



American Planning Association
New York Metro Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

July 1, 2009

The Honorable Christine C. Quinn
Speaker of the New York City Council
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Re: Bicycle Access to Office Buildings (Intro. 0871-2008)

Dear Speaker Quinn:

The New York Metro Chapter of the American Planning Association appreciates the opportunity to provide professional input on the proposed Bicycle Access to Office Buildings legislation currently before the New York City Council. The professional planners of the New York Metro Chapter recognize that the benefits of increased bicycle mode share in the City's transportation network are varied and great. Insofar as the Bicycle Access in Buildings Bill (Intro. 0871-2008) is supportive of increased bicycle activity and does not place undue burden on building owners and tenants, we support Intro. 0871-2008.

Cycling as a mode choice has multiple wide-ranging benefits. The choice of cycling over other means of transportation provides health benefits for the user, environmental benefits in the form of reduced green house gases and other air polluting emissions, and apparent benefits to the transportation system as cyclists ease the burden to the City's strained public transit and roadway systems.

Promotion of cycling is consistent with local planning goals and is specifically addressed in PlaNYC 2030, New York City's sustainability plan. That plan states that the City will pursue strategies to encourage the growth of cycling across the city and calls for increased bicycle parking in and near large office buildings. Intro. 38 would complement the supportive bicycle parking policies contained in the recently passed Zoning Resolution text amendment, which requires the inclusion of bicycle parking facilities for new commercial and residential buildings.

Studies and surveys conducted by the New York City Department of City Planning have found that the lack of safe and secure bicycle parking facility is a dominant cause preventing individuals from cycling to work¹. The Bicycle Access to Office Buildings bill would require that the owner, lessee, or manager of an office building grant access to bicycles if requested by a tenant. The bill, as written, does not require building owners to provide storage space, merely access for bicycles. The bill provides adequate exceptions whereby the owner would not be required to provide access if the building's elevator or freight elevator cannot accommodate a bicycle or

1 http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/bicycle_parking/index.shtml



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if there is alternate covered, off-street or indoor no-fee parking available in the immediate vicinity.

We recommend that the New York City Council approve this legislation and promote cycling as a viable transportation option, simultaneously reducing traffic congestion and improving environmental conditions for all the City's residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Donald C. Burns".

Donald C. Burns, AICP
President, New York Metro Chapter
American Planning Association

cc: The Honorable John C. Liu, Transportation Committee Chair
The Honorable Leroy G. Comrie, Jr., Consumer Affairs Committee Chair

The New York Metro Chapter of the American Planning Association represents more than 1,300 planners, designers, engineers and other professionals involved in planning for the region's communities. Our members work in the private sector, in nonprofit organizations and in government agencies to address planning issues affecting the physical, social and economic environment of the metropolitan region (New York City, Long Island and the Hudson Valley). We are part of the American Planning Association whose 46,000 members are dedicated to creating livable communities of lasting value.

The New York Metro Chapter is particularly committed to promoting planning-related public education, encouraging broad participation in planning decisions, and collaborating with other organizations to advocate the highest standards of the planning profession.