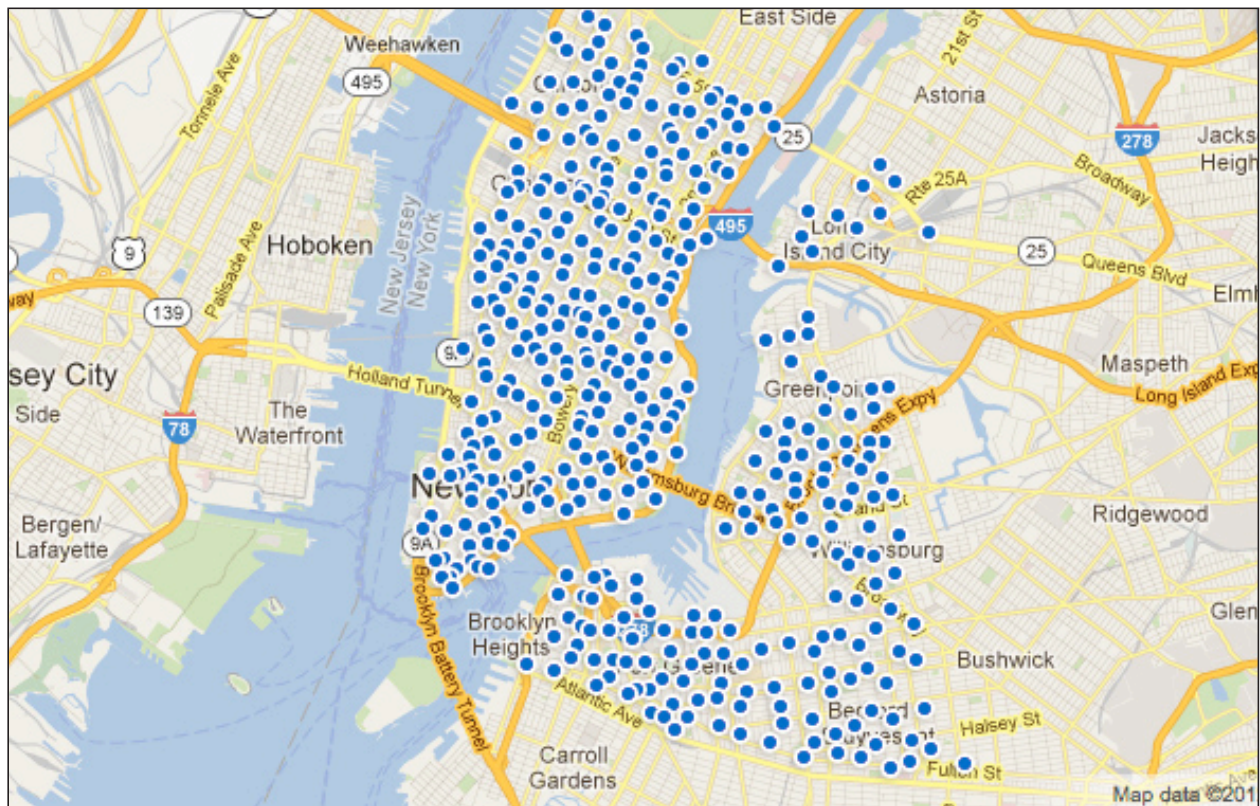
MOST DANGEROUS INTERSECTIONS IN NEW YORK CITY (BROOKLYN)*



Source: Transportation Alternatives
*For Motor Vehicle-Cyclist Crashes (1995-2009)



DRAFT CITI BIKE STATION MAP



Source: New York City Department of Transportation

Expand Safe Streets for Seniors

As demonstrated by their disproportionately high incidence of serious injury from pedestrian-cyclists accidents, senior pedestrians are particularly vulnerable to serious injury in collisions with bicycle riders. The Department of Transportation program, Safe Streets for Seniors, identifies areas with high concentrations of seniors and high rates of pedestrian accidents and implements changes to accommodate their unique pedestrian needs, such as extended cross walk times and shortened crossing distances. Programs like Safe Streets for Seniors promote a calm and safe street environment for a particularly at-risk population and should be expanded.

