

GRAHAM BECK



City Planning Designs Safer QBB Access in Queens Plaza

IN 2001, THE DEPARTMENT of City Planning started work on the Queens Plaza Bike and Pedestrian Improvement Project. The project features new car-free biking and walking connections to the Queens side of the Queensboro Bridge. City Planning is working with the DOT to finalize the design and should release the plans this fall. In 2007 the NYC Economic Development Corporation will build the improvements. This project will improve safety for the 2,500 bikers and walkers who brave the plaza's traffic each day to cross the Queensboro Bridge. City Planning should build on its success and work to improve safety on the bridge's Manhattan side.

City Planning's design calls for an east-west biking and walking path to be built on the median between the Queens Plaza North service road and the plaza's main road. This path will connect the bridge path and the biking and walking paths on the Queens Boulevard Viaduct. City Planning also designed a car-free path and on-street bike lanes that will

extend west to the waterfront Queensbridge Park, and the future Queens East River-North Shore Greenway.

The biking and walking improvements and safer

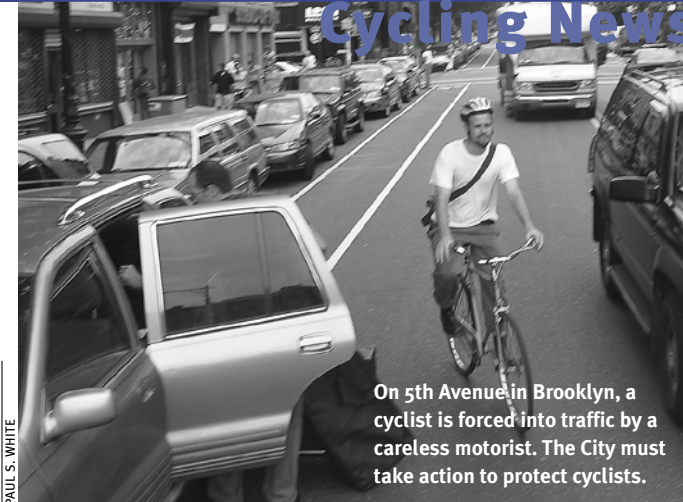
bridge access will compliment the City's 2001 rezoning of Queens Plaza and Long Island City. These neighborhoods were rezoned to allow new residential and commercial development, which the zoning requires to have indoor bike parking. □

Take Action For the NYC Bike Safety Action Plan

BY JULY NEARLY TWICE as many New Yorkers had died in bike crashes as compared to the same period last year. In reaction, the City did nothing nor planned any new initiatives to improve cyclists' safety. The death toll continued to rise through the fall. Twenty-one New Yorkers have died in bike crashes to date in 2005. This is a 50% increase in cyclist deaths compared to January to October 2004 and a 62% increase over the same period in 2003.

Family and friends, advocates, cycling clubs and New York City cyclists are alarmed. Is the City?

In July, T.A. and a coalition of city bicycling organizations took action and developed the New York City Bike Safety Action Plan. On behalf of the coalition, T.A. presented the Action Plan to the DOT and NYPD in July and urged them to implement it and make city streets safe for biking. T.A. also urged Mayor Bloomberg to adopt and implement the Action Plan.



PAUL S. WHITE

On 5th Avenue in Brooklyn, a cyclist is forced into traffic by a careless motorist. The City must take action to protect cyclists.

BREAKING NEWS

As we went to press T.A. received a letter from the DOT outlining the agency's new bike safety initiatives, including: conducting a study of bicyclist fatalities with the Department of Health and NYPD; developing bike safety outreach with advocates; pursuing truck safety legislation in Albany and encouraging helmet use. This said, we felt it important to run this piece to highlight the great need to improve cyclist safety and ensure the Bike Safety Action Plan is implemented.

In September, 500 New Yorkers sent postcards to Mayor Bloomberg urging him to adopt and implement the Action Plan.

Neither the DOT, the NYPD nor City Hall has announced plans to combat the increase in cyclist deaths.

City Council support will pressure City Hall and City agencies to adopt the Bike Safety Action Plan. This fall Councilmembers James, Lopez, McMahon, Moskowitz, Perkins and Yassky signed on their support to the Action Plan, and T.A. is urging the rest of the City Council to support it too. □

We support the New York City Bike Safety Action Plan

- Brooklyn Civic Riders Bicycle Club
- Century Road Club Association
- Fast and Fabulous Cycling
- Five Borough Bicycle Club
- FreeWheels
- Injury Free Coalition for Kids at Harlem Hospital
- Kissena Velodrome Committee
- New York Bicycle Messenger Foundation
- New York Bicycling Coalition
- New York Cycle Club
- North Brooklyn Health Network
- Recycle-A-Bicycle
- Right Of Way
- Staten Island Bicycle Association
- Times Up!
- Transportation Alternatives
- The Weekday Cyclists
- Veloprop

TakeAction!

Call or e-mail your Councilmember and urge them to support the Action Plan. Find your Councilmember's contact info at nycouncil.info/constituent.

The City must adopt the New York City Bike Action Plan and convene a multi-agency taskforce of the Health Department, Police, Transportation and City Planning to:

1. Study of all NYC bicycle fatalities from 1995 to the present and identify the gravest dangers to cyclists and assign relative responsibility to key parties (drivers, cyclists, street design, etc.).
2. Develop and implement an aggressive, ongoing enforcement campaign to deter drivers from illegal behaviors that put cyclists in peril.
3. Commit to implementing the City's official "Bicycle Master Plan" by 2010 with the goal of putting every New Yorker within a half-mile of the bike network.
4. Develop and implement a Public Awareness Campaign with guidance from street safety advocates to curb dangerous driving and educate drivers about cyclists' rights to the streets.
5. Increase the City's personnel capacity to plan and fund bicycle facilities, and reinstate the NYC Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Council and hold public meetings to solicit input from New Yorkers who bike.
6. Work for legislation to require safety-enhancing retrofits to trucks, such as sideguards that deflect cyclists and pedestrians and reduce fatal impacts.

TakeAction!

Thank City Planning Director Amanda Burden for planning safer Queens access, and urge the agency to improve safety on the Manhattan side of the Queensboro Bridge.

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nyc.gov/html/mail/html/maildcp.html