Advancing Health Equity: Bike Lanes for All

Aletha Maybank, MD, MPH
Associate Commissioner, NYC Dept. of Health and Mental Hygiene
Director, Center for Health Equity
Public Health Framework: Importance of Active Transportation

"The human body is the only machine that breaks down when it is not used."  ~Nicholas DiNubile, MD, Special Advisor, US President’s Council on Physical Fitness and Sports

More physical activity may prevent 6,300 deaths each year in New York City.¹

NYC Community Health Survey 2013
Percentage who did not participate in exercise in past 30 days by neighborhood

¹Bureau of Epidemiology Services, NYC DOHMH
Mission of NYC Health Department: Protect and promote the health of ALL New Yorkers

- Diabetes Deaths (per 100,000)
- AIDS Deaths (per 100,000)
- Asthma Hospitalizations (per 100,000 Children)
- Hospitalizations for Drug Use (per 100,000)
- Infant Deaths (per 1,000 Live Births)
America’s First Bike Path

Coney Island Cycle Path
Ocean Parkway, Brooklyn in 1894
It is Not Just About Bike Lanes...

• Exclusion
• Displacement
• Opportunity
• Triumph
Exclusion and Triumph

- Marshall “Major” Taylor’s first race, *Citizen Handicap*, held on Ocean parkway in Brooklyn
- The 1st African-American to become a world champion cyclist in 1899
Misperceptions and Opportunity

The colour of the skin is in no way connected with strength of the mind or intellectual powers.

meetville.com
Gentrification and Displacement
Strategies for Bike Friendly Communities

The importance of the “5 E’s” is well established:

- Engineering
- Education
- Enforcement
- Evaluation
- Encouragement

Our work in communities most negatively impacted by health inequities, speaks to the need for a sixth “E”

- **Engagement** ....*meaningful*
Improving Neighborhood Health District Public Health Offices

• Locations
  – South Bronx
  – East and Central Harlem
  – Central Brooklyn

• Target and work closely with NYC’s communities most in need

• Collaborate with local institutions
Meaningful Community Engagement

**Collective Impact**

**Backbone Support:** The frame

**Continuous Communication:** All parts knowing what is being done at all times

**Shared Measurement:** Gears and crank

**Mutually Reinforcing Activities:** Pedaling

**Common Agenda:** Getting there together on not at all
Common Agenda Setting

Goal to increase biking and walking
Brownsville and East New York, Brooklyn

“THE STREETS NEED TO BE SAFER.”
Backbone Support

The Department of Health and the Department of Transportation working with a community organization brought groups together with common theme

*Everyone wants optimal health for themselves, their and their communities*
Mutually Reinforcing Activities

- School programming
- Town hall meetings
- Community bike rides

Continuous Communications

- In-person meetings
- Conference calls
- Electronic & printed communication
Why is it tough to ride here?

Powell Avenue, Brownsville

Pitkin Avenue, East New York

Saratoga Avenue, Brownsville

Pitkin Avenue, East New York
Why is it tough to ride here?

- Wide streets, no markings (Powell Avenue, Brownsville)
- No bike racks (Pitkin Avenue, East New York)
- Potholes (Saratoga Avenue, Brownsville)
- Double parking (Pitkin Avenue, East New York)
Shared Measurement

• Process measures were tracked, such as number of attendants at community forums, participants engaged in school programs and the number of free bicycle helmets distributed.
• Bike counts were conducted pre- and post-installation of bicycle lanes.
• Street intercept survey was administered biannually to cyclists along new bike lanes.
Proposed Project Timeline

2012
- Create a priority list of projects
- Establish a 3 year plan for implementation

2013
- Implement Phase I
- Community evaluation and input

2014
- Implement Phase II
- Community evaluation and input

2015
- Implement Phase III
- Community evaluation and input
Project Progress - Bike Racks Installed

Total of 562 Racks Installed
Pennsylvania Avenue - Before
The Larger Context
Advancing Health Equity

• #BlackLivesMatter– A Challenge to the Medical and Public Health Communities– NYC Health Commissioner Dr. Mary Bassett, NEJM

• Changing perceptions, norms, and systems
  – Improved coordination of City Agencies
  – Community members, especially those who have been historically marginalized, MUST have a seat at the decision making table
“Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.”

Jane Jacobs