



A Memorandum for District 4
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Unsafe Bike Lanes

Getting around New York City, home to one of the largest urban populations in the world, can often be difficult, which makes commuting by bike an increasingly popular solution that is good for both the planet and personal health. U.S. and European cities with higher rates of bicycling also have lower rates of vehicular crashes,¹ but we need to increase bike accessibility in a logical way for cyclists, drivers, and pedestrians and doesn't impede traffic or parking. 2016 saw a tragic 18 deaths from cycling accidents, which were all caused by accidents with motor vehicles.² At the same time, many District 4 pedestrians feel that the bicyclists are a threat to their safety. I've met dozens of constituents who have been hit or almost hit by speeding bicyclists ignoring traffic laws. Earlier this year, a 62-year old woman was critically injured after she was hit by a bicycle while walking around two parked cars on 14th Street.³ Less than two years ago, a mother in Central Park was killed by a bicyclist

¹Welle, Ben, Qingnan Liu, Wei Li, Claudia Adriaola-Steil, Claudio Sarmiento, and Marta Obelheiro. Cities Safer by Design. Rep. Washington DC: World Resources Institute, 2015. Web. https://www.wri.org/sites/default/files/CitiesSaferByDesign_final.pdf

² New York City Department of Transportation. Bicycle Crash Data Report. 2016. Web. <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/downloads/pdf/bicycle-crash-data-report-2016.pdf>

³ Gardiner, Aidan. "Woman Suffers Life-Threatening Injury as Bike Hits Her on 14th Street: NYPD." Dnainfo. 9 Mar. 2017. Web. <https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/20170309/greenwich-village/cyclist-hits-pedestrian-critical-injury-ny-pd-14th-street>

who hit her in a crosswalk.⁴ Our goal is to ensure that vehicles, bicyclists, and pedestrians all safely share the street.

First, we must improve education for drivers and cyclists alike on how to safely share the streets. Many cyclists either do not know or choose to ignore traffic laws, leading to accidents and dangerous situations. The rights and responsibilities of bicyclists should be taught in NYC classrooms, very clearly printed on all Citibike docks and bicycles, part of driving safety in the DMV handbook, and emphasized on the DMV permit and road test. For cyclists, I want to launch education initiatives on safe riding practices such as wearing helmets and obeying traffic laws. At the same time, we need to hold bicyclists accountable to obeying traffic laws. NYPD Traffic Enforcement Agents must crack down on individuals who ride the wrong way down one-way streets, run red lights, or weave through cars to get around them faster.

Additionally, as the City continues to develop “protected” bike lanes, lanes designated for bikes that are separated from vehicular traffic by planters, curbs, parked cars or posts, it needs to also consider pedestrian safety and education. Although the addition of protected bike lanes across the City has resulted in 17 percent fewer crashes with injuries over three years,⁵ many constituents are confused, overwhelmed, and frustrated by the additional lanes to watch while crossing.⁶

⁴ Golding, Bruce, Larry Celona, Erin Calabrese, and Kirstan Conley. "Woman Brain-dead after Getting Hit by Cyclist in Central Park." New York Post. 18 Sept. 2014. Web.

<http://nypost.com/2014/09/18/cyclist-slams-into-pedestrian-in-central-park/>

⁵*Protected Bicycle Lanes in NYC*. Rep. New York City Department of Transportation, 2014. Web.

<http://www.streetsblog.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/2014-09-03-bicycle-path-data-analysis.pdf>

⁶*Protected Bicycle Lanes in NYC*. Rep. New York City Department of Transportation, 2014. Web.

<http://www.streetsblog.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/2014-09-03-bicycle-path-data-analysis.pdf>

Finally, before the City begins work on new bike lanes, it should look to fill in the gaps that exist in current routes.⁷ In District 4 alone, there are a number of places where the bike lanes end abruptly, confusing everyone on the road. 1st Avenue has a number of gaps, including at the corner of 1st Avenue and 48th Street. Routes running across Manhattan are notorious for ending abruptly or skipping back and forth on opposite sides of the street, such as on 51st, 49th, 44th, and 39th Streets.⁸ Finally, bicyclists and pedestrians alike will rejoice when the East River greenway is finally completed.⁹

As your City Council Member, I will fight to continue New York's strong cycling tradition by making the city better for pedal-pushers and car drivers alike, while also improving pedestrian safety.

⁷Walker, Alissa. "It Will Take More than Bike Lanes to Make Biking Safe." *Curbed*. Vox Media, Inc., 16 Sept. 2016. Web. <https://www.curbed.com/2016/9/16/12944148/bike-lanes-streets-safety>

⁸ "Manhattan Bike Paths, Bike Lanes & Greenways." *NYC Bike Maps*. NYCBikeMaps.com, n.d. Web. <http://www.nycbikemaps.com/maps/manhattan-bike-map/>

⁹Michael, Bloomberg R. *Manhattan Waterfront Greenway Map*. Digital image. *The Official Website of the City of New York*. The City of New York, n.d. Web. http://www.nyc.gov/html/edc/pdf/greenway_mapside.pdf