

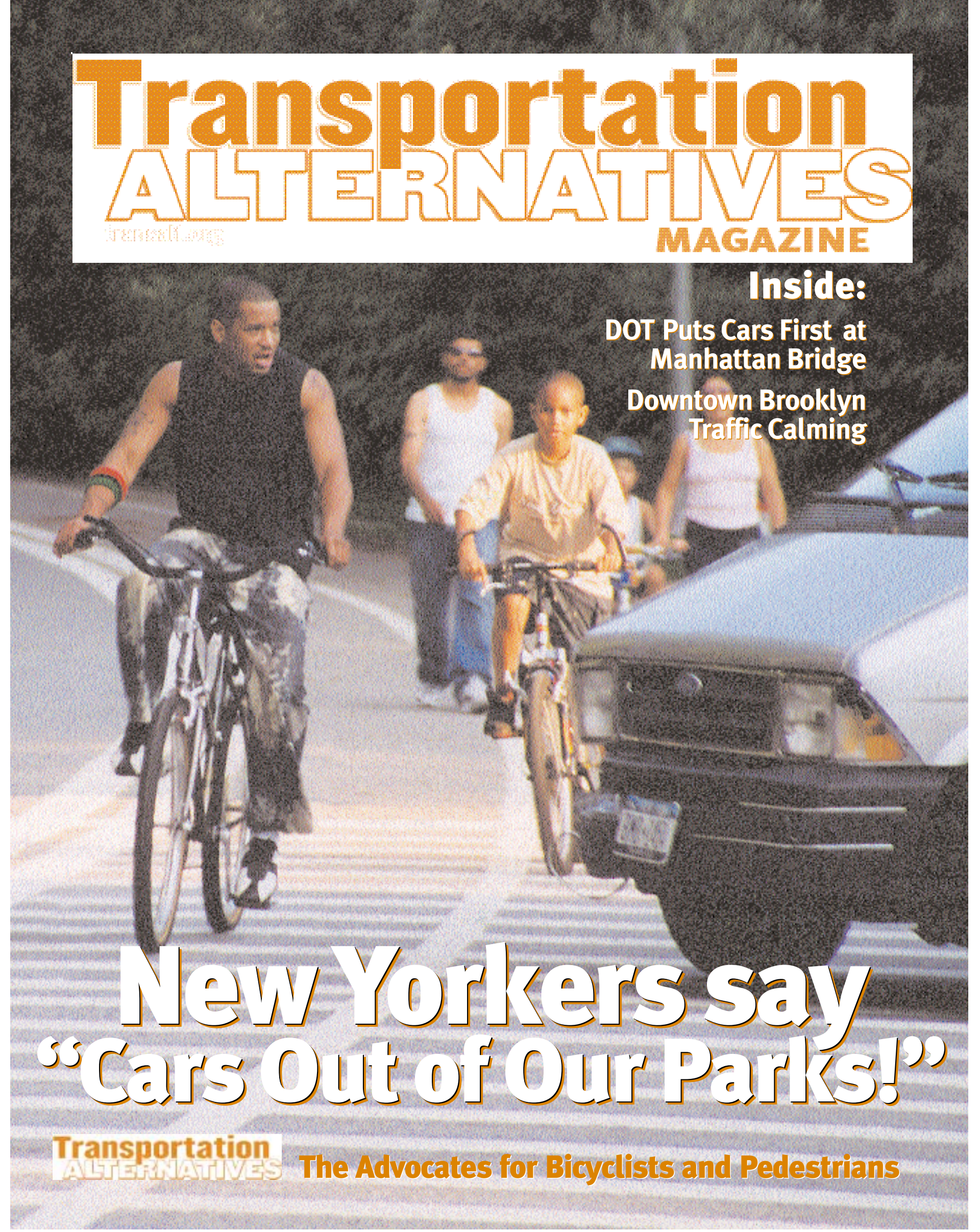
Transportation ALTERNATIVES MAGAZINE

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Inside:

**DOT Puts Cars First at
Manhattan Bridge**

**Downtown Brooklyn
Traffic Calming**



**New Yorkers say
“Cars Out of Our Parks!”**

**Transportation
ALTERNATIVES**

The Advocates for Bicyclists and Pedestrians

Provocateur

Light Rail Can Save New York!

BY GEORGE HAIKALIS

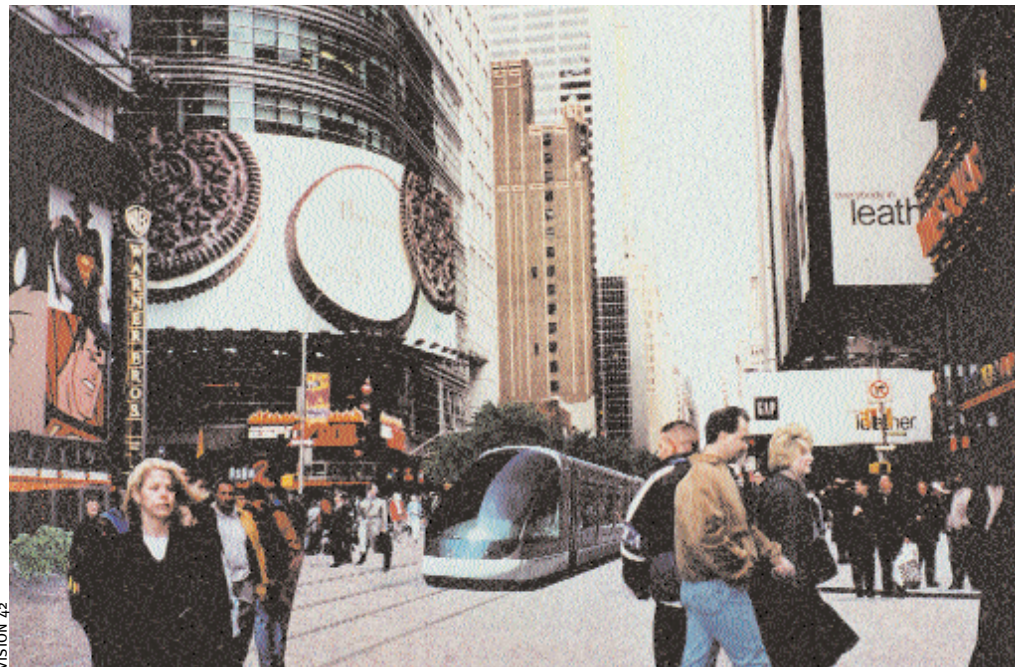
PROponents of plans to build the long-awaited Second Avenue Subway, Mayor Bloomberg's single-minded advocacy of an extension of the 7 subway line to the West Side of Manhattan and champions of a long list of other transit mega-projects have sparked a great deal of debate about the best way to expand New York City's transit system given limited funding sources. As the MTA weighs its options, it must consider three key issues: cost, construction time and public reception of the project. One proposal that is not currently a top contender for MTA approval is a light rail transit system on 42nd Street in Manhattan. Though it may not be as well known as the subways, light rail—the modern version of streetcars—would actually be a cheaper, faster and better-received solution than many of the proposals for new subways and regional rail lines.

Cheaper to Build, Cheaper to Maintain

The New York City Department of Transportation, in its 1994 Final Environmental Impact Statement, estimated the cost of the two-mile 42nd Street light rail line at \$70 million, and the costs of rebuilding the remainder of the street—clearly in need of repair—at \$30 million. Allowing for inflation, and inclusion of a plan for dramatic upgrading of the pedestrian environment, costs might be double the earlier estimate, or about \$200 million. This would still be a bargain. At \$100 million per mile, light rail costs would be less than one-tenth the cost of new subway construction in New York. The City's proposal to extend the 7 subway line for 1.2 miles to the West Side Rail Yards is estimated to cost some \$1.4 to 2 billion. In addition, the operating cost of light rail would be substantially less than the bus service it would replace.

A Fast Solution

The excitement generated by such mega-projects as the Second Avenue Subway is often quickly quelled by the sober realization that the MTA would



An artist's rendering of the proposal for a pedestrian-only 42nd Street with a river-to-river light rail system. Light rail—the modern version of streetcars—is a cheaper, faster and better-received solution to expanding the transit system than many of the current proposals for new subways and regional rail lines.

not complete the project until 2020. Similarly, the extension of the #7 train might take ten years to complete just 1.2 miles. The two-mile, river-to-river crosstown light rail on 42nd Street, by contrast, can be built in four years, with much less disruption to the everyday lives of people already living and working in the area.

Well Loved in NYC and Around the World

Though New York City's trolleys were once heavily used and much appreciated by thousands of people each day, the City systematically destroyed its 600 mile street railway system, the world's largest, beginning in the 1920's. Why? Streetcars got in the way of motorcars, which were becoming increasingly popular with the city's wealthiest and most influential citizens.

But the trend is changing. Over the past twenty years, new light rail lines have been installed in more than two-dozen North American cities. These new

lines have proven very popular, often doubling or tripling ridership in corridors where they replaced bus service and stimulating economic development in the cores of these cities. The appeal of light rail is its panache, offering something new and attractive, and its reliability and sense of permanence. New York City should be especially interested in the role that light rail can play in revitalizing the ailing post-9/11 tourist economy, much as San Francisco has used its heritage trolley to stimulate tourism along its now-vibrant waterfront.

Popular and Political Support

In 1994, the two-mile river-to-river crosstown line was approved by the City Council by a vote of 49 to 2, but it died in the Giuliani Administration after a debate about the cost of replacing utility lines and the loss of front door limousine access for a few real estate moguls. The current squabble about transit mega-projects is the perfect time to revisit the once-popular 42nd Street light rail line. This is the essence of "vision42"—a citizens' initiative that continues to gain public support.

George Haikal is a civil engineer and transportation planner, a long-term member of T.A. and a perpetual provocateur—chairing Auto-Free New York and co-chairing vision42 (auto-free.org).

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City Councilman James Davis
April 3, 1962-July 23, 2003
 Champion of a Car-Free Prospect Park
 Friend of Transportation Alternatives

Transportation ALTERNATIVES

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Danger Signs

STUCK TO OUR OFFICE BULLETIN board is a fading newspaper picture of "The Metrocard Mayor," Mike Bloomberg riding the subway his first week in office. Usually, news clips are buried under a new tidal wave of flyers, meeting announcements and postcards after a few days. But this fraying sign of promise and potential still survives.

Along with the novelty of a mayor riding the subway, Mike Bloomberg brought to City Hall a well thought out transportation plan and the desire to toll the East River bridges. Some of the Mayor's progressive transportation thinking has made it to the streets. The Mayor's top aides have championed a round Manhattan Waterfront Greenway, new sections of which will open in August. The City has also mounted aggressive lobbying efforts for more red light cameras and federal transportation funding and staffed a strong transportation office in Lower Manhattan. It has also taken on the tough task of taming trucks.

Unfortunately, no one at City Hall seems to be asking the key transportation questions of where the City wants to be in a year, two years, ten years, etc. Upon taking office, Bloomberg dissolved the Mayor's

Office of Transportation, the place where transportation policy and politics met and a key conduit for conveying the perspectives of transportation watchdog groups like T.A., the Straphangers Campaign, Tri-State Transportation Campaign and RPA (among others) to the Mayor and his top staff. This void has been aggravated by the DOT's failure to hire a much-needed Deputy Commissioner for Planning.

As a result, many of the Mayor's best transportation ideas have languished. Other great cities have launched bold new transportation initiatives. London has its celebrated congestion pricing program, but it has also made huge advances in providing better bus service through creating dedicated bus lanes and using signal timing changes and other techniques that fall under the rubric of "bus rapid transit." It has also created major new pedestrian areas, including at Trafalgar Square. The mayor of Paris has created a massive cycling network from scratch, much of it bike lanes protected by low curbs. He has also converted Paris' equivalent of the FDR into an enormously popular beach for much of each summer. Back in the

USA, Los Angeles is achieving big gains in bus service and ridership using bus rapid transit. Lastly, Chicago has launched an innovative package of bicycling encouragement programs and network of new lanes and paths that, when completed, will rival anything in Europe.

NYC isn't matching these impressive initiatives with its own. In fact, in some ways it is going backwards. Recently, City officials told the public that there would be no safety improvements at the extremely dangerous Brooklyn entrance to the Manhattan Bridge path. A few weeks later, other City representatives dismayed Downtown Brooklyn civic and community groups by telling them that the five-year, \$1.2 million Downtown Brooklyn Traffic Calming Project would result in no reduction in traffic on neighborhood streets and no pedestrian safety improvements until 2010, if at all.

