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**CITY ANNOUNCES UNPRECEDENTED CITYWIDE  
BICYCLE SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS**

***DOT, DOHMH, DPR and NYPD Release Comprehensive Report of 1996 – 2006  
Bicycle Injuries and Fatalities***

New York City Transportation Commissioner Iris Weinshall today joined Health Commissioner Dr. Thomas R. Frieden, Parks & Recreation Commissioner Adrian Benepe and Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly to announce a series of unprecedented bicycle safety improvements, including the addition of 200 miles of new on-street bicycle facilities (paths, lanes and routes) over the next three years. The agencies also announced the release of a joint report describing the factors that contributed to the deaths and serious injuries of bicyclists over the past decade.

The joint report issued today, *Bicyclist Fatalities and Serious Injuries in New York City 1996-2005*, examines factors that contributed to the deaths of 225 bicyclists during the past decade and the serious injuries of 3,462 bicyclists between 1996 and 2003. While bicyclist injuries declined by 46% between 1996 and 2003, death rates in the past decade remained steady at 2.8 deaths per million, per year. Bicycle death rates in New York City are similar to national rates. Two times as many New York City adults (6% vs. 3%) bicycle or walk to work compared to the national average, according to census data.

“The ambitious target we’ve set for the next three years will complete the backbone of the City’s planned bicycle network,” said Transportation Commissioner Iris Weinshall. “Last year, *Bicycling Magazine* named New York one of the top cycling cities in the United States and we’re committed to being the safest city for cycling as well.”

“Safe bicycling is a great way to increase physical activity and improve health,” said Health Commissioner Thomas R. Frieden, M.D., M.P.H. “By making New York City an even safer place to ride, we hope more New Yorkers will bike for better health.”



"As both a runner and cyclist myself, I am always thrilled to know recreation is on the rise in New York City parks, but it is also important to remember that an increase in use of public space means more reason to use caution on bike paths, lanes, and routes," said Parks & Recreation Commissioner Adrian Benepe. "We are delighted to come together with the various City agencies through this awareness initiative to inform New Yorkers of the importance of bicycle safety, while also bringing to their attention the exciting new developments in store for cyclists along New York City streets and in parks."

"A combination of adherence to traffic rules by motorists and cyclists alike, along with the use of appropriate safety equipment, will go a long way toward saving lives and making the cycling environment even safer," said Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly

The 200 miles of new on-street bicycle facilities will include vehicle-free bike paths, on-street striped lanes and signed routes. The Department of Transportation (DOT) will install 40 miles in Fiscal Year (FY) 2007, which began July 1, 2006 and will add 70 miles in FY 2008 and 90 miles in FY 2009. To accomplish this, DOT is hiring new staff and committing more funding for its Bicycle and Highway Design divisions. The City's Parks & Recreation Department (DPR) also plans to complete 40 miles of greenways in City Parks over the next four years.

Since July 1, 2006 DOT has installed more than 10 miles of bicycle facilities in Queens, including new bike lanes on Shorefront Parkway, Beach Channel Drive, Commonwealth Blvd and 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue. DOT plans to complete 30 additional miles of facilities in the coming months, including lanes in Chelsea and The Lower East Side in Manhattan, Bedford-Stuyvesant and Flatbush in Brooklyn, and the South Bronx.

DOT has also initiated a public outreach campaign to increase motorist and cyclist awareness and make clear a bicyclist's right to the road, in partnership with DOHMH, NYPD, The Office of the Public Advocate, the Taxi and Limousine Commission, AAA, Transportation Alternatives, and the Five Borough Bike Club. The advertising firm Publicis is providing its services pro-bono to help develop this campaign.

Key findings from the report provided critical insight into how to make New York City streets safer and prevent deaths and injuries. The full report is available online at: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/episrv/episrv-bike-report.pdf>.