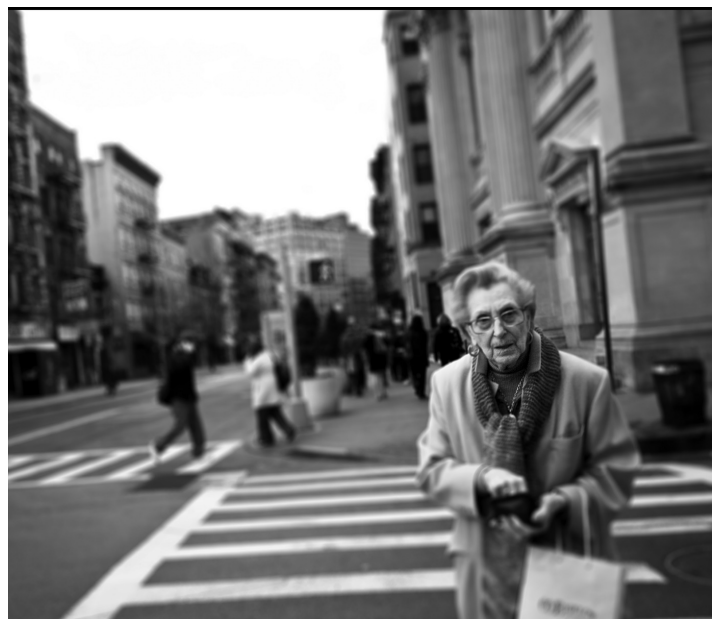


Photo: A. Strakey/Flickr



2. Educate Road Users

Supporting safe cyclists and a safe cycling environment is just part of the equation. All cyclists, pedestrians, and drivers must be educated on bike safety and the rules and regulations of the road.

The Department of Transportation and other organizations have launched several campaigns to create awareness about responsible behavior related to bicycling.¹³ Appropriate messaging is prominently displayed in print advertisements, in bus shelters, on taxi tops, bus tails, and phone kiosks so that their messages are highly visible to bicyclists, drivers, and pedestrians. These campaigns generate valuable awareness, though more can be done to educate all road users.

Expand Availability of Bicycle Safety Courses

Several organizations, such as Bike New York, Transportation Alternatives, and Recycle-a-Bicycle, offer bicycle training classes. With the growing number of bicyclists in New York City, the availability of these courses should be expanded and customized for different audiences, including non-English speakers, children, and seniors. The City can partner with these not-for-profit organizations to increase the outreach about, and accessibility to, bike safety classes.

To incent Citi Bike riders to enroll in trainings, a discount could be offered on the annual membership for people who complete bike safety training. Cyclists who receive traffic tickets could be given the option to reduce their fines by enrolling in a bike safety class.

Incorporate Bicycle Awareness into Drivers' Education

Operators of motor vehicles need to be educated about bicycle-vehicle interactions. There is very little language about cycling in the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles' (DMV) education curriculum, but especially for New York City residents, there needs to be an expanded effort to address bike safety rules and regulations during drivers' education. Outreach through the Taxi and Limousine Commission, trucking unions, and the MTA will create awareness of cyclists to the drivers that spend the most time on the roads.



Example of public awareness campaign related to bicycling

¹³ New York City Department of Transportation, "Heads Up!" http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/html/safety/heads_up.shtml, accessed on June 1, 2012; New York City Bicycle Safety Coalition, "Look!" http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/html/pr2007/pr07_84.shtml, accessed on June 1, 2012.



Teach Children to Bicycle Responsibly

There is ample precedent for this: almost all German, Dutch, and Danish schoolchildren receive comprehensive bicycle education and training in their schools by the 3rd or 4th grades.¹⁴

Promote “5 to Ride” Pedal Pledge Program

The City should partner with the “5 to Ride” campaign which was started as a grassroots effort by the Stuart C. Gruskin Family Foundation to make City streets safer for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists. The campaign promotes the signing of a “Pedal Pledge,” a promise made by businesses to educate their delivery cyclists on the “5 to Ride” rules of the road. The “5 to Ride” rules are: 1) put Pedestrians first, 2) stop at Every red light, 3) ride in the right Direction—with traffic, 4) stay on the Asphalt, off the sidewalk, 5) pick one Lane, and stick with it. To date, pledges have been made by more than 50 local restaurants in Manhattan and Brooklyn and over 100 individual bicyclists.