NYC can and should be doing better than this. As the 9/11 catastrophe made clear, transportation is central to the city's economy, quality of life and very feel. Mayor Bloomberg needs to have someone thinking about the big picture—which

Many of the Mayor's best transportation ideas have languished.

doesn't just mean mega-projects. It means thinking about how the city treats cyclists and pedestrians and what the role of the car is. It means looking at innovations elsewhere and figuring out how to use them here. For instance, the leader behind Transport for London's bus success is now a consultant. He could be brought in to jump start the "surface subway" bus rapid transit candidate Bloomberg proposed for First and Second Avenues. Likewise, the head of Chicago DOT's bike program could be brought in to explain to officials here what they are doing.

Mayor Bloomberg made billions as an innovator and manager, someone who took good ideas and put them into practice. He needs to take his genius for innovation and give the city's transportation thinking a big push. Because, when it comes to moving people, cars, trucks and bicyclists in ways that make the city more livable and competitive, NYC is lagging the world, not leading it. Let's go Mayor Mike, this is a race we need to win.

John Kaehny
 Executive Director

City Provides Guarded Bike Parking

TENANTS WHO BIKE COMMUTE TO THE Municipal Building at 1 Centre Street in Manhattan can be assured that their bikes locked under the south archway will be secure during the workday. This spring, the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, which manages 53 City-owned buildings, installed new bike racks under the archway and stationed a daytime guard to watch them.

Citywide Administrative Services instituted the guarded bike parking after T.A., eight city council members and Municipal Building tenants asked Commissioner Martha Hirst to create a policy that would allow tenants to bring their bicycles inside all city-owned and -managed buildings.

While the new guarded bike parking at the Municipal Building is a boon for nine-to-fivers, it leaves cyclists with other work schedules vulnerable to thieves and vandals. When the City allows tenants to bring their bikes inside, it sets a good example for private building owners and managers who may not have

Guarded bike racks are secure but far more expensive than allowing tenants to bring their bicycles inside.

enough resources to hire an outdoor bike guard.

In 1999, the Department of City Planning revealed that the lack of secure bicycle parking is the number one obstacle to potential commuter cyclists in New York City and recommended that the Department of Citywide Administrative Services establish a policy allowing its tenants to bring their bicycles inside its buildings. This spring, Citywide Administrative Services reversed a ten-year old policy of allowing Municipal Building tenants to bring their bicycles inside and maintains that it has no plans to allow tenants to bring their bicycles into any of its buildings. Anecdotally,



GARY LINGARD

tenants can bring their bicycles into thirteen of the City's fifty-three buildings.

Write to Citywide Administrative Services Commissioner Martha Hirst and ask her to allow bicycles into all City-owned buildings:

Commissioner Martha Hirst
NYC Department of Citywide
Administrative Services
1 Centre Street
New York, NY 10007
[nyc.gov/html/mail/html/
maildcas.html](http://nyc.gov/html/mail/html/maildcas.html)

NYC Bike Rack Program Lagging

IN JULY, THE NYC DOT RELEASED THE new CityRacks contract for bidding. The contract calls for the installation of 1,300 racks over the next three years, about 430 racks a year. Compare this to Chicago, which installs 900 racks each year, more than double the NYC Department of Transportation's plan.

The DOT should continue to install bike racks in the unused sidewalk space behind subway station entrances. This placement encourages both bicycling and transit use. According to the Department of City Planning, transit stations are the second most requested location for bicycle parking, behind only parks. In particular, the 1,2,3,9 line subway stations from 66th to 116th Street and L stations from Bedford to Grand Avenue are perfect locations to install bike racks. These neigh-



GARY LINGARD

borhoods are conducive to bike-to-transit trips and the sidewalks are wide or could be widened.

Last summer, the DOT tested 216 "Chicago" style bike racks on New York sidewalks. The new rack design is stronger, easier to lock to and sports a svelte black paint job. Last fall, after

The DOT needs to install more bike racks at subway stops and other popular destinations like the Bedford Avenue L station in Williamsburg, Brooklyn.

reviewing the test racks, the NYC Art Commission—the agency that has jurisdiction over all street furniture in the

city—approved the new design.

To request a free CityRack, go to transalt.org/cityracks, call 212-442-7687 or write to:

City Racks
40 Worth Street, Room 1035
New York, NY 10013

DOT to T.A.: No Safety Improvements for Manhattan Bridge

IN A JUNE MEETING, THE DEPARTMENT of Transportation rejected T.A.'s urgent plea to the agency to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety at the Jay Street entrance to the Brooklyn side of the Manhattan Bridge. T.A. and many Brooklyn elected officials have urged the DOT for over a year to install the agency's own scheme to make the location safer. The 1996 plan includes permanent stop signs, pedestrian signs and a crosswalk. Once constructed, these measures would alert motorists exiting the bridge and driving on Jay Street to the presence of bicyclists and pedestrians, greatly improving their safety.

In spite of their own admission of the need for change, DOT officials say that there is too much bridge traffic to make Jay Street safer. In other words, the DOT believes that the flow of traffic is more important than the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians at the Brook-

lyn side of the Manhattan Bridge.

Instead of making the Jay Street path entrance more secure, the DOT obtusely insists that cyclists and pedestrians take an absurd quarter-mile detour that requires cyclists to walk their bikes for a half a block or ride on the sidewalk. In July, T.A. surveyed 113 cyclists and pedestrians crossing the Manhattan Bridge and found that one hundred of the people surveyed (88%) get to the bridge path via Jay Street and zero (0%) by the DOT recommended route. The remaining thirteen people (12%) approach the bridge from the north, using neither Jay Street nor the DOT's route.

Because of the way the Manhattan Bridge cuts across the street grid, Jay Street is the most popular and direct walk-



NOAH BUDNICK

The DOT refuses to install its own 1996 plan for signs and signals to make the Jay Street Manhattan Bridge entrance safe.

ing and cycling route to the bridge's path. More importantly, the street will continue to be the most popular route after the permanent bicycle path on the east side of the bridge opens in the next few years.

Join T.A. and City Councilmember David Yassky, Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz and State Senator Marty Connor by writing to DOT Commissioner Weinshall and asking her to make the Brooklyn Side of the Manhattan Bridge safe and accessible for bicyclists and pedestrians.

**Commissioner Iris Weinshall
NYC DOT
40 Worth Street
New York, NY 10013**

Hey DOT, Are You Listening? Painting Bridge Bumps Yellow Doesn't Cut It

On June 12, T.A. member Amanda Hickman wrote to DOT Commissioner Iris Weinshall asking her to remove the bumps on the Williamsburg Bridge path. She specifically noted that:

"Painting the bumps yellow doesn't make it any safer or more comfortable to ride over them."

In a letter dated July 7, DOT Manhattan Borough Commissioner Margaret Forgione responded:

"... our agency made two changes on the path to make crossing the joints easier. In May, Bridge Operations completed painting all 24 joints yellow to draw special attention to them. Additionally, the action was supplemented by the installation of standard warning signs to further alert path users to the presence of the joints."

Bridge Bumps Need to Go!



LOREN TALBOT

AGROWING GROUP OF ELECTED officials and community and civic organizations have asked the DOT to remove the twenty-six, two-inch metal bumps on the Williamsburg Bridge path: the Eastern Paralyzed Veterans Association, the United Jewish Organizations of Williamsburg, El Puente, Community Board 3 (Manhattan), the Community Board 1 (Brooklyn) Transportation Committee and State Senator Martin Malave Dilan.

The bumps span the width of the path, create hazardous conditions for path users and discourage frequent cycling on the bridge. They also appear to violate the Americans with Disabilities Act because they are barriers for disabled people. In addition, the bumps do

Bicyclists, pedestrians, community groups, community boards and elected officials say that the twenty-six bumps on the Williamsburg Bridge are dangerous.

little to slow fast cyclists, who jump over them, making conditions more dangerous for everyone.

DOT engineers frequently cite national bicycle and pedestrian design guidelines issued by the authoritative American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials when they do not want to use innovative traffic calming methods. Interestingly, these same guidelines say that multi-use paths, including those on bridges, should be smooth and free of hazards.

It is obvious to path users that the bumps are dangerous and badly designed. Hey DOT, remove the bumps!

**Commissioner Iris Weinshall
NYC DOT
40 Worth Street
New York, NY 10013**

DOT Wants to Color In Curbside Bike Lanes

IN A JUNE MEETING, THE DEPARTMENT of Transportation confirmed that, thanks in part to the positive response to the two-block blue bike lane on Henry Street in Brooklyn, it intends to use light blue or green colored asphalt to pave the city's five miles of curbside bike lanes, about two-and-one-half miles of which are on Cross Bay Boulevard in Queens. Before the DOT begins work in 2004, though,



PORTLAND, OR DOT

In Portland, OR, blue bike lanes connect to bridge paths and guide bicyclists through dangerous intersections.

it must get an agreement that contractors will maintain the colored lanes when they cut open streets. T.A. hopes that the colored lanes' success will continue and that the DOT will adapt it for other locations, such as improving bicyclist safety at dangerous and confusing greenway and bridge entrances and at heavily cycled intersections.

The NYC Bicycle Master Plan states that colored bike lanes give bicyclists "preferential status" and reduce motor vehicle speeding and illegal parking. Studies confirm that colored bike lanes increase bicyclist safety. In Portland, OR, motorists yielded to cyclists in colored bike lanes 28% more than normal and motorists slowed or stopped when approaching a colored lane 23% more than normal. Seventy-six percent of cyclists and 50% of motorists said that the colored lanes felt safer.

By nature, curbside bike lanes are safer than bike lanes striped between car parking and travel lanes. Curbside lanes are safer because, without adjacent car parking, there is little chance that bicyclists will be hit by opening car doors, the most common cause of cycling crashes in NYC.

Write to Commissioner Weinsall and ask the DOT to use colored bike lanes at greenway and bridge entrances and at heavily cycled intersections.

Commissioner Iris Weinsall
NYC DOT
40 Worth Street
New York, NY 10013

Needed: Direction Arrows for Bike Lanes



NOAH BUDNICK

To reduce rampant, dangerous wrong-way bicycling in bike lanes, the DOT should mark lanes with directional arrows.

BICYCLING AGAINST TRAFFIC IS ILLEGAL and extremely dangerous. Motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists do not look for or expect wrong-way traffic, creating dangerous situations for all. Indeed, head-on collisions are more likely to result in serious injury or death. To reduce wrong way riding, the DOT should mark bike lanes with directional arrows as well as bicycle symbols.

The city badly needs arrows on streets like Central Park West, Second Avenue, Lafayette Street and Hudson Street in Manhattan; according to City Planning counts, 26% of cyclists ride the wrong way on these streets.

Other United States cities, including Chicago, Denver, San Francisco and Portland, Oregon, use directional markings. Arrows are also recommended by both authoritative road design manuals: the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials' Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities (1999) and the Federal Highway Administration's Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (2001).

Write to DOT Commissioner Weinsall and tell her that New York City's bike lanes need arrows:

Commissioner Iris Weinsall
NYC DOT
40 Worth Street
New York, NY 10013

STREET SMART Cycling Tips

✓ Stay Away From Car Doors

Ride four feet away from parked cars, even if it means riding in a whole lane of traffic. This will reduce the chance of a motorist opening a car door into you.

✓ Never Ride on Sidewalks

When you ride on the sidewalk, you anger and threaten pedestrians and break the law. The police can take

away your bicycle and fine you \$300.

✓ Give Pedestrians a Break

Yield to pedestrians crossing streets. Stay out of crosswalks when stopped at red lights.

✓ Ride With Traffic, Not Against

Riding against traffic is dangerous for you and for pedestrians. If you ride against

traffic, you are more likely to crash with a car or pedestrian and suffer serious injury. Fine: \$55

✓ Report Crashes to the Police

If you are in a crash with a vehicle, car door or pedestrian, call 911. You and the motorist, pedestrian or other bicyclist must stay and provide your names, addresses and telephone numbers for the police.

NYPD Keeps Hudson Greenway Open During Fleet Week

IN MID-MAY, FLEET WEEK CAME ASHORE on the West Side of Manhattan, and tens of thousands of sailors and visitors flooded the USS Intrepid Museum, Passenger Ship Terminal and adjacent Hudson River Greenway.

This year, the NYPD set up a special detour for greenway users so that during most of the event the path remained open and passable. The police barricaded off the westernmost lane of Route 9A between 43rd and 48th Streets for through bicycle and pedestrian traffic.

