

**ROBERT MOSES**  
COMMISSIONER



**THE CITY OF NEW YORK**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PARKS**  
ARSENAL  
64TH STREET AND FIFTH AVENUE  
CENTRAL PARK  
NEW YORK CITY

**ALLYN R. JENNINGS**  
GENERAL SUPERINTENDENT  
**WILLIAM H. LATHAM**  
PARK ENGINEER  
**GEORGE E. SPARGO**  
ASSISTANT TO THE COMMISSIONER  
**JAMES A. DAWSON**  
SENIOR PARK DIRECTOR  
**JAMES A. SHERRY**  
CHIEF CLERK

August 8, 1938

Hon. Fiorello H. LaGuardia  
Mayor of the City of New York  
City Hall  
New York, N. Y.

Dear Sir:

When on July 9th as one of those participating in the ceremonies in connection with the opening of a two and one half mile section of the outmoded Motor Parkway in Queens, into an experimental bicycle path from which data to satisfy the demands of bicycle traffic will be obtained, I said - "The way to make progress, sometimes, is to go backward," and that the Park Department was planning more than fifty miles of additional paths exclusively for bicyclists throughout the five boroughs, which would turn the calendar back forty years, and concerning which we would make an announcement in the near future.

The need for taking children off the public streets where they are constantly threatened with serious injury, and are themselves a hazard to motorists is imperative, and is evidenced by the increasingly numerous letters received from parents and others interested in the welfare of the youth of the city. Every motorist is aware of the hazard created by children of the adolescent age exploring the whole width of the roadway, and particularly by delivery boys who weave in and out of traffic or steal a tow on the rear of fast-moving vehicles and trolley cars. On sidewalks and park paths bicyclists are just as much a hazard to pedestrians as they are to motorists on the streets.

Groups, organizations and individuals have been clamoring and petitioning for bicycle tracks, exclusive lanes marked off along parkways and arterial highways, and the use of roadways during hours when automobile traffic is very light, all for the accommodation of this revived sport.

In 1899 bicycle sales totaled 1,089,000 and they dropped down steadily to a low of 180,000 in 1932. However, since 1933 sales have been rapidly on the increase until last year when they totaled 1,300,000, an all time high. The bicycle trades have not been slow to let the rest of the world in on the secret and they, along with the special weekend cycle trains and Sunday supplements, seem to be spreading a revival of interest in the old-fashioned, but now somewhat streamline, bike.

Recognizing that bicycles have no place on public highways, and fully aware of the marked rise in enthusiasm and growing interest in bicycling on the part of the general public within the city limits, park executives have for some time been studying the entire park system to ascertain local unsatisfied cycling needs, and where proper facilities can be located advantageously to furnish the opportunity for bicycle riding without too long a delay and without involving large expenditures for construction.

In the following program of proposed bicycling facilities, most of which have been submitted to the Works Progress Administration in our thirty-month program of park improvements, not yet approved, which will be constructed with relief labor, we have taken into consideration that nothing could be less exhilarating than riding up and down a short straight stretch of road. We have planned winding layouts which will lead in most cases from somewhere to some other place, and of such length and design that there will be no feeling of monotony to a person who rides his or her bicycle with the intention of securing mental relaxation and physical exercise; and also that the sport can be indulged in with reasonable assurance of safety.

The attached small scale map of the city shows the location of all paths planned for immediate development. Also on the following pages are the specific plans mentioned in the various sections of this memorandum, as well as a summary of the various units recommended, indicated by number and showing the mileage proposed for each location.

As to details of construction, all paths will be surfaced with permanent materials so as to require as little maintenance as possible when practical; they will be wide enough to permit two lanes in each direction; grade crossings at park drives will be protected with traffic lights and definite barriers placed, if necessary, to prevent careless riders from starting across at high speed, while at grade crossings of pedestrian paths warning signs will be placed for both pedestrians and cyclists.

As explained heretofore, study of the experimental bicycle path now in operation on the old Motor Parkway will provide essential data and also the answers to various problems which might arise in connection with the development of the complete program.

Yours very truly,



Commissioner