Example of public awareness campaign related to bicycling

3. Enforce the Rules of the Road

With cyclists, drivers, and pedestrians educated on the rules of the road and interacting in a safe environment, the next step is to ensure that the rules are enforced.

Increase the Number of Police Officers on Bicycles

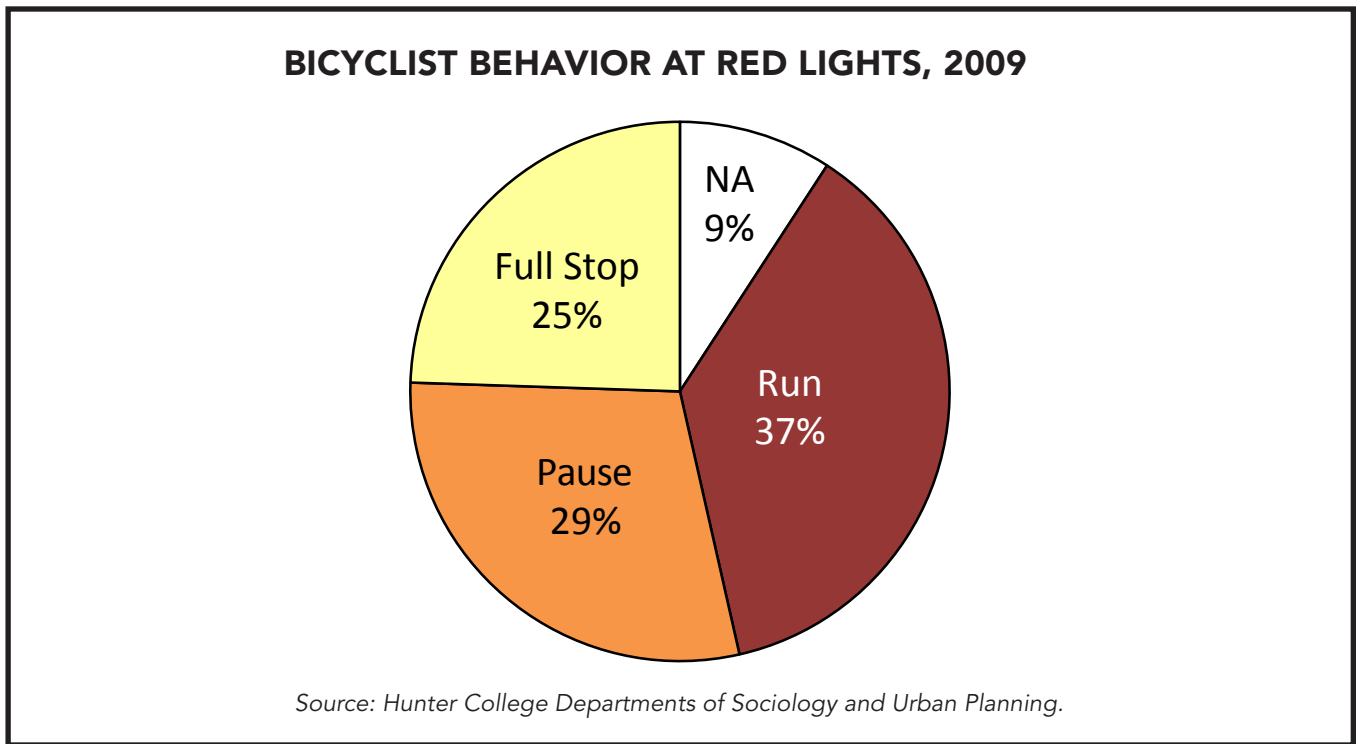
In order to enforce regulations involving cyclists, police officers need to be on bicycles too. Dedicating resources in this manner sends the message to cyclists that the NYPD is serious about enforcement. Also, as a practical matter, officers on bicycles are much more aware of blocked bike lanes when they themselves are the ones being blocked.