The NYPD deserves kudos for its much-improved planning as well as for providing a greenway detour during this year's Fleet Week. However, in the future, the police department needs to coordinate more with the Passenger Ship Terminal and Intrepid, whose security people required cyclists to dismount and walk their bikes between 42nd and 50th Streets during some off-peak periods. Additionally, the City still lacks official rules that require maintenance of bicycle access to the greenway during special events and the arrival of cruise ships. Greenways are key pieces of transportation infrastructure, and the City needs to create policies that ensure that they remain open.

This year was a welcome change from the last two years of Fleet Week, when there was no detour for through greenway traffic and the huge Fleet Week crowds closed the greenway, forcing greenway users to walk and



NOAH BUDNICK

T.A. Sues State DOT To Remove Hudson Greenway Stop Signs

FOR TWO YEARS, T.A. HAS PRESSED THE State DOT and the Hudson River Park Trust in letters and meetings to remove stop signs from the middle of the Hudson River Greenway path. Placed at head height and directly in front of often-conflicting traffic signals, the signs are dangerous and confusing and have caused passing cyclists to crash, break their elbows and develop deep scalp lacerations.

Despite our pleadings and a letter from Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, the signs remain. So, on April 20th, T.A. filed a lawsuit demanding that the State DOT remove the signs for violating the State Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. In our lawsuit, we assert that the stop signs conflict with traffic lights located at the same intersections, are placed on the center of the path and are not permanently mounted. As a result, the stop signs create dangerous conditions because they contradict green traffic signals, block sight lines on the path, can be easily moved and are confusing for greenway users and motorists alike.

If you have suffered injury or crashed because of one of these signs, please contact T.A. at info@transalt.org or 212-629-8080.

Bad: Fleet Week 2002. Thousands of Fleet Week visitors crowded the greenway, closing it to through bicycle and pedestrian traffic.



NOAH BUDNICK



NOAH BUDNICK

Much better: Fleet Week 2003. Fleet Week crowds crowded the greenway again, but the NYPD set up a detour for through greenway traffic in Route 9A's western lane.

bike head-on into traffic on Route 9A.

Write to the Department of Parks and Recreation Commissioner Adriane Benepe and tell him that the Department needs policies to ensure that greenways stay open and passable during special events.

Commissioner Adriane Benepe
 NYC Department of Parks and Recreation
 The Arsenal
 Central Park
 830 5th Avenue
 New York, NY 10021
nyc.gov/html/mail/html/maildpr.html

GREENWAY Rules

Pedestrians

- Use designated walkways whenever possible.
- If you must walk on the bikeway, walk on the right, near the outside edge of the path, and walk no more than two abreast.

Joggers

- Use walkway when possible.
- When on bikeway, run on the right, near the outside edge of the bikeway and in the same direction as bicyclists.

Cyclists & Skaters

- Keep right, pass left.
- Signal with your voice or bell when passing.
- Yield to pedestrians.
- Be mindful of children and older path users.
- Never bike on walkways.

Dog Walkers

- Use a short leash.
- Do not walk your dog on the bikeway.
- Parents, keep your children safe by helping them learn these tips.

Reclaiming the Streets

A “Big Nothing” or Still Worth Cheering For?

BACK IN 1997, T.A. HOPED THAT the Downtown Brooklyn Traffic Calming Project would revolutionize the way that New York City addressed community complaints about through-traffic, dangerous driving and poor pedestrian conditions on neighborhood streets. There has been no such revolution. In June, the Brooklyn Borough President convened a meeting to wrap-up five years of community planning with the DOT, traffic consultant Arup and community groups, including T.A.



Raised crosswalk at 24th Street between 7th and 8th Avenues in Manhattan: The DOT repeatedly refused to test such four-inch high raised crosswalks in Downtown Brooklyn though they are a proven pedestrian safety tool used around the world and (quietly) here in Manhattan. Instead, the DOT built a two-inch device, which, as expected, did not work.

At the meeting, the DOT announced that it would not install any of the traffic calming recommendations in the 130-page consultant report until 2009. In short, the DOT said that, after spending five years, \$1.2 million and thousands of hours of the time of interested citizens, it would:

- Not reduce through traffic on neighborhood streets, which was the community's number one concern.
- Not install any physical pedestrian

safety or traffic calming devices like neckdowns or medians until 2009.

- Not test important traffic calming devices (some already in use in NYC) like raised crosswalks, diagonal diverters, street closures, speed cushions and median barriers.

Community leaders were dismayed and incredulous. T.A.'s representative blasted the effort as a “big nothing.” But maybe in hindsight it should not have been such a surprise. Since day one of the project, it was clear that the DOT traffic engineers disliked the

project and many of the traffic calming practices employed by the consultants at Arup. Unconstrained by an order from City Hall to listen to the consultants and general public, DOT officials sabotaged the project by undercutting the consultant and vetoing important traffic calming devices like raised crosswalks and changes of street directions. Judging from the consultant's report, the DOT also had the consultant spend an enormous amount of time and money attempting to maximize traffic flow on major arterial streets; this time spent tweaking traffic lights was time away from working on pedestrian safety and neighborhood quality of life.

DOT: No Net Reduction in Traffic Capacity

The DOT's car-first philosophy is written all over the consultant's report. In particular, its philosophy is apparent in the agency's insistence that the goal of the project is to reduce the effects of traffic, not to reduce the volume of traffic. The political impetus and community goal for the project, on the other hand, is to reduce the number of cars in the neighborhoods surrounding Downtown. This fundamental dis-



Family-style anti-traffic rally in Brooklyn Heights 1997: Election year demonstrations like this one pressured then-Mayor Giuliani to acquiesce to community demands to hire an expert consultant to help traffic calm Downtown Brooklyn neighborhoods.

Since the 1980s, Downtown neighborhoods like Brooklyn Heights, Carroll Gardens and Boerum Hill have implored the City to do something about the avalanche of traffic clogging their streets. The issue came to a head in 1997 when the State DOT raised the specter that the Gowanus Expressway would have to be rebuilt, pouring 400,000 cars a day onto already jammed streets. With T.A.'s help, community groups staged five early morning traffic-blocking actions that featured families carrying signs. The demonstrations got great TV coverage and put pressure on then Mayor Giuliani, who was up for re-election that year, to acquiesce to community demands to hire an independent consultant to work with the DOT and the public to reduce traffic and “traffic calm” Downtown Brooklyn. Neighborhood groups and T.A. helped write the request for proposal for the consultant, which was based on a proposal for Federal clean air funds drawn up by Brooklyn traffic engineer Brian Ketcham. The neighborhood groups also sat on the committee selecting the consultant, an important first for New York City.

Reclaiming the Streets

agreement about the purpose of the project is at the root of its problems. While the community wanted a net reduction in traffic, the DOT sought only to shift traffic from small streets to big streets. Remarkably, a perfect opportunity to observe the effects of closing streets in the project area presented itself when Clinton Street, a busy, middle-size street, was torn up completely for replacing giant water and drainage pipes. Traffic counts showed that some traffic diverted to adjacent streets, but that, overall, traffic declined. This confirms, yet again, the findings of a huge 1998 British government study which surveyed 50 major road and bridge closings around the world, including in NYC, and found that, in 49 of the cases, overall traffic declined. Unfortunately, the DOT and the consultant did not seem to understand what they saw on Clinton Street. The groups believed that every car taken off a small residential street would appear on a major street; hence, the huge amount of work spent retiming traffic signals.

The Consultant's Report

Ultimately, with their options severely limited by the DOT, Arup recommended that the agency install numerous neckdowns (extensions of the sidewalk at corners) throughout Downtown neighborhoods. Neckdowns narrow the crossing distance for pedestri-



Inexpensive traffic calming at Yeshiva University in Northern Manhattan: The DOT refused to use inexpensive techniques like this to test the effects of narrowing streets and widening sidewalks.

ans and slow turning cars, thus helping to reduce the number of pedestrians struck by turning drivers. However, neckdowns do not reduce vehicle speeds or discourage vehicles from using small, neighborhood streets. If the DOT actually spends \$3.6 million to build traffic calming improvements in 2009, it should spend it on more than neckdowns. These neighborhoods need real relief from traffic, a need that has only grown since the City announced that Downtown Brooklyn would be rezoned to encourage massive new office buildings.

Read the Downtown Brooklyn Traffic Calming Report at transalt.org/campaigns/brooklyn/dbtc/arup.html.



Bollards at 59th Street and 5th Avenue in Manhattan: Bollards are an attractive and inexpensive way to enlarge pedestrian space without expensive drainage work. The DOT refused to consider designs like this in its Downtown Brooklyn traffic calming study.

DOT Short Term Plan Is Bonanza of Bike Lanes and LPIs

Concessionary Bike Lanes

As a sop to the angry community, the DOT has fast-tracked 30 traffic signal timing, parking and bike lane improvements intended to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety. The agency expects to have the improvements in place by the end of 2004, and many of them sooner. T.A. and the communities would warmly welcome these changes, were it not for the fact they are but a modest response to a massive community planning process.

Giving Pedestrians a Head Start

Most of the planned signal changes are for Leading Pedestrian Intervals, which change the timing of the walk symbol so that it comes on two to three seconds before motorists get a green light. This head start for pedestrians gives walkers time to establish themselves in an intersection before motorists turn across their path. Leading Pedestrian Intervals are proven to improve pedestrian safety; the City has installed them at about 200 intersections.

New Bike Lanes To Be Installed in Next 14 Months

Street	From	To	Description
3rd Ave	9th St	Dean St	16 block bike lane
Dekalb Ave	Flatbush Ave	Vanderbilt Ave	13 block bike lane
Myrtle Ave	Gold St	Vanderbilt Ave	10 block bike lane
3rd St	Smith St	3rd Ave	Bike lane & signage to discourage trucks
Ashland Pl	Dekalb Ave	Myrtle Ave	Bike lane
Dean St			11 block bike lane
Bergen St			Bike lane
Clinton St	Hamilton Ave	Tillary St	Twenty block bike lane on w/s of the st.
Henry St	Atlantic Ave	Clark St	Extend blue color bike lane for 7 blocks
Union St	Hicks St	3rd Ave	8 block bike lane

Reclaiming the Streets

T.A. Launches “Safe Routes for Seniors and Schools” in N. Manhattan



JOHN KAERNY

Traffic calmed shopping areas benefit seniors. Here at 46th Street and Queens Boulevard at the Sunnyside shopping area, some older pedestrians enjoy benches on a sidewalk extension.

tion but account for 36% of pedestrian fatalities. Children are 20% of the area's population and account for 49% of pedestrian injuries. Mapping also shows that children and seniors in the area tend to be struck at the same dangerous streets and intersections.

T.A.'s goal is to work with leaders from seniors groups, service providers and some schools to win pedestrian safety improvements in a two block area around 12 senior centers, major destinations and schools. These improvements include neckdowns, raised crosswalks, speed humps, longer crossing times and pedestrian head starts, or Leading Pedestrian Intervals. An estimated 150,000 pedestrians will benefit from these improvements. We hope that, in the places where senior centers and schools are close together, both institutions will call for the same slate of pedestrian improvements.

Though T.A. will not formally launch the project until later this year, T.A. Safe Routes for Seniors Outreach Director, Karla Quintero, began meeting with local leaders of seniors groups and service providers in April. The leaders have given the project a hearty welcome and are enthusiastic about making it work.

WITH FUNDING AND SUPPORT from the New York State Department of Health's "Healthy Heart Program," and in cooperation with the Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center and Mailman School of Public Health, T.A. is starting a major new five-year program to improve walking conditions and safety for seniors in Manhattan north of 110th Street. The five-year program is modeled on T.A.'s innovative "The Bronx Safe Routes to School," which won traffic calming improvements at six Bronx schools,

extensive plans for pedestrian improvements at 32 more and inspired New York City to launch a \$2.5 million "Safe Schools" project to traffic calm the area around 32 schools.

Northern Manhattan is a dangerous place for pedestrians, and seniors and children are the most vulnerable walkers. According to crash mapping done by T.A. using State DMV records, northern Manhattan's pedestrian crash rate is about 50% higher than the city average. Furthermore, seniors, defined as people age 65 and older, are about 15% of northern Manhattan's popula-

Warning! Traffic Lights Can Be Bad for Pedestrians

THE NYC DOT IS BESIEGED by requests for new traffic signals from communities seeking to reduce speeding and improve conditions for pedestrians. The agency often refuses these requests, which angers the public. But in this case, the DOT is usually right.

