

# Letters

T.A.'s annual Holiday Party brought together staff, members and volunteers for a raucous night at the Housing Works Book Store.



WILEY NORVELL

## Dear T.A.,

With the installation of MuniMeters and the removal of parking meters along some streets the City has eliminated a great deal of bicycle parking. Not smart with the Mayor wanting a greener NYC and the MTA talking about raising fares. Is the City planning to install bike racks along the curb to replace the parking meters?

JIM DENNY  
EAST VILLAGE

## Dear Jim,

As you've pointed out, the NYC DOT has been replacing old coin meters with MuniMeters. T.A. has been highly supportive of this policy—despite the old meters' usefulness as bike parking. The reason we support the changeover is because MuniMeters have a higher rate of compliance (fewer people allowed to park for free) than coin meters, and they allow greater flexibility in how the agency prices curbside parking spots.

That said, there is a chronic shortage of outdoor racks, with roughly one rack for every 30 cyclists. It is more important than ever for cyclists to request their own free rack from the city through the CityRacks program. Another great solution is to attend a transportation committee meeting of your local community board and ask that they take the lead on a comprehensive bike parking request for the entire neighborhood where you live

and work.

For details on the CityRacks program, visit [nyc.gov/html/dot/html/bicyclists/bikerack.shtml](http://nyc.gov/html/dot/html/bicyclists/bikerack.shtml). This program is known to be slow. However, the Mayor has promised a substantial increase in CityRack installations in the coming year.

## Dear T.A.,

I was reading the latest RECLAIM issue, and most of it was good, but I disagree with the article "Traffic Starts At Home." The idea that new buildings shouldn't provide private parking rankles me. I've lived in Bensonhurst for 28 years, and for most of those years I have had a car. Here in Brooklyn, we have to deal with alternate side of the street parking. Now with the construction of new condos, the available parking spaces have decreased. New buildings are only required to provide 50% parking. I need my car for getting to Long Island, Staten Island, and New Jersey. It's unfair to say that new buildings shouldn't provide parking, and that all cars are evil. I'm a bike advocate, but would like both sides of the issue heard.

ANONYMOUS  
BENSONHURST

## Dear Anonymous,

To clarify, T.A. is not supporting any measure to completely eliminate parking in new buildings—we simply don't think parking

should be required by City zoning in areas with good transit access. Our recent study, *Guaranteed Parking, Guaranteed Driving*, reveals how the availability of a parking spot at home increases the likelihood that someone will own and drive a car. There are clearly good reasons for some people, like yourself, to own a vehicle because they are making trips for which transit is inadequate (like Brooklyn to New Jersey). However, many people drive despite the fact that good alternatives exist. Our primary aim is to reduce traffic between transit-friendly locations and reducing parking requirements is part of the strategy.

## Dear T.A.,

I am a concerned cyclist/resident who has observed dozens of cars illegally parked in the bike lanes on both sides of Bedford Avenue between Bergen and Dean every single Sunday for several months (I first noticed it in October). I have repeatedly called 311 and filed multiple complaints, yet each time the local precinct decided that no action was needed. This is a very hazardous situation and I'm frustrated with the City doing nothing to address it. What is the best course of action?

LEANNE ELISHA  
BROOKLYN

## Dear Leanne,

We are sorry to hear that your efforts with the NYPD and 311 have been in vain. In the last few months T.A. has been surveying the Bedford Avenue bike lane a bit further south, from Atlantic Avenue to Flushing Avenue. Our results are as troublesome as your riding experience. It is clear that the Bedford Avenue bike lane needs an upgrade to a protected design like 9th Avenue in Manhattan.

1. See page 19 on how you can contact our Brooklyn volunteer committee to join up and make this lane a priority.
2. Take a look at our Adopt-a-Bike-Lane template at [transalt.org/campaigns/bike/adopt](http://transalt.org/campaigns/bike/adopt). Volunteers have designed this program to rally grassroots support in their local community for design upgrades to popular bike routes that are not safe enough.
3. Organize your neighbors and friends. Create a petition, attend your local community board meeting about the problem and contact your elected officials
4. NYPD precincts also have monthly community council meetings. Attend one with friends and speak to officers directly about the problem.

Good luck!



## The Word on the Streets

Thank you to the many readers who send letters in response to *Reclaim*, T.A. *StreetBeat* or [transalt.org](http://transalt.org). Feedback from readers is hugely helpful. We encourage all readers to send us comments.

E-mail [info@transalt.org](mailto:info@transalt.org); mail to 127 W. 26th St. Ste. 1002, New York, NY 10001; fax 212-629-8334; or submit a comment through our web site. [We look forward to hearing from you!](#)