Target Dangerous Cyclist Behavior

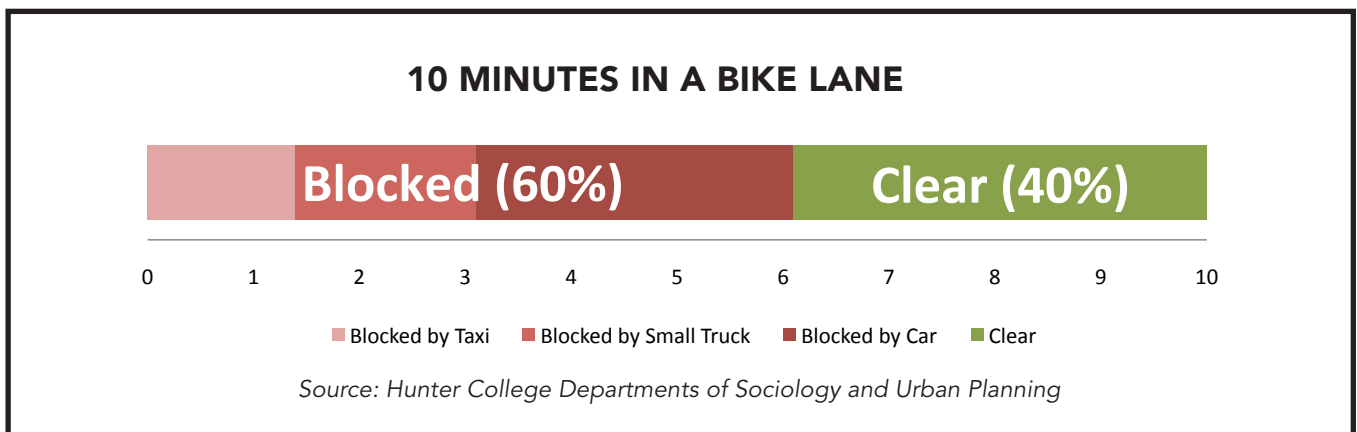
Two particularly dangerous infractions are cyclists ignoring traffic signals and riding against the flow of traffic. In a study of bicycling behavior in mid-town Manhattan, more than one-third of cyclists (37%) did not stop at red lights. Additionally, 13.2 percent of cyclists were observed riding against traffic.¹⁵ This bicycling behavior is dangerous and warrants targeted attention.

¹⁴ Pucher, Thorwaldson, Buehler, and Klein, Op. Cit.

¹⁵ Peter Tuckel and William Milczarski, “Biking Behavior in Mid-Manhattan,” *Hunter College, Departments of Sociology and Urban Planning*, 2009.



Blocking bike lanes is another example of dangerous behavior. A 2009 Hunter College study demonstrated that bike lanes are frequently blocked. During a 10-minute span of time (a stretch of just five to six city blocks), a New York City cyclist traveling in a bike lane has more than a 60 percent chance of being blocked by a motor vehicle. The biggest offenders are cars (30%), followed by small trucks (17%), and taxis (14%).¹⁶ These infractions create dangerous conditions for cyclists, as they are forced to swerve into traffic. The NYPD needs to better monitor and clear motor vehicles that block bike lanes.



¹⁶ Peter Tuckel and William Milczarcki, "Bike Lanes or Blocked Lanes? An Observational Study of Vehicular Obstructions of Bike Lanes in Manhattan," Hunter College, Departments of Sociology and Urban Planning, 2009.

Increased enforcement of other motor vehicle violations is important too. Bicycle-motor vehicle accidents are the most likely to result in fatality or serious injury. Over 95 percent of cyclist fatalities and three-fourths of serious injuries involved a motor vehicle.¹⁷ New York's roads are an interactive, multi-modal system; increased enforcement from any surface modes will increase safety across all other modes. Through greater enforcement of speed limits and greater traffic signal compliance, the roads will be safer for all users.