On low volume streets, traffic lights can actually make dangerous conditions even worse by encouraging speeding and increasing traffic. Philadelphia removed 400 traffic



Despite what many community groups may think, traffic calming devices, like the speed table in the Prospect Park South neighborhood of Brooklyn, are usually much more effective at reducing dangerous speeding than traffic lights.

lights after an official study found that traffic lights increase the frequency and severity of crashes. Unfortunately, many community groups, uninformed

and groping for any answer to their traffic problems, latch on to lights as their only hope. In many places, stop signs, speed humps and other traffic calming devices offer a better solution.

Curbing NYC's Truck Problems



TO ITS CREDIT, THE DEPARTMENT of Transportation has embarked on the difficult task of taming trucks in New York City. For years, huge numbers of trucks have strayed from truck routes, double parked and overwhelmed city neighborhoods with noise, vibration, air pollution and danger. In June, the DOT launched the New York City Truck Route Management and Community Impact Reduction Study with the firm of Edwards and Kelcey as its consultant. The study resurrects an earlier effort which sank under harsh community criticism that it was biased in favor of truckers.

The focus of the current study is keeping trucks on truck routes through improved signage, enforcement and street engineering. However, the DOT has insisted in public meetings that it wants the study to examine a wide range of measures to reduce truck impacts. In July, T.A., the Tri-State Transportation Campaign, NY Environmental Justice Alliance and other groups recommended to the DOT a number of things that the City can do to reduce the harmful side effects of trucks, including identifying ways to keep trucks on designated routes and out of neighborhoods using traffic engineering, enforcement and education.

Recommendations

1. Traffic calming Refine traffic calming approaches to keeping trucks on legal and appropriate routes, as the DOT has done in some Bronx and Staten Island neighborhoods.

2. Use "No Trucks" signs The DOT says that "negative" signage does not seem effective at discouraging illegal truck traffic, yet many police officials have told us that the signs encourage police enforcement and make summonses easier to uphold in court.

3. Assess automated truck enforcement cameras

4. Improve police enforcement The lack of effective police enforcement of existing truck routes and regulations is a huge problem. We need to understand how police enforcement currently does and does not work, specifically:

- Determine the kinds and number of truck summonses given and how they are adjudicated.
- Assess how to use TrafficStat to improve truck enforcement.
- Gather examples of effective police enforcement and training strategies.
- Consider implications of pending state legislation that would impose higher fines for driving off of designated

The DOT is conducting a new study to tame truck traffic on neighborhood streets. In order to reduce the full extent of truck impact on city streets and neighborhoods, the DOT should follow the recommendations below.

routes, and push the State Department of Motor Vehicles to impose fines for this offense.

5. Use smart parking policies to reduce truck double parking The underpricing of curbside parking causes widespread double parking, especially by trucks making deliveries to retailers and by commercial service vehicles.

- Expand the commercial vehicle congestion pricing program beyond midtown.
- Increase on-street parking fees where double-parking trucks are a problem.
- Identify locations where government permit parking forces trucks to double park and seek to reduce or relocate permit parking.

6. Expand restrictions on the biggest trucks Current city rules bar trucks over 55-feet long (unless given a special permit by the DOT) at various times of day from three congested areas in Manhattan.

7. Keep trucks on highways where possible and appropriate As much truck traffic as possible should be rerouted from city avenues and streets to the limited-access highway network.

8. Non-stop tolls Non-stop tolls that use E-ZPass or license plate cameras connected to computers like those in London have eliminated the reason for the destructive one-way toll on the Verrazano Narrows Bridge that funnels trucks into lower Manhattan.

Getting the most from the study

- Ensure trucking interest groups fully participate in the truck study.
- Use the internet to share findings and update the public.

T.A. Rallies to Stop Speeding Frenzy in Central Park

T.A. radar study finds 1 of 4 motorists in Central Park exceeding speed limit by 10 mph

EVER WONDER JUST HOW FAST those cars in Central Park are really going? So did we. So for five days in June, T.A. used a radar gun to measure speeds at various locations around the park's loop drive. The results confirmed what most park users have long known: speeding in the park is out of control. T.A. found that 90% of motorists speed and that 23% drive more than 10 mph over the 30 mph limit.

Central Park's loop drive is used by thousands of runners, cyclists, walkers and skaters during the popular morning and evening periods when cars are allowed in the park. These vulnerable users are separated from the speeding vehicles by a thin white line and a few feet of space. The speeding puts them at severe risk of being struck and killed or injured; indeed, Jesus Martinez, a promising amateur bicycle racer for Kissena Bicycle Club, was hit by a speeding car in 1998 while training in the recreation lane on the loop drive and had part of one foot severed.

Ken Coughlin, chair of Transportation Alternatives' Car-Free Central Park Committee summed up the problem. "Cars and Central Park do not mix," he said. "Cab drivers and other motorists treat the park drive like a Grand Prix course. Putting thousands of joggers, cyclists and skaters in a recreation lane inches away from these speeding cars is a recipe for disaster."

Coughlin noted that speeding has been a problem in the Park for decades and that despite years of complaints, police speed enforcement is limited and sporadic. "Of course the police should enforce the speed limit in Central Park. But they have their hands full and there will never be enough cops to permanently stop speeding in Central Park. The clear answer to this ongoing safety crisis is to make Central Park car-free."

Transportation Alternatives' Car-Free Central Park Committee gathered on June 2 to tell motorists to slow down and to bring attention to the epidemic of speeding on Central Park's loop drive. The rally was given extensive airplay by NY 1 TV news and covered by Fox 5 TV. But to date, there has been no crackdown on speeders in Central Park.

Radar Speed Study

Using the same kind of radar gun as many police departments as well as standard traffic engineering sampling methods, Transportation Alternatives measured the speeds of 850 vehicles on Central Park's loop drive on five weekdays in June. (For the full speed study, see transalt.org/press/releases/030701cpark.html.)

Findings

The posted speed limit in Central Park is **30 mph**. The average speed is **36 mph**.

90% of motorists exceed the legal speed limit

67% exceed the speed limit by 5 mph or more

23% exceed the speed limit by 10 mph or more



JOHN KAEHNY

50,000 Sign Petition Calling for Car-Free Central Park

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES Car-Free Central Park Committee has collected the signatures, names and addresses of more than 50,000 New Yorkers who want cars out of Central Park. The all-volunteer petition drive has enlisted sweaty joggers, celebrity cyclists and park-loving pedestrians who all agree on one thing:

"I support making the Central Park drives permanently car-free. Central Park was painstakingly designed to be a green oasis in the city, not a thoroughfare for motor vehicles."

But the petition drive is not over and we need your help to get more signatures. Sign the petition online at transalt.org/campaigns/cpark/petition.html and then tell all your friends and family!

How big is 50,000? It is:

- **2,000** pieces of paper, each with 25 signatures stacked in two very big boxes
- **15,000** more than the 35,000 motorists who drive through the park everyday
- Almost twice the average of **26,000** votes received by the city councilmembers whose districts surround the park



Though they are too young to vote or sign a petition, kids want and need car-free parks. The looks of fear on these two girls' faces as they try to bicycle in Prospect Park near speeding cars shows that frustration with cars in parks is learned early. Where can they play if not a park?

The dedicated Car-Free Central Park Committee has gathered over 50,000 signatures in support of a car-free Central Park.



Three Myths about Car-Free Parks

There are numerous myths about car-free parks. Here are three.

? Myth: "Closing the park to cars will increase congestion on surrounding streets."

! Reality: A massive British government study of 50 locations around the world conclusively found that closing roads reduces overall traffic. History shows the same to be true in NYC. In 1958, Fifth Avenue was closed to create Washington Square Park and traffic in the surrounding area declined. In 1973, the elevated West Side Highway was torn down and traffic in southern Manhattan and adjoining streets declined.

? Myth: "Cars make the park safer."

! Reality: Speeding cars, which crowd park users together and periodically hit them, make Central Park more, not less, dangerous.

Crime? The police and other experts agree that the presence of other walkers, runners, skaters and cyclists are what make Central Park safe. More people use the park when it is free of cars.

? Myth: "Motorists are park users too."

! Reality: Motorists are not "park users." They use the physical space of the park, but they do not use it as a park; they use it as a highway. Half of the land in NYC is already dedicated to moving and storing motor vehicles, and less than 10% to parks. Why should that 10% be compromised by dangerous and loud motor vehicle traffic?

Four Good Reasons for Car-Free Parks

There are numerous reasons for car-free parks. Here are four.

! Peace and quiet. New Yorkers endure stressful noise and unhealthy pollution, much of it produced by motor

vehicles. Central Park was created to be a haven from these assaults on the senses.

! Save lives and prevent injuries. A crowded multi-use lane next to a de facto expressway is a recipe for disaster. Cars average nearly 40 mph when in the park. Each year, cars hit more than a dozen pedestrians and cyclists on the drive and create crowding that causes numerous other crashes.

! Decrease traffic near the park. The park drive is a magnet for cabs traveling between Midtown and the Upper East and Upper West Sides. Cabs are 85% of the vehicles using the park drive, and when the park is closed to them, they spread out on the street grid to find the fastest alternative route.

! Reduce conflicts between runners, cyclists and skaters. Once cars are out, park users will have more space and time on the park drive, which can be clearly marked to separate users of different types and speeds.

Cycling News

Making Chicago “The City That Bikes”

CHICAGO MAYOR RICHARD DALEY’S goal is “to make the City of Chicago the most bicycle-friendly city in the United States.” Daley has been mayor since 1989 and was re-elected to a fifth term in 2003 with 78% of the vote. You will not find a more powerful big city mayor. So, when Daley says he wants a velorution, New York City cycling advocates watch closely.

This spring, the Chicago DOT sent out a remarkable edition of its regular newsletter laying out the City’s broad bicycling goals and implementation plan.

CDOT News: Bike 2010 Plan Edition

Boost trips made by bike—Especially short trips like errands and children riding to school.

Reduce bicycle crashes—Combat the most common causes of bicycling injury and endangerment.

To measure its success, Chicago will carefully track changes in the number of cyclists and the number of crashes. This will help the City understand if its programs are working or not. In contrast, the City of New York grades itself based on the miles of bike lanes and number of bike racks it installs, indicators that do not necessarily reflect cycling conditions.

Chicago’s Ongoing Bicycle Improvements and Outreach

DOT-Led Bicycle Education Tours Since 2000, the Chicago DOT’s Bicycle Pro-



CHICAGO DOT

A Chicago style Bicycle Ambassadors program could do much to promote bicycling in NYC.

novice bicyclists bike more, fit helmets and perform bike safety checks. (In NYC, there is enormous public anger against bicyclists riding on sidewalks and disre-

specting pedestrians. This saps the support for cycling.)

gram has led six two-hour bicycle tours each summer. Now, more people want bike facilities. Attendees vary from DOT engineers and staff to elected offi-

cialists to community groups, and topics vary from the technical aspects of bike lane design to garnering community support for bicycle projects.

Chicago vs. New York

	Chicago, IL	New York, NY
Population	3,000,000	8,000,000
Land Area (square miles)	228	309
Density (avg. pop./sq.mi)	13,000	26,000
City Budget (2002)	\$4.6 billion	\$42 billion
Government Bicycle Staff	20	10

Mayor Daley’s Bicycle Ambassadors The five summer Ambassadors attend 200 community events a year where they teach the public about bike safety, sharing the road, bike lane and bike path etiquette and how to bike to work and school. They also help

DOT Bike Parking Program Chicago has already installed 8,000 on-street bike racks (versus 2,000 in NYC) and installed secure parking at twenty-one transit stops. Now the City is working with building owners to build secure bike parking areas for their tenants. Next year, plans are to build a downtown bike station near transit that will have secure bike parking, showers, lockers and bike repair and rental.

DOT Bike Lane Design Guide Developed by the Chicago DOT Bicycle Program and approved by Mayor Daley and DOT Commissioner d’Escoto, the CDOT Bike Lane Design Guide established the safest bike lane standards for the forty most common roadway configurations in Chicago. The design guide makes traffic planning most efficient and greatly reduces internal DOT debate between bike planners and traffic engineers.

Bike 2010 Plan

The Bike 2010 Plan is Chicago’s most recent campaign to achieve Mayor Daley’s goal of America’s most bicycle-friendly city. The Chicago DOT contracted the Chicagoland Bicycle Federation (a local advocacy group) to seek public input and develop recommendations to make biking safer and encourage more people to ride.

Initiatives include:

- Ensure quality bike lanes and paths through heightened inspection, signing, striping, repaving and sweeping.
- “Sunday Ciclovía”—Create a weekly event by closing a network of streets to motorized traffic on Sunday mornings to encourage families to do regular physical activity.

- Collect and track data on bicycle trips and set goals to increase the number of bike trips.
- Create “bicycle boulevards” that use traffic calming measures to lower motorist speeds and discourage through-motor vehicle traffic.
- Install raised bike lanes to provide cyclists with more protection from traffic.

