



September 12, 2008

Dear Members of the Real Estate Board:

I write you to follow up discussions I have held with REBNY principals on the issue of bicycle parking in office buildings.

With your participation, we hope to launch a substantial pilot project that increases bicycle access to office workplaces. In this effort, I pledge to make technical staff available to you for purposes of specifying bike parking hardware or in developing bike room layouts, as appropriate to particular cases.

As you know, Mayor Bloomberg launched a major sustainability initiative in 2007, and area of transportation improvement the Mayor's plan spotlights is bicycle transportation. Modern cities around the world gain major clean mobility benefits through modest investments in bicycle networks and supporting facilities. For instance, in Berlin, a city of 3.4 million people with a good mass transit network, about 10% of trips are made by bicycle.

We are rapidly expanding our network of bicycle lanes and paths, and New Yorkers are responding. NYCDOT estimates that bicycle commuting in the city has increased about 75% since 2000.

But the issue of parking is a potential limiter to bicycle use in New York. As with any transportation system that relies on individual vehicles, a bicycle needs to be parked at the end of a trip. Many New Yorkers are hesitant to leave a decent bicycle locked on the street for an entire work-day for fear of theft or damage. In a recent Department of City Planning survey of 1,100 New Yorkers who identify themselves as cyclists, those who did not bicycle to work identified "no safe parking facility for my bike" as the strongest single deterrent factor, exceeding even "too much traffic/driver behavior."

Many workplaces have already addressed this issue. I recently had the pleasure of awarding New York City's first "Bicycle Friendly Business" award to Credit-Suisse for its well-run bike room and employee discounts for showers at a neighboring gym.

Certainly, one size does not fit all when it comes to buildings in the city, and there are many ways to park a bicycle. My view is that whether it is finding a general space for a bike rack or simply allowing access to tenant offices via freight elevators, the obstacles are more cultural than practical, and that if hand trucks and furniture can conveniently and safely get inside, bicycles can as well.

I hope that you will respond affirmatively to this appeal and offer, and work with DOT and the Real Estate Board to increase bicycle parking opportunities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Janette Sadik-Khan', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Janette Sadik-Khan  
Commissioner