Target Dangerous Locations

A DOT report on 225 cyclist fatalities and 3,462 serious cyclists injuries between 1996 and 2005 revealed that crashes occurred most commonly on arterial roads and at intersections.¹⁸ Most fatalities (53%) occurred on arterials, although they account for only 10 percent of streets in New York City.¹⁹ As noted previously, the majority of fatalities and serious injury occur at, or near, intersections. For instance, the Transportation Alternatives CrashStat program shows that there were forty crashes between motor vehicles and cyclists at the intersection of Bowery and East Houston Street between 1995 and 2009.²⁰ Enforcement efforts must target these busy arterials and intersections.

To best target the most dangerous locations, there should be better interagency communication between NYPD, DOT, and NYC Bike Share to inform the efficient and effective enforcement of bicycle rules and regulations. For instance, if NYPD is reporting a spike in accidents at a particular intersection, DOT should investigate the design and infrastructure of that area, and make the necessary modifications.

4. Mitigate Liability

Despite best efforts to provide a safe cycling environment, educate road users, and enforce the rules of the road, accidents will happen.

As a self-insured entity, the City of New York is responsible for paying out claims for which it has been deemed liable. The City is most exposed to liability issues when the infrastructure for which it is responsible leads to a crash. For instance, if a cyclist is hurt due to a pothole in a City street or because of a downed stopped sign, the City may be found liable.

¹⁷ Pucher, Thorwaldson, Buehler, and Klein, *Op. Cit.*

¹⁸ "Bicyclist Fatalities and Serious Injuries in New York City 1996-2005," New York City Departments of Health and Mental Hygiene, Parks and Recreation, Transportation, and the New York City Police Department, September, 2006.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* The report defines an arterial street as "a main road or 'through corridor' with several lanes for each direction of traffic. Arterial streets make up 10% of all NYC roadways. Examples of arterial streets include Metropolitan Avenue in Queens, Ocean Parkway in Brooklyn and 57th Street in Manhattan."

²⁰ "CrashStat," Transportation Alternatives, <http://crashstat.org/sites/default/files/dangerous/Top%20Ten%20Intersections%20CITYWIDE.pdf>, accessed June 6, 2012.



Since 2002, more than 1,000 claims have been filed against the City in connection with bicycle-related accidents. The Office of the Comptroller, on behalf of the City, has settled 741 of those claims for a total of more than \$47 million. Each year, the number of bicycle-related claims and settlements has varied. In 2002, the lowest settlement year, the City paid just under \$2 million to settle bicycle-related actions, while in 2009, the highest settlement year, the City paid \$11.5 million to settle similarly related claims.

BICYCLE-RELATED CLAIMS SETTLEMENTS			
Fiscal Year	Total # Claims Filed	Total # Settlements	Total Paid
2002	117	77	\$1,992,500
2003	100	63	\$5,055,799
2004	100	82	\$2,854,815
2005	106	80	\$4,406,200
2006	117	69	\$2,072,684
2007	101	76	\$4,991,958
2008	104	74	\$6,456,894
2009	118	43	\$11,576,300
2010	102	52	\$3,005,952
2011	122	67	\$2,852,332
2012	107	58	\$2,360,763
TOTAL	1,194	741	\$47,626,197

Source: New York City Office of the Comptroller, Bureau of Law and Adjustment

In anticipation of the bike share launch, the New York City Comptroller’s Office has set up a tracking system to monitor claims filed against the City by bike share users.

There are ways for the City to mitigate the risk of having to use taxpayer dollars to cover bicycle-related claims. The first two recommendations below relate to the Citi Bike program specifically.

Increase Bike Share Insurance

As part of the Citi Bike program, the City has required Alta to purchase general liability insurance in the amount of \$10 million for each year that NYC Bike Share is in operation. The NYC Bike Share will be the largest program in North America, and it is unknown if the level of coverage is adequate. Additionally, because Citi Bike is a New York City program, it stands to reason that the City may be named in more lawsuits. For the first three years, the City should require NYC Bike Share to purchase increased liability coverage until there is sufficient historical data to determine the appropriate level of coverage



Adjust Crash-Response Procedures

A February 2012 City Council hearing investigated the NYPD's response to all crashes on New York City streets and found that the police do not have the capacity to properly investigate crashes, motor vehicle or bicycle related. In 2011, only 304 of the approximately 3,000 accidents (10%) that resulted in serious injury or fatality were investigated in New York City.²¹ Currently, the NYPD only has nineteen officers assigned to the Accident Investigation Squad (AIS).²² These officers cannot respond immediately to every crash scene. Also, in practice they typically only investigate crashes that result in a fatality at the scene.