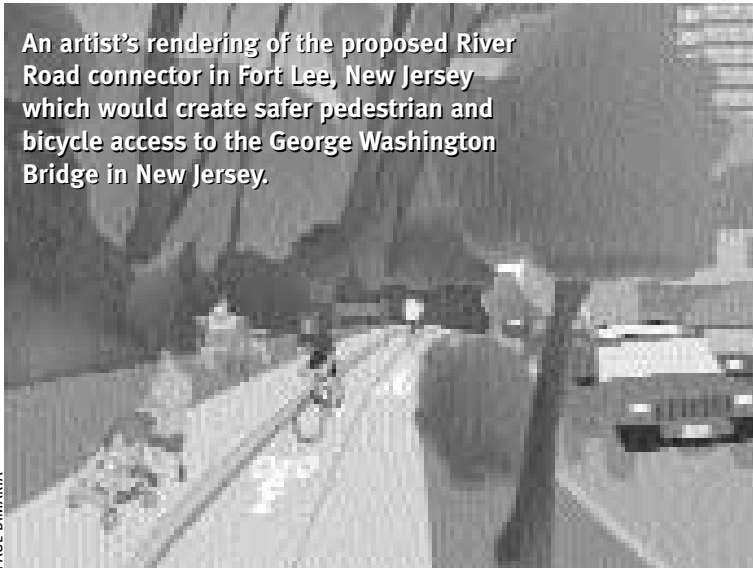
- Use colored pavement at intersections to reduce conflicts between bicyclists and motorists.

- Encourage the Department of Revenue’s Parking Enforcement Agents, Emergency Medical Technicians, Chicago Department of Transportation, Chicago Police Department and other city agencies to use bicycles.

- Support the Chicagoland Bicycle Federation, Chicago Cycling Club, Chicago Critical Mass, Chicago Bike Winter, Friends of Chicago Parks and others.

Support Grows in NJ for GW Bridge to “River Road” Connector Path

An artist's rendering of the proposed River Road connector in Fort Lee, New Jersey which would create safer pedestrian and bicycle access to the George Washington Bridge in New Jersey.



PAUL DIMARIA

THIS SPRING, BERGEN COUNTY Executive Dennis McNerney and New Jersey State Senator Joseph Coniglio (Fort Lee) endorsed building a half-mile long off-street path between the New Jersey side of the George Washington Bridge bicycle and pedestrian path and Henry Hudson Drive (aka River Road) in Palisades Interstate Park.

The path, proposed by T.A., would provide a safe and direct cycling route along Main Street and Hudson Terrace. Currently, the 1,500 bicyclists and

pedestrians traveling between the bridge and the park on an average weekend day must endure a blind turn, steep hill and three of New Jersey's most dangerous intersections. Over the winter, T.A. enlisted more than a dozen transportation, environmental, planning and civic organizations to call on the Port

Authority of New York and New Jersey and the Palisades Interstate Park Commission to work together to build the half-mile path. Now, this coalition aims to increase its ranks and win the support of more New Jersey elected officials. The Port Authority is planning a \$86.5 million reconstruction of the George Washington Bridge's New Jersey-side entrance ramps. Construction is scheduled to start in the second half of 2004. The River Road connector could be added to this construction contract at very little additional cost.

Write to the Port Authority and the Palisades Interstate Park and urge them to build the greenway:

Joseph Seymour, Executive Director
Port Authority of New York and New Jersey
 225 Park Avenue South
 New York, NY 10003
jseymour@panynj.gov

James F. Hall, Superintendent
Palisades Interstate Park Commission New Jersey Section
 P.O. Box 155
 Alpine, NJ 07620
jhall@njpalisades.org

Supporters of Path

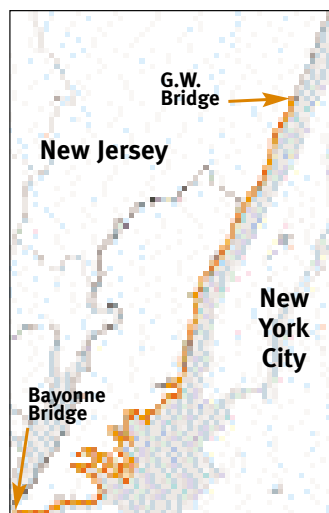
- AAA Club of North Jersey
- Bicycle Touring Club of North Jersey
- Bike New Jersey
- Central Jersey Bicycle Club
- East Coast Greenway Alliance
- Hudson River Fisherman's Association
- Hudson River Waterfront Conservancy
- Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance
- New Jersey Bicycle Advisory Council
- Pedestrian Task Force of New Jersey
- Regional Planning Association
- Transportation Alternatives
- Tri-State Transportation Campaign

Jersey's Long Campaign for Hudson River Waterfront Path

THE REGIONAL PLAN ASSOCIATION'S 1966 "LOWER HUDSON" study proposed the creation of a continuous eighteen-mile walkway and bikeway along the Hudson River from the Bayonne to the George Washington Bridge. Since then, advocates have fought hard to preserve public access to the waterfront despite massive residential development.

The 1984, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Coastal Zone Management regulations require developments within 500 feet of the high tide mark to include a thirty-foot wide public multi-use path along the Hudson River waterfront. Some developers have built these paths but do not provide public access to them through their developments.

Since 1990, a coalition that includes the Hudson River Waterfront Conservancy, Fund for a Better Waterfront, Friends of the Weehawken Waterfront, the Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance, Hudson River Fisherman's Association and the Trust for



Civic groups want property owners to provide public access to the proposed Hudson River Walkway Multi-use Path in New Jersey.

Public Land, has worked and fought with developers and the government to ensure publicly accessible and well-connected paths. Despite developers' guardhouses and "private property" signs, advocates have negotiated and sued to ensure public access to the path, often working to extend the street grid to the water's edge.

As older industrial sites and waterfront properties are developed, the multi-use path has grown. According to the NJ Department of Environmental Protection, a total of eleven miles are completed, though five of these

miles are a sidewalk along Broadway in Bayonne. In the last ten years, two-and-half miles of path opened in Liberty State Park, and a total of three miles opened in Hoboken, Weehawken and West New York. The George Washington Bridge-River Road connector path (see above article) would be the northern piece of the Hudson River Walkway Multi-use path.

IMAGE PROVIDED BY OASIS NYC. BASEMAP DATA COPYRIGHT NYC DOITT, 2001

Lessons from London

London Reclaims Trafalgar Square, is Times Square Next?

LONDON'S NEW, SUCCESSFUL congestion pricing program has opened up the city to thinking beyond just the flow of motor vehicle traffic. Now, the city is actively engaging in redesigning major public spaces like Trafalgar Square in the heart of London to better serve pedestrians, cyclists, people with disabilities and visitors. As cars move out and walking and cycling London enthusiastically moves back in to the world famous square, the question becomes, when will New York City reclaim its world famous public space—Times Square—from dangerous, suffocating car traffic?

Rethinking Trafalgar Square

Pedestrians, cyclists, people with disabilities and visitors to Trafalgar Square are now all benefiting from major improvements to the area. Trafalgar Square is London's most popular outdoor space and one of the most famous squares in the world, containing both the National Portrait Gallery and the National

As part of a larger project to improve its major public spaces, London has reclaimed Trafalgar Square from motor vehicle traffic and redesigned it to accommodate pedestrians.

Gallery. However, the city's development and high volumes of traffic had detracted from its magnificent setting and increased pollution in the Square. Before the redesign, the Square was dominated by traffic; visitors would often have to cross up to three lanes of traffic in order to reach the center. The now pedestrianized north side of the Square carried 1,500 cars an hour and was a pedestrian danger zone. In order to turn this inaccessible speedway into a truly accessible popular public space, Transport for London, the city's transportation agency, developed its World Squares for All Masterplan in 1998. Using the plan, the city removed traffic from the north side of the square on September 1, 2002



and then constructed an impressive new pedestrian terrace and grand staircase linking the National Gallery with the square below.

A key part of the plan was reclaiming two large areas from cars, adding nearly 1,500 square meters of space for pedestrians. These improvements were expected to reduce motor vehicle traffic capacity by about 30-40%. The city has improved traffic flow with a new circular plaza, which controls traffic at the junction of five major streets. The plaza also improves access and safety for pedestrians traveling between the Square and major destinations.

Along with reducing traffic capacity in the Square, London shifted some traffic to the south of the Square. There, the city installed traffic-calming measures and changed the direction of some of the smaller roads to prevent overflow traffic and increase pedestrian safety.

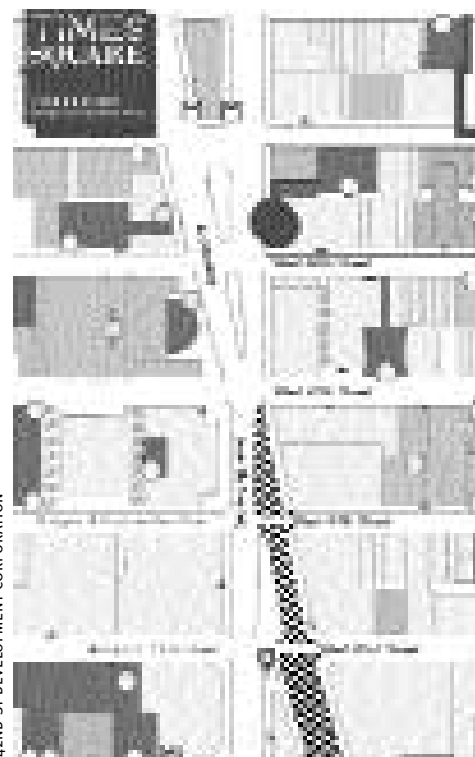
In the Square, the most striking part of the makeover is the addition of a grand central staircase linking the National Gallery directly to the Square for the first time. A pedestrian piazza has replaced the road on the north side of the Square, reducing noise and improving safety and accessibility. The city has also added a slew of amenities for pedestrians, including provisions for disabled pedestrians.

For more information on the reclaiming of Trafalgar Square, see tfl.gov.uk/streets/wsfa_abt.shtml.

Broadway Plaza

LONDON HAS RECOGNIZED THAT its famous public places are far too valuable to overrun them with dirty, noisy car traffic, and so should New York City. A pedestrianized Times Square, known as Broadway Plaza, would benefit both pedestrians and drivers. The redesigned Square would provide the city's millions of residents and visitors with a central public gathering place to enjoy the sites and the (non-motorized) sounds of this great city as well as improve traffic flow for drivers by eliminating the traffic crossing of 7th Avenue and Broadway. Instead, what is supposed to be the "Crossroads of the World" is now a congested highway for speeding taxis and cars eager to move through rather than move in the Square.

Broadway Plaza would encompass both Broadway and the adjoining traffic island with the TKTS booth, creating a large gathering spot. There could also be room for a second plaza on Broadway



south of 45th Street, below the building at 1 Times Square, where the famous ball drops.

Metropolitan

News from the Metro NYC Region

Summer 2003

NEW JERSEY

NJ Builds New Transit While NYC Flounders

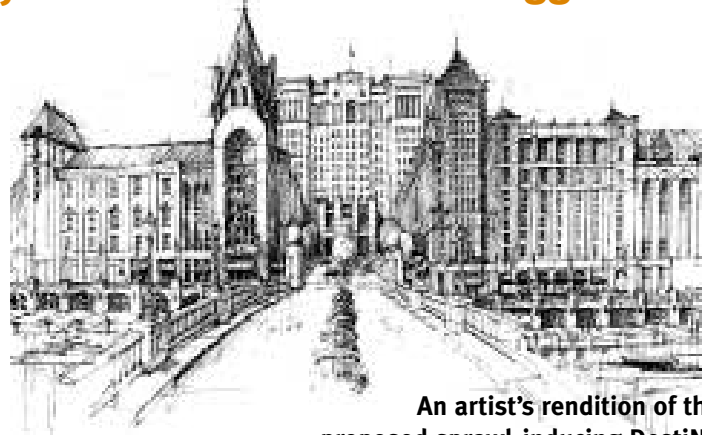
UNLIKE NEW YORK CITY, WHERE THERE IS A LOGJAM OF competing mega-projects and nothing new is ever built, New Jersey has spent the last decade actually completing new transit projects.

Since 1991, New Jersey Transit has successfully built commuter rail connections for two new "Midtown-direct" services and tied its entire north Jersey rail network together at the new Secaucus Transfer station. It has also built two new light rail lines (Trenton-Camden will open this summer) and has a Federal Transit Administration full-funding agreement for a third (Newark-Elizabeth).