### **Bicycle lanes and helmets may reduce the risk of death.**

- Almost three-quarters of fatal crashes (74%) involved a head injury.
- Nearly all bicyclists who died (97%) were not wearing a helmet.
- Helmet use among those bicyclists with serious injuries was low (13%), but it was even lower among bicyclists killed (3%).
- Only one fatal crash with a motor vehicle occurred when a bicyclist was in a marked bike lane.

### **Nearly all bicyclist deaths (92%) occurred as a result of crashes with motor vehicles.**

- Large vehicles (trucks, buses) were involved in almost one-third (32%) of fatal crashes, but they make up approximately 15% of vehicles on NYC roadways.
- Most fatal crashes (89%) occurred at or near intersections.
- Nearly all (94%) fatalities involved human error. All New Yorkers, whether pedestrians, bicyclists or motorists, can help prevent crashes by following traffic signs and signals and respecting other road users.

### **Men and some children face particular challenges.**

- Most bicyclists who died were males (91%), and men aged 45–54 had the highest death rate (8.1 per million) of any age group.
- Among children aged 5-14, boys had a much higher death rate than girls; Queens had the highest child bicyclist death rate of the five boroughs.

### **Possible clusters of deaths and serious injuries were identified.**

- The 3 densest clusters (3 or more fatal crashes within 1,000 feet) were found on the east side of Manhattan north of midtown, Park Slope in Brooklyn (2 near the Western edge closer to the Gowanus Canal), and Hunts Point in the Bronx.
- Crashes resulting in serious injury (5 or more serious injuries within 250 feet) were clustered in Midtown Manhattan, the northern side of Central Park and the Central Bronx.

As a result of the recommendations made in the report the City has planned many action steps to improve bicycle safety. For more information on these initiatives, see the attached appendix.

### **Data Sources**



Data on fatalities in this report comes from DOT's Fatality Database. Data on serious injuries comes from the New York State DOT Safety Information Management System (SIMS).

## **APPENDIX**

The City is also planning a number of additional bicycle safety improvements and has committed to undertaking the following action steps. For a complete list of improvements go to: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/episrv/episrv-bike-report.pdf>.

### **Bicycle Infrastructure Improvements**

- Over the next three years DOT will install 200 miles of bicycle facilities with targets of 5 miles of Class I separated paths, 150 miles of Class II striped lanes, and 45 miles of Class III signed routes. DPR will also add 40 miles of Greenways in City parks over the next four years.
- Accelerate the placement of outside bicycle parking racks citywide.
- Begin construction of mountain bike trails in the South Park section of Fresh Kills, Staten Island. Complete construction of mountain bike trails in Highland Park and Cunningham Park in Queens.

### **Motorist and Bicyclist Awareness**

- Provide materials on bicycle awareness to new driver education and remedial traffic school programs.
- Introduce programs to supply free bicycle helmets and instruction to all interested bicyclists in New York City.
- Work with associations of bicycle riders, including delivery and messenger services, to improve bicycle safety among workers.

### **Investigation and Enforcement**

- Train more DOT accident investigation staff to ensure that all transportation fatalities are investigated in a timely manner.
- Increase enforcement of laws against motorists who park or drive in a bicycle lane, and enforce traffic control obedience among motorists and bicyclists.



### **Legislation**

- Support state legislation requiring large vehicles to be equipped with cross over mirrors. These mirrors, commonly seen on school buses, increase a vehicle operator's ability to see in front of the vehicle.
- Support legislation to increase the fine for motor vehicles that park in bicycle lanes within city parks.
- Explore the utility of legislation as a means to increase helmet use.

### **Improved Data Collection, Analysis and Reporting of Bicyclist Injuries**

- Train health care providers to better document contributing factors in medical records.
- Add a question on bicycle use to DOHMH's annual population-based telephone survey of adults to better track the bicycling population and monitor trends.
- Reconcile bicyclist death information between DOT's (Fatality Database), NYPD (Accident Investigation Squad) and DOHMH's (Vital Records Death Certification) quarterly to better track the number of bicyclist fatalities.