To address this issue, two related resolutions have been introduced to the City Council—one would require five AIS officers to be assigned to each police precinct, and a second would stipulate that the NYPD investigate whenever there is a serious injury, not just when someone is killed or likely to die.²³

Crash-response procedures must be modified. Without a proper investigation, it is difficult to determine the underlying cause of an accident, which unnecessarily complicates the insurance process for all parties involved, and may increase the City's exposure if named in a lawsuit.

5. Increase Data Collection, Reporting, and Publication

Transparency and robust data collection is a prerequisite to determining what is working correctly and what needs improvement.

Currently, data about bike usage related to commuting patterns and bike ridership trends are generated by the U.S. Census and the New York City Department of Transportation. Crash data, including incidents of bicycle-bicycle, bicycle-pedestrian, and bicycle-motor vehicle accidents, are collected by the New York State Department of Health (NYS DOH), the Department of Motor Vehicles, and the NYPD. Additionally, there are not-for-profit organizations, such as Transportation Alternatives, that generate original data and analysis. On the whole, however, data collection is generally inconsistent, lacking in key areas, and often unavailable until at least a year after an incident.

In 2011, the City Council passed a bill that requires the NYPD to compile the total number of bicycle crashes that are reported to City agencies, including those that do not involve a motor vehicle.²⁴ Such reporting is helpful in understanding the magnitude of bicycle-related crashes. It is now known, for instance, that in October through December of last year there were 754 crashes involving a bicycle,

21 Victoria Bekiempis, "NYPD Slammed With Lawsuit Over Handling of Pedestrian and Cyclist Deaths," *The Village Voice*, June 11, 2012, and New York State Department of Motor Vehicles, "Summary of New York City Motor Vehicle Accidents." <http://www.dmv.ny.gov/Statistics/2010NYSAccSummary.pdf>

22 John Del Signore, "Here's Why Drivers Get Away With Murder In NYC," *Gothamist*, February 15, 2012. http://gothamist.com/2012/02/15/heres_why_drivers_get_away_with_mur.php.

23 Natalie O'Neill, "Councilman Steve Levin's Proposed Bill Forces Cops to Investigate All Serious Bicycle Crashes," *The Brooklyn Paper*, March 27, 2012. http://www.brooklynpaper.com/stories/35/13/dtg_bikebill_2012_03_30_bk.html.

24 New York City Council, Local Law 374, <http://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=777873&GUID=8FA0E3F4-FA01-4206-9677-AB27E2F07FE9&Options=&Search>, accessed on June 11, 2012



3,581 incidents involving pedestrians, and 10,272 involving a motor vehicle.²⁵ The report would be more helpful if it detailed the exact location of these incidents (versus just the precinct), and was integrated into a shared database.

New York City should become a model of transparency and innovation by making bicycling data widely available to the public. This will provide individuals and nongovernmental organizations with the opportunity to create unique tools and add value in ways previously unimagined.

For example, Open Plans is a non-profit technology organization that seeks to foster government transparency by building open source software. They used MTA data to help build an open technology platform to track buses in real time, and are now working with DOT to create a trip planning tool for Citi Bike. Another great example of transparency is Transportation Alternatives' CrashStat website. This application helps New Yorkers identify the most dangerous streets in their neighborhood through crash data displayed on easy-to-use Google Maps. Unfortunately the effectiveness of CrashStat is somewhat minimized by the fact that data is published at a multi-year lag.