Looking forward, New Jersey politicians are backing one major project for federal funding: Senators Lautenberg and Corzine and Governor Jim McGreevey all agree that winning funds for a second New Jersey-Midtown commuter rail tunnel is the state's top priority in the latest version of the federal Transportation Equity Act. Editorials in the *Star-Ledger*, *Asbury Park Press*, *Trenton Times* and *Courier-News* have supported the project and the state's leaders.

NEW YORK STATE

Syracuse Won't Get World's Biggest Mall



An artist's rendition of the proposed sprawl-inducing DestiNY Mall in Syracuse, New York.

THE PYRAMID MANAGEMENT GROUP ANNOUNCED IN JULY THAT it will not build DestiNY, a \$2.2 billion mall outside of Syracuse, New York because of problems with the city. Instead, the angry builder plans on building the mega-mall elsewhere in New York or the Northeast. Environmentalists and civic groups have often blasted Pyramid as a master of winning questionable zoning changes and using tax abatements to build sprawl-fueling malls and mega-stores in the midst of rural areas, destroying mom and pop stores and devastating main streets. Despite the setback, Governor Pataki, State Senate Majority Leader Bruno and Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver are still falling over themselves to give Pyramid \$600 million in tax abatements to build the mall elsewhere in upstate New York.

NEW YORK CITY

Mega-Project Logjam

BACK IN NEW YORK CITY, A PHENOMENAL \$60 BILLION WORTH of transit and rail mega-projects are competing for limited federal, state and MTA funding. The mayor's favorite project is extending the 7 Train west from Times Square to service a future Olympic/New York Jets Stadium. However, this project has no other patrons and must get in line behind the East Side LIRR connector to Grand Central Station, the Second Avenue subway, an improved Nassau/Fulton subway center, a rebuilt South Ferry 1 train and the cross harbor rail freight tunnel. In July, the *Daily News* reported that the planned \$645 million extension of the N train to LaGuardia Airport championed by former-Mayor Giuliani would probably be removed from the wish list. Around the same time, the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation added a new mega-project to the list when it launched a \$5 million study of Long Island Railroad access to lower Manhattan. Promoted as a way to connect lower Manhattan to JFK airport, the project largely consists of building a new tunnel under the East River from the LIRR Flatbush Avenue terminal to the transit hub being planned downtown.

REGION

Attention MTA Bridges: High Speed E-ZPass Works

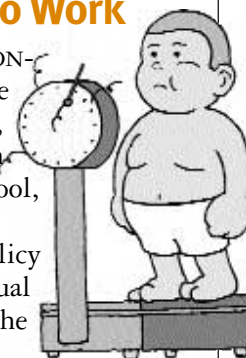
THE MTA REQUIRES MOTORISTS USING E-ZPASS TO SLOW TO 5 mph and wait for a gate to rise before proceeding. This speed requirement is unnecessarily slow and delays traffic at MTA crossings; E-ZPass can actually work at speeds of up to 50 mph. Not surprisingly, other local toll agencies want to take advantage of the full technology. In June, the Port Authority equipped the toll lanes at the Outerbridge Crossing with 25 mph E-ZPass lanes in a pilot program to test non-stop tolling on all three Staten Island-New Jersey crossings (Outerbridge, Bayonne and Goethals). Up river on the Tappan Zee Bridge, the New York State Thruway Authority is building two 20 mph non-stop toll lanes. The new lanes will process up to 1,800 cars per hour, up from its current capacity of only 800.

NATIONAL

Fat American Kids Get Driven to Work

ACCORDING TO THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL, one-third of American children are obese or overweight. A recent study by Belden, Russonello and Stewart found that more than 70% of parents used to bicycle or walk to school, while only 18% of children do today.

According to Surface Transportation Policy Project, in Washington, the estimated annual cost of physical inactivity and obesity in the United States is approximately \$117 billion.



Sensible Transportation

Pataki Trade Center Site Tunnel to Cost \$45,000 an Inch

YES, GOVERNOR PATAKI AND HIS State DOT are totally serious about building a four block tunnel alongside the World Trade Center site that will cost \$45,000 an inch—for a total of \$860 million—and take more than five years to build. In June, the agency presented two options for the Route 9A/West Side Highway near the site, but one option was to do

nothing. This “No Build” alternative is required by environmental law, but it is never adopted. In other words, the State DOT is saying that it is going to build the tunnel.

New York City elected officials are cool to the idea and object to the huge expense. The officials, local residents, environmentalists, good government groups and civic groups (including T.A.) believe that the money would be far better spent on improving transit access to and far from downtown. Instead of the tunnel, T.A. and other opponents of the tunnel support an urban boulevard with a promenade, which would cost \$175 million and take only two years to build.

The rationale for the tunnel is to create more green space near the trade center site and 9/11 memorial. But the tunnel actually creates only very little more space than



Despite enormous community opposition, Governor Pataki wants to build an \$860 billion tunnel to replace four blocks of West Street in Lower Manhattan.

the boulevard option: 12 foot wide sidewalk versus 10 foot and 64 feet of green space adjacent to the sidewalk versus 54 feet. However, even this minor difference (12 feet total) could easily be

evened up if the State DOT puts two turn lanes at Liberty and Vesey Streets.

Hopefully, the fact that groups as disparate as AAA and Transportation Alternatives oppose the tunnel will encourage Governor Pataki to rethink his support for the tunnel.

For more information on this issue, see the Web site of the Coalition to Save West Street, saveweststreet.com.

Opposing the West Street Tunnel

U.S. Congressman Jerrold Nadler

New York City Council Member Alan J. Gerson

Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields

State Assemblymember Deborah J. Glick

American Automobile Association of NY

The Clean Air Campaign

Straphanger's Campaign

New York City Transit Riders Council

Rebuild Downtown Our Town

Transportation Alternatives

Tri-State Transportation Campaign

New “Hours” Report: E. River Bridge Tolls Cut Traffic, Save Time



The Bridge Tolls Advocacy Project's new report reveals that East River bridge tolls would be cost effective and would reduce traffic and save time, especially for residents of Brooklyn and Queens.

THE HOURS,” A NEW REPORT FROM the Bridge Tolls Advocacy Project has found that tolls on New York City's East River bridges would reduce traffic on and around the bridges and reduce travel times by an average of five minutes.

The report also reveals that tolling the bridges will reduce traffic on neighborhood streets near the bridges because motorists will stay on the Long Island Expressway and continue through the tolled Midtown Tunnel instead of detouring on Long Island City streets to the currently free Queensboro Bridge. Likewise, motorists will stop detouring from the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel to the Brooklyn Bridge and Manhattan Bridges.

This reduction in traffic through

downtown Brooklyn is crucial to the success of the massive new development planned in that area. Without tolls on the Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridges, downtown Brooklyn

will choke on massive traffic jams.

Time saved from the tolls would be worth an estimated \$650 million a year to drivers. This savings translates to more than 90% of the expected \$700 million annual out-of-pocket costs of tolls.

Finally, the report shows that 80% of the reduction of traffic congestion will be in Brooklyn and Queens or on the bridges themselves, which means that tolls will primarily benefit Brooklyn and Queens residents. Another Bridge Tolls Advocacy Project paper earlier this year found that only 2% of Brooklyn and Queens residents would pay more than \$50 a year on tolls. This is most likely the same 2% that can afford to pay for parking and all the other expenses associated with driving a car daily in NYC.

Fugheddaboudit! You Can't Beat Brooklyn's Transportation Thinkers

NEW YORK CITY HAS SOME OF THE TOP TRANSPORTATION THINKERS IN THE world. Among the most innovative are Brooklyn's Bruce Schaller, a consultant who has produced reports for T.A. and the Straphangers Campaign on the benefits of the car pool restrictions on East River bridges, bus rapid transit on First and Second Avenues in Manhattan, Metrocard fares and improving service on the M96 bus. Schaller Consulting's latest report details how to improve the slow and unreliable B41 bus. Similarly, Community Consulting Services (CCS) has produced numerous important studies that highlight inexpensive and practical ways to improve the transportation system and quality of life in Brooklyn. CCS founders, Brian Ketcham and Carolyn Konheim, have been the best hope for creating a practical borough-wide transit system that finally provides the level and full range of service that Brooklyn so badly needs. Indeed, Ketcham and Konheim were the lead writers for CCS's new report, "Better Transit for Brooklyn: A Proposal for a Brooklyn Transit Agenda," which outlines 26 plans for a comprehensive and cheap way to improve mass transit throughout Brooklyn.



SCHALLER CONSULTING

Schaller Consulting: Improving Service on the B41

In its latest report, Schaller Consulting outlines why the B41 Limited bus, which travels 7.4 miles on Flatbush Avenue between Downtown Brooklyn and the Kings Plaza mall and serves 44,000 riders on a typical weekday, is one of the slowest bus routes in Brooklyn. The bus currently averages speeds of less than 8 mph (slower than a chicken or domestic pig). Solutions include:

- **Add a bus lane on Flatbush Avenue** between Livingston Street and 5th Avenue, in effect inbound between 7 am and noon and outbound between noon and 7 pm.
- **Add a bus lane on Flatbush Avenue** in the vicinity of the Junction, between Farragut Road and Avenue I, in effect throughout the day on both sides of the street.

Brooklyn's Schaller Consulting recently released a report on improving service on the B41 bus, which currently travels slower than a chicken and domestic pig.

- **Increase bus lane enforcement** throughout the route.
 - **Institute pre-boarding fare payment** at the Atlantic Avenue and Nostrand Avenue bus stops.
 - **Reconfigure the bus parking area at Kings Plaza** to allow buses to pull in more quickly.
 - **Replace the bus stops at Hoyt Street and Bond Street** with a single intermediate stop at Elm Street.
 - **Extend limited-stop service** from Kings Highway to Kings Plaza.
 - **Extend the length of certain bus stops** so that buses do not need to wait to enter the stop.
 - **Improve the marking of bus lanes,** bus stops and the Cadman Plaza terminus.
- Read the full report at transalt.org/info/pub.html#re.

CCS: Better Transit for Brooklyn

Community Consulting Services' report, "Better Transit for Brooklyn: A Proposal for a Brooklyn Transit Agenda" presents 26 plans for mass transit in Brooklyn, some of which would cost the Metropolitan Transportation Authority pennies per rider to implement and could be finished relatively quickly. Brooklyn's 2.3 million

Brooklyn's Community Consulting Services has developed a cheap, fast and comprehensive plan for improving mass transit throughout Brooklyn, including the much-beleaguered G train.



COMMUNITY CONSULTING SERVICES

daily transit riders generate the most transit trips and fare revenue of any county in the MTA region and comprise one-third of the city's transit users. But the average work trip by transit by Brooklyn residents is 18 minutes longer than the regional average, with some subway segments operating with "crush loads." And, in spite of making the largest contribution to the fare revenues that back MTA bonds, Brooklyn fare payers get the least capital investment per rider (\$1.04 vs. \$1.12 average for NYC Transit and \$5.76 average for commuter rail).

Among the main suggestions of the report are:

- **Establish longer routes** on the F, G, L, R, V, 4 and 5 lines.
- **Extend the life** of retired subway cars by refurbishing them.
- **Allow for street-level transfers** at intersecting train lines, such as the G and M in Williamsburg.
- **Connect downtown Brooklyn to lower Manhattan** and Kennedy Airport through an East River tunnel.
- **Equip city bus drivers with satellite global positioning system** receivers so that they do not bunch up and cause delays.
- **Add express bus service** in areas where trains do not go.

Read the full report at communityconsulting.org/BklynTransit/Bklyn-Trans.html.

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Auto-Free WORLD

Car Hits Pedestrian with Safety Flag in California Crosswalk



Berkeley, California's recent pedestrian flag "safety initiative" substitutes carnage for common sense.

FORTY-EIGHT HOURS AFTER CITY OFFICIALS placed pedestrian safety flags at a corner in Berkeley, California, a driver in a Jeep hit a 53-year-old woman in the crosswalk carrying a flag. After hitting the pedestrian, the driver swerved into the oncoming lane and collided with another vehicle. The driver was cited for failure to yield to a pedestrian. While saddened by the news, Berkeley officials saw the accident more as a testament to intersection's danger than the flags' effectiveness. Berkeley City Councilwoman Polly Armstrong, who sponsored the flag measure said, "We hope over time—when drivers are paying a little more attention than that driver was—that [the flags would] be helpful." She added that, "Pedestrians have to be on guard and aggressive with their flags."

