

Jillian Smith
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Supporter of Bike Access in Office Buildings

My name is Jillian Smith. For the past four years I have been riding my bike to work, traveling from Brooklyn to SOHO during the rush hour traffic. On the first day, four years ago that I rode my bike to work I parked it outside of my office building and my back tire was stolen. After that I inquired about bike parking in my office and was told there is space in the basement with a bike rack. Since then my bike hasn't suffered a single loss during my work hours.

Bike riding in New York can be dangerous. Even with the many additional bike lanes added over the past couple of years it can be a stressful process. It begs the question of why I ride my bike to work and why my company should want me to ride my bike to work. Overlooking the less concrete reasons of my bike rides giving me a better sense of place, better connecting me to my community and allowing to see my city from a different angle, bike riding keeps me healthy and happy, and that makes for a more productive employee. New Yorkers work long hours, often at the expense of other things. I get a half an hour of exercise in before work and a half an hour after work. I'm healthier now than I was four years ago.

The bike parking in my office is under a staircase behind the messenger center. This isn't space that would be otherwise used as office space. There are about twenty bicycle commuters who park there each day. Our bikes are sheltered from the weather and sheltered from roving hands. When I started parking there, I assumed all office buildings offered indoor bike parking. It seemed like a such a simple thing for such a large payoff.