Create BikeStat Website

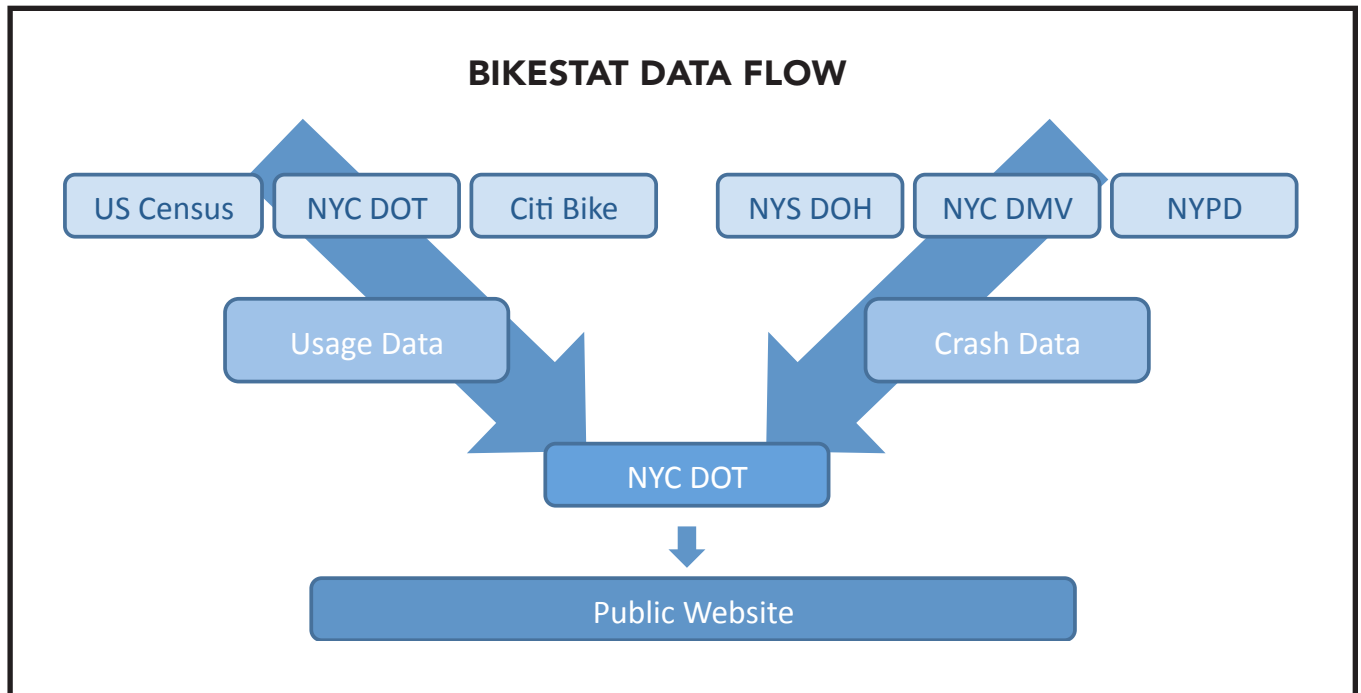
When Citi Bike launches, NYC Bike Share will be able to track an unprecedented amount of bicycling data. Citi Bike will generate a wealth of information about its users including membership, enrollment, and preferred routes and stations.

The DOT should create BikeStat, a user-friendly website where anyone can obtain relevant information and statistics about bicycling in New York City. With accurate, reliable, and timely data that consistently tracks bicycle use, route trends, and crash data, policy makers and planners can coordinate information to address hazardous conditions, improve outreach and education, enhance enforcement strategies, and increase accident responsiveness. Moreover, New Yorkers could work together to identify ways to make their communities safer.

To enhance its effectiveness, BikeStat should include geographic information and be updated, at a minimum, on a daily basis, and optimally in real time.

²⁵ "Bicycle Crash Data, October 1–December 31, 2011," New York City Department of Transportation, NYC DOT website, <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/downloads/pdf/bicycle-crash-data-report-2011.pdf>, accessed on June 11, 2012.





Conclusion

Bike riding has become an increasingly popular mode of transportation in New York City. With the arrival of 7,000 more bikes in July, and another 3,000 by yearend, it is critical that the City does all that it can to support safe cyclists and a safe cycling environment, educate all road users, enforce the rules of the road, mitigate the City’s liability, and increase data collection, reporting, and publication. The recommendations outlined in this report will help the City achieve these objectives and help New Yorkers enjoy the benefits of bike riding.





Comptroller of the City of New York

1 Centre Street, New York, NY 10007
comptroller.nyc.gov



NEW YORK CITY COMPTROLLER
JOHN C. LIU