Oakland Tribune

Give Donkey Bray(k) Too, Israelis Told

PEOPLE FOR THE ETHICAL TREATMENT OF Animals has written Israeli President Moshe Katsav praising the government for sticking reflective strips on camels so that the animals do not get hit by cars on darkened roads. The organization asked him to "use your good office to extend this program to the most overworked beast of burden, the donkey. In these rural areas, motorized vehicles knock them both down with some regularity." There was no immediate comment from Katsav's office.

NY Daily News

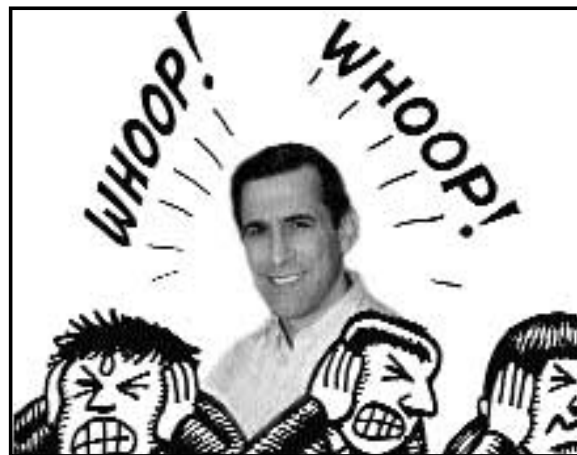
June 1 Car-Free Champs Elysees

SUNDAY, JUNE 1 WAS CAR-FREE DAY ON the Champs Elysees in Paris. The entire avenue was filled with pedestrians; the event also featured an exhibition of historic trains as part of the French Railway's celebration of 150 years of rail in France. The mayor made a press announcement stressing how much people were enjoying themselves on the avenue, which the day before had been carrying six lanes of traffic.

CarBusters

Darrell Issa: Car Alarm Congressman

DARRELL ISSA, A REPUBLICAN CONGRESSMAN from Orange County, California, has won April's "Noisy Dozen" award from Noise Free America, a national



Can I get a "whoop whoop?!" Congressman Darrell Issa is making a fortune off of your lost sleep.

lobbying group dedicated to opposing noise pollution. The group gave Issa the award for promoting dangerous boom cars, hot rods on public roads, useless and annoying car alarms and the violently loud "Boom and Vroom Car" lifestyle. Issa is the former chairman of the powerful Consumer Electronics Association. He is the founder of the Mobile Enhancement Association, Directed Electronics and VIPER car audio and alarms; the con-

gressman has made \$100 million as the owner of VIPER. Issa, a candidate for the United States Senate from California in 2004, is a member of the Congressional Automotive, Performance, and Motorsport Caucus, which advocates legalizing noisy racing equipment on city streets. As head of the Consumer Electronics Association, Issa has traveled around the country lobbying against municipal noise ordinances.

PRWeb

Cleveland Radio Station Advocates Assaults on Cyclists

ON THE MORNING OF JULY 2, LOCAL STATION WMJI-Majic 105 read an e-mail from a listener saying that bicycles should not be on the roads. At least one of the station's DJs told listeners who were in cars to do things like:

- Speed past the bike, pull back into the lane and slam on their brakes;
- Speed past the bike, have the passenger open their door and put on the brakes;
- Yell and/or honk at all cyclists as they pass them in their car;
- Throw things like cans or rolls of pennies out their window at cyclists.

The next day, the station's DJs continued taking calls from listeners and further encouraged drivers to do whatever it takes to get cyclists off the roads. Callers who agreed with the DJs were awarded a gift certificate at a local restaurant. In response, several organizations contacted the Federal Communications Commission and Clear Channel, the station owner. After a flood of complaints, Clear Channel and WMJI-Majic agreed to rectify the situation by, among other things, broadcasting public apologies from the offending DJs, running public service announcements throughout northern Ohio and donating money to local bicycling causes.

CarBusters

Bike to Transit

Going somewhere? Bring your bike. Use our listings of bicycle policies of area trains, buses and ferries. Detailed information of our full list is online at transalt.org/info/aboard.html.

TRAINS

Amtrak 800-872-7245, AMTRAK.COM. No permit. Bicycles travel only in baggage cars. You may put your bike on an earlier train and pick it up when you arrive (no tandems). Bicycles usually must be boxed. \$5 fee each way. Roll-on service at most stops on "Adirondack" trains. Call for reservations.

Long Island Railroad 718-558-8228, MTA.INFO. Need permit; pick up from Penn or Grand Central Stations. \$5 one-time fee. Limit two bikes per car, four bikes per train. Wkdy OB: departing Penn Station 9 am-3 pm and 8 pm-7 am. Wkdy IB: arriving 10 am-4 pm and 7 pm-6 am. Wkends and Holidays: see permit.

Metro North 212-532-4900, MTA.INFO. Need permit; pick up from Grand Central, window #27. \$5 one-time fee. Limit two bikes per car, four bikes per train. Port Jarvis line—get NJ Transit pass. Wkdy OB: departing Grand Central 9 am-3 pm and 8:15 pm-6 am. Wkdy IB: arriving 10 am-4 pm and 7 pm-6 am. Wkend: no restrictions. Holidays: See permit.

New Jersey Transit 973-762-5100, NJTRANSIT.COM. No permit. Wkdy OB: departing Penn Station 9:30 am-4 pm and 7 pm-5 am. Wkdy IB: arriv-

ing 9:30 am-4 pm and 7 pm-5 am. Wkend: no restrictions. Holidays: see permit.

NY Transit (subway). MTA.INFO. No permit. Be considerate and use ends of train cars. A few stations' gates limit bike entry/exit at times.

PATH 800-234-PATH/201-216-6247, PANYNJ.GOV. No permit. Wkdy OB/IB: 9:30 am-3:30 pm and 6:30 pm-6:30 am.

BUSES

Greyhound 800-231-2222, GREYHOUND.COM. \$15/bike. Provide your own box or \$10.

MTA 718-445-3100, MTA.NYC.NY.GOV. Seasonal on QBx1 over Whitestone Bridge.

NJ Transit 800-777-3606/973-491-9400, NJTRANSIT.COM. No fee. Luggage bays on northern Jersey division.

Peter Pan 800-343-9999, PETERPANBUS.COM. No fee. Travels in luggage bay. Box required.

FERRIES

NY Waterway 800-53-FERRY, NYWATERWAY.COM. \$1/bike.

Staten Island Ferry 718-815-BOAT, SIFERRY.COM. No fee. Enter at lower level.

Going somewhere?

transalt.org/info/aboard.html



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Zoe Ryder White

Occupation: Kindergarten teacher at PS 116 in East Midtown, Manhattan

T.A. member? Yes

Commute: From Baltic Street between 4th and 5th Avenues in Park Slope, Brooklyn to 33rd Street between 2nd and 3rd Avenues in Manhattan. It depends on how late I am! If I'm in a hurry, I go down 4th Avenue to Bergen right on Smith/Jay Streets and then onto the Manhattan Bridge. In Manhattan, I go up 3rd Avenue all the way to school. If I have time, I take the Brooklyn Bridge to the Hudson River Greenway (so much nicer and safer) and then cut across town on 30th Street in Manhattan. More often, though, I take the quicker way.

Bike: A rattly but trusty and beloved Giant Iguana I bought 10 years ago in Minnesota.

Gear: I wear a Winwood helmet and use blinky lights from Planet Bike and one of those fluorescent yellow pants-leg holders.

Parking: I park in the back of the book room at my school. My colleague, Julienne, parks in a little closet in her classroom. I know another teacher who parks her bike behind her easel in the classroom.

How long commuting? A couple of years.

Why started? I started commuting because of my husband, who promotes bicycling in developing countries. Before I knew him and other serious bike commuters, I was scared to ride in the city. I rode in Prospect Park sometimes and in my neighborhood, but almost never in Manhattan. I didn't know about the Hudson River Greenway and other bike lanes either. But once he showed me the ropes, I was converted! I love seeing where I am all along the way, going in and out of neighborhoods

and smells, catching bits of conversations at traffic lights.

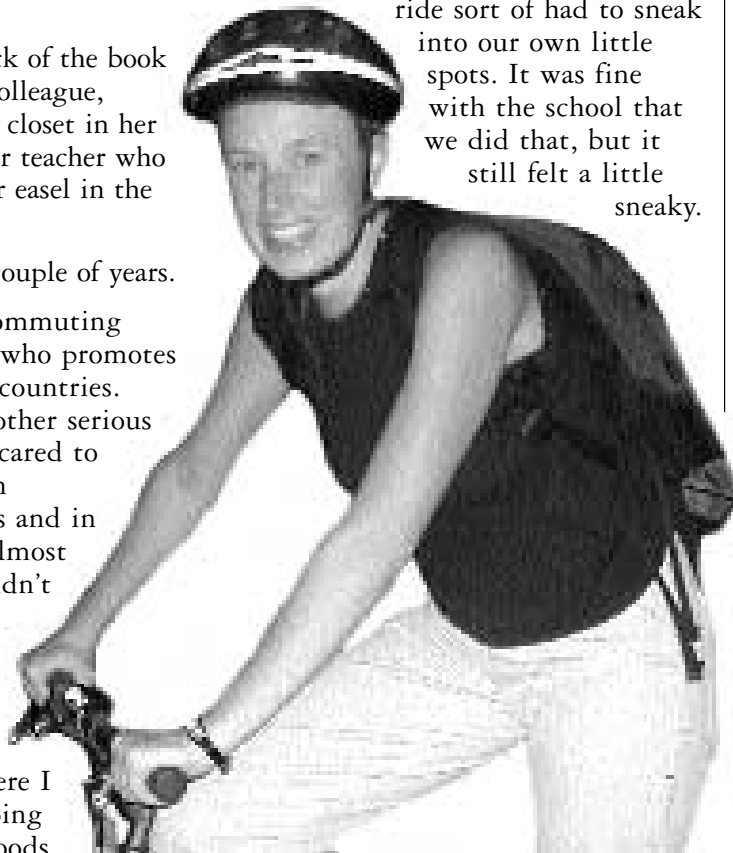
Attire: Mostly I just wear whatever I am wearing to work.

Weather: I don't ride when it's really freezing out and if it's raining hard because I get lazy about allowing enough time to change my clothes for work (if I were to get drenched), especially since I try to be at work at 7 am.

Response from co-workers: Mostly people are very supportive and think it's a good idea. One other kindergarten teacher, Julienne, has been biking almost every day since we talked about it. A few people have told me they think I am crazy.

Do you think that more of your coworkers would bike to work if the school provided indoor bike parking? Definitely.

A few people have mentioned to me that they don't know where to put their bikes, or don't want to leave them outside, and those of us that do ride sort of had to sneak into our own little spots. It was fine with the school that we did that, but it still felt a little sneaky.



I certainly would prefer bike parking. Plus, my bike was always in the way of the book bins in the book room where I parked and it might have been irritating to other teachers.

Best Commute: When I was finishing grad school last summer I sometimes commuted from our house in Brooklyn to Teachers College, on 120th Street and Broadway. It was so beautiful riding up the Hudson River Greenway all the way there in the early morning when it wasn't crowded. I like being so close to the river and not having to stop or slow down or worry about getting run over. I also like the way the city changes as you ride through it from here to there—you get the Brooklyn Bridge in the morning light, then the sun hitting the windows in the financial district and then you follow the river up to Riverside Park where it actually smells like the woods a little bit. In addition, it was long enough to make me feel like I'd gotten some exercise and cleared my head before class.

Worst experience/commute: A few weeks ago a cube truck coming off the Manhattan Bridge on the Brooklyn side nearly squashed me. A van stopped and waved me across that ramp that lets off BQE cars, so I went, but then this cube truck behind the van decided to go around it. It didn't see me and I saw it just in time. I had to brake really fast so I almost launched myself over the handlebars. And then the guy who was driving started yelling at me!

Advice: Don't expect cars to stop, even if they see you.

Riding style: I don't like to take a lot of risks: I don't ride very often in the middle of the street with cars on either side. But I do like to go as fast as my rattly bike will go for as long as I can before stopping!

Memorable reactions: Once on the Manhattan side of the Manhattan Bridge, a Rasta on a bike near me shouted out to me as I went by, "YES! Ride the Manhattan Bridge! Power to the people!"

This bridge is for the people!" He kept shouting about how the Manhattan Bridge is the "power-to-the-people" bridge.

I like being so close to the river and not having to stop or slow down or worry about getting run over.

Take Action

T.A.'s Volunteer Advocacy Committees Need You!

T.A.'S VOLUNTEER ADVOCATES are people just like you working for better bicycling, car-free parks, traffic calming, pedestrian rights and safe streets in your neighborhood. Come to a committee meeting and meet great people who care about the same things you do. We want to hear what you have to say and show you how you can help change things. Sign-up for the e-mail list of the committee nearest you. For more info, contact volunteer@transalt.org, call **212-629-8080** or contact the committee directly (see below).

This could be you! Members of T.A.'s Brooklyn Committee defended Prospect Park from car invasion during car-free hours in the Spring. Check out the exciting T.A. volunteer advocacy committee near you to meet fascinating and fun people who share your views on stopping the car invasion of your neighborhood.



AARON ANPERSTEK

Bronx Committee

Meet other people who love The Bronx just as much as you. Help us re-open the Highbridge Bridge, reinstate car-free Sundays on the Grand Concourse, win a new segment of the Hudson River Greenway in Riverdale Park and make other pedestrian and cycling safety improvements. And, of course, become a part of the fantastic Tour de Bronx! Bronx@transalt.org, **718-653-2203**

Brooklyn Committee

Be a part of a dynamic group of concerned Brooklynites working on Car-Free Prospect Park, Downtown Brooklyn Traffic Calming, Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridge access and a pedestrian safe Grand Army Plaza, among other things. Sign-up for the Brooklyn e-mail list: Transalt.org/Brooklyn. Bklyn@transalt.org, **212-629-8080**. Meets the last Monday of every month at

Ozzie's, 249 5th Avenue, between Carroll Street and Garfield Street in Park Slope, Brooklyn.

Greenpoint/Northside Brooklyn Working Group

Toast your favorite beverage with people from your neighborhood interested in pedestrian and cycling issues. T.A.'s newest committee is already hard at work getting the teeth-rattling metal bumps removed from the Williamsburg path, bicycle parking at the Bedford Avenue L stop and stopping illegal truck traffic around Cooper Park.

Volunteer@transalt.org, **212-629-8080**.

Car-Free Central Park Committee

We cannot stand cars in the park either, and we are doing something about it! Did

you see NY1 news on June 2? We were the top story! We just collected 50,000 petition signatures from park users calling for cars to get out of the park. Get in the loop and help get cars off it, join our e-mail list: Car-freecentralpark.org. [Central Park@transalt.org](mailto:CentralPark@transalt.org), **212-629-8080**.

Gowanus Taskforce

If you live near the Gowanus Expressway you should be part of determining its future. The highway will soon be rebuilt and the chance to make a difference is now. T.A. is a core member of the Gowanus Community Stakeholder Group, which seeks to ensure an unbiased study of whether to replace the hulking highway with a new elevated one or a tunnel. Your help on this mega-project will make a difference for decades to come. Gowanus@transalt.org, **212-629-8080**.

Paul DiMaria

Age: I was born three months before James Dean died.

Occupation: Production editor, graphic designer

T.A. Member Since: Oops, I volunteered before joining.

Neighborhood: The Bronx, hometown of Colin Powell, Stanley Kubrick, Anne Bancroft and Don DeLillo. Specific neighborhood, at the moment: Williamsbridge.

What draws you to help Transportation Alternatives? I've been involved with transit advocacy groups, including Auto-Free New York and the Empire State Passengers Association.

When did you start working for T.A.? Well, I'm between jobs right now, so I offered some of my time in May. I've been at the office most days since then.

What exactly do you do for the organization? I did a map of the Brooklyn-end of the Manhattan Bridge bikeway. I also used Illustrator to create a rendering of the proposed Fort Lee bikeway in New Jersey.

What is the favorite thing you have worked on at T.A.? I liked going out in the field in Brooklyn and New Jersey to get a first hand look at what I would be drawing.

What is your philosophy on volunteering? As per Nietzsche: "Maturity consists in having found again the seriousness one had as a child, at play."

What is your favorite thing about

New York? I lived for many years in suburban New Jersey, where I had to get into a car just to buy a newspaper. Now that I'm back in the city, I appreciate being able to get around without having to drive constantly.

If you had infinite powers, what would you do to make New York a better place? May I rest on the seventh day? During the first six days I would:

1. Expand the subway system – if Ho Che Minh City can start one from scratch, we can afford to extend ours.
2. Give surface transit, including future light rail, priority on the streets over private cars.
3. Integrate the commuter railroads so that service flows through the city, not just into it. Lower rail fares within the city limits.
4. Plan new housing and businesses to fit in with transit; avoid traffic disasters like the Bay Plaza Shopping Center at Co-op City.
5. Reform the taxi industry. The present "leasing" system exploits the drivers and encourages insane driving. (I drove a taxi in 1978-79, so I have first hand experience with the business.)
6. Promote the existing bridge walkways/bikeways as tourist attractions and add new ones to bridges now lacking them. (The Whitestone Bridge was built with a walkway, but it was removed to add a car lane.)



Paul's volunteer illustration has helped make T.A.'s advocacy more vivid.

What do you like about T.A.? The incredible furniture. It's quite different from those office parks with five-thousand identical gray and maroon cubicles.

What do you like about commuting to Manhattan from the Bronx? I have two subway lines available, so if one breaks down, I have an alternative.

Is there anything else you want to say about your experience at the T.A. office? I may have been inspired to ride a bicycle again; the last one I owned was a 1972 Columbia 3-speed.

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Letters

Make Motorists Pay

THE “PROVOCATEUR” PIECE BY ALEX Marshall is muddled, and its confused message is at odds with what T.A. often says. Marshall proposes transportation be treated as “a service” akin to education, rather than like a private business that “has to make a profit.”

But as T.A. often writes, motorists should pay for ALL the costs of their driving—in taxes, charges and in fines for violation of rules. The point of the report by Martin Wachs, cited by Marshall, is that U.S. motorists do not pay enough of their costs and are paying less and less. His report shows that at the city and county level, only 40% of road and bridge costs are paid directly by road users. But when one includes Federal and state road related income and expenses, highway-user taxes and tolls paid for 81% of road spending. Marshall’s 60% figure is based on fees paid by motorists after some funds went to transit and elsewhere. For more than 50

Motorists should pay for ALL the costs of their driving—in taxes, charges and in fines for violation of rules

years, the tie between user-charge financing and highway spending has limited highway spending. Breaking the tie by treating transportation like education is likely to increase, rather than constrain highway spending, while doing little to increase transit financing. If we think of the public sector of transportation in an urban area as an enterprise that should be financed by users, except when a strong case can be made for subsidy from other funds, then people can be encouraged to use transportation more efficiently—think congestion charges for auto use, or the way in which the MTA has used Metrocard to encourage off-peak travel.

DICK NETZER
*Professor Emeritus of Economics
and Public Administration*
Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of
Public Service

T.A. E-bulletin
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The Word on the Streets

Thank you to the many readers who send letters in response to *Transportation Alternatives Magazine*, the T.A. E-Bulletin or transalt.org. Feedback from readers is hugely helpful.

We encourage all readers to send us comments. E-mail info@transalt.org; mail to 115 W. 30th Street, Suite 1207, New York, NY 10001; fax 212-629-8334; or submit a comment through our Web site. We look forward to hearing from you!

Taxis Are Too Cheap

IN 1974, THE NEW YORK CITY TAXI meter was hiked to 60 cents per mile, which is equal to \$2.20 in 2003 dollars. Yet 2003’s New York cab drivers are expected to get by on 75 cents less per mile, in real terms, than in 1973—double the drag on lease drivers’ income, who get to keep only the last hours of their take. Whatever excuses may be made for growing economic inequality in America from sea to shining sea,

there is no explanation beyond unchecked neglect for New York yellow cab drivers to suffer under a fare structure that is almost 75 cents a mile below the real value of what their American born predecessors were paid for the same work almost three decades ago.

DENIS DREW
NYC Taxi Driver

Midtown Crosswalk Barricades Should Stay

WHILE THUMBING THROUGH MY SPRING, 2003 edition of *T.A. Magazine*, I was disappointed to come across an article advocating the removal of the Midtown Recessed Crosswalks, or “Crosswalk Barricades” as your magazine referred to them. It contained a number of statements that warrant some comment. First, the fences were installed and are maintained by D.O.T., not the N.Y.P.D., although we did advocate their installation as a practical tool for expediting the flow of crosstown traffic on what was then called the Transitway. Regrettably, as your article correctly points out, there is no shortage of jaywalkers at these loca-

tions (not to mention many others around the city). The risks associated with jaywalking could, perhaps, be effectively addressed if the existing fences were extended around the corners onto the crosstown streets, creating recessed crosswalks there, too. In any case, the advent of the D.O.T.’s Thru-Streets Program hardly renders the recessed crosswalks ‘pointless,’ as your article suggests. The Thru-Streets program, however, has no impact on the Sixth Avenue Crosswalks as there are no restrictions on vehicles turning onto Sixth Avenue from either 49th or 50th Streets. If anything, these

recessed crosswalks help to facilitate the additional vehicles turning north onto Sixth Avenue from 49th Street. As for the turns onto Fifth Avenue, there are restrictions on turns at these locations for only 8 hours per day, five days per week, or, for 24 per cent of the time. The limited overlap of recessed crosswalks with Thru-Streets, is hardly a reason to call for their demise, although the lack of maintenance may, in the end prove fatal to the project (there are currently two fences that are badly in need of repair). While I agree that the recessed crosswalk is not the answer to all of our traffic concerns, I do believe that, if used properly, it can be a useful tool in the continuing efforts to balance the rights of motorists, pedestrians and, of course, bicyclists.

All the best,

DEPUTY CHIEF JAMES MCSHANE
NYPD

Ed: T.A. respectfully disagrees with the Chief. The barricades encourage jay walking, making the intersection less safe. The barricades also penalize city-friendly pedestrians in a failed attempt to increase traffic capacity.

T.A. Celebrates 30 Years of Success



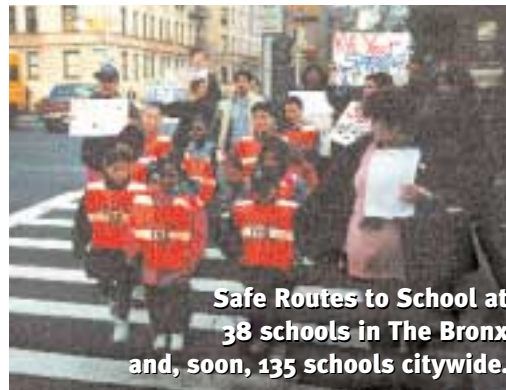
Pedestrian and bicycling paths on all the East River bridges for the first time in 50 years, each bridge an epic struggle.

SINCE OUR FOUNDING in 1973, T.A. HAS WON COUNTLESS victories for bicyclists, pedestrians and sensible transportation. Advocacy work can be slow and hard, but thanks to the support of our members, we are making a difference in the way that the City treats bicyclists and pedestrians. **Here are just some of these successes.**

- Pedestrian and bicycling paths open on all of the **East River bridges** for the first time in 50 years.
- 50% **reduction** in pedestrian deaths.
- \$80 million in **federal funding** for bicycle and pedestrian projects.
- Year-round weekday **car-free hours in Central Park** and numerous entrances reclaimed as park space.
- Year-round weekday **car-free periods in Prospect Park** plus a further increase in car-free hours in the park.
- Major safety improvements on the “Boulevard of Death”—**Queens Boulevard**.
- A promise of a **Manhattan Waterfront Greenway**, a car-free path circling the entirety of Manhattan.
- Thousands of modern **bike racks** throughout NYC.
- A complete **Hudson River Greenway**—ten miles of car-free walking and cycling along the scenic Hudson.
- Major **pedestrian improvements** in Times Square and Herald Square.
- Landmark NYC **traffic calming** law.
- Network of new **bicycle lanes** throughout the city, including extra-wide lanes on Hudson Street, Cross Bay Boulevard and many other streets.
- Full-time pedestrian and bicycle access to the **George Washington Bridge**.
- **Traffic calming** innovations for neighborhood streets.
- Major **crackdown** on reckless drivers.
- **Neighborhood Streets Network** coalition of over 100 organizations.
- New bicycle and pedestrian **safety education** for taxi cab and livery car drivers.
- Dozens of **Give Respect/Get Respect** actions and outreach to the city council and police department.
- Introduction of the concept of “**traffic calming**” into the New York City mainstream.



Innovative bicycle lanes such as the one on Second Avenue in Manhattan.



Safe Routes to School at 38 schools in The Bronx and, soon, 135 schools citywide.



Major pedestrian improvements in Herald Square and Times Square.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: GARY LINGARD, ELLEN CAVANAGH, JOHN KEAHNY, NO CREDIT

Sunday, September 7

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