

A Vision for Bicycling on the Lower East Side and Chinatown



Neighborhood Action Plan

Executive Summary

**Manhattan
Community District 3:
The Lower East Side
and Chinatown**



Who is Local Spokes?

Local Spokes, the Lower East Side/Chinatown Bicycling Coalition, engages local residents to envision the future of bicycling in our diverse neighborhoods.

We seek to engage and understand the community's various perspectives through multilingual outreach and a youth ambassadors program. This participatory process has led to the development of a neighborhood action plan that will result in additional resources to address potential barriers and increase accessibility to bicycling.

Local Spokes is a coalition of nine community based organizations that came together in 2010 to create a new model for inclusive and sustainable development. In response to a perceived lack of community involvement in the planning process around growing bicycle movement in New York City, particularly among low-income residents, people of color, immigrant communities, and youth.

About the Action Plan

In 2010 Local Spokes came together to develop a community-driven process that could shape the future of bicycling in our neighborhoods. Over the past year, Local Spokes has collected 1,200 community surveys and conducted numerous visioning sessions with more than 250 community residents throughout the Lower East Side and Chinatown. Issues such as accessibility for low-income residents, safety concerns, the NYC bike share program, job creation, education and infrastructure were included.

Local Spokes' Neighborhood Action Plan identifies key findings that address local transportation infrastructure, bicycle education and safety, and the role of bicycling in creating and sustaining local jobs. The Plan synthesizes strategic recommendations generated from our comprehensive community outreach and visioning process. In the coming year Local Spokes will work to implement a core of activities from this Action Plan that furthers the issues and priorities identified through community visioning. Local Spokes will partner with public entities and ally organizations to advocate for the strategic recommendations which involve the investment of public resources and broader, systemic changes that improve cycling in the neighborhood.

Local Spokes Members

Asian Americans for Equality has, since 1974, advanced the rights of Asian Americans and all those in need through advocacy, immigration assistance, social services, affordable housing, sustainability initiatives, and economic development.

Green Map System, active in NYC and hundreds of diverse communities, supports a locally-led global movement charting the way to a sustainable future.

Good Old Lower East Side is a neighborhood base building organization that has been fighting to keep people in their homes and in their communities since 1977.

Hester Street Collaborative seeks to create more equitable, sustainable, and vibrant neighborhoods where community voices lead the way in improving their environment and public spaces through design, education and advocacy.

Recycle-A-Bicycle is a community-based bike shop and non-profit organization that utilizes the bicycle as a resource to foster youth development, environmental education, community engagement, and healthy living.

Time's Up! is an environmental organization that advocates for bicycle uses and promotes environmental awareness.

Transportation Alternatives advocates for biking, walking and public transportation throughout the five boroughs of New York City.

Two Bridges Neighborhood Council is a long time developer of affordable housing and is involved in community development for the Lower East Side and Chinatown communities.

Velo City is a cycling-based urban planning and design education initiative serving high school youth and community residents of diverse, underserved NYC neighborhoods.



Local Spokes is grateful for the support of the JM Kaplan Fund, without which this coalition would not exist.



How We Made the Action Plan



Neighborhood Actions and Recommendations

Bike Share

What Local Spokes will do:

- > Conduct bike share demonstrations and informational sessions at neighborhood events and tenants associations
- > Train a local resident(s) to be ambassadors about the bike share program at community meetings and on site at bike share stations
- > Create a multilingual poster awareness campaign for New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) and other housing development buildings

Local Spokes recommends:

- > Locate additional bike share stations at East River Waterfront access points
- > Translate bike share outreach materials and station signage in neighborhood specific languages
- > Extend discount program for NYCHA residents to all low income residents
- > Hire local residents for the Alta/Citibike Bike Share Ambassador Program

Bike Parking

What Local Spokes will do:

- > Identify sidewalk space or parking spots that could accommodate the NYC Department of Transportation's (DOT) Street Racks program
- > Work with the Bike Friendly Business owners to identify locations to request a cluster of bike racks
- > Support local efforts to manage and re-use abandoned bike issue at the neighborhood scale, including coordination of public resources from DOT and the NYC Department of Sanitation

Local Spokes recommends:

- > Increase the number of city racks in CD3 from the estimated 1,025 racks by at least 20%
- > Implement 3-5 Street Racks locations within the LES and Chinatown
- > Emphasize addition of racks at public buildings including schools and public housing, and within public parks
- > Implement the NYC Department of City Planning's study around bike parking connections with mass transit
- > Identify a pilot NYCHA building development to locate an indoor bike parking area

Wayfinding - Navigating the Neighborhood

What Local Spokes will do:

- > Develop a wayfinding and rules-of-the-road signage campaign with the youth ambassadors to increase awareness and promote connectivity around bike infrastructure within the neighborhood
- > Use existing programs like the DOT's Urban Art Program to implement the signage campaign in a temporary way

Local Spokes recommends:

- > Incorporate a larger strategy around connections in the neighborhood bike lane network and to the East River Greenway in DOT's neighborhood wayfinding program
- > East River Park and Pier 42 waterfront park projects should include greenway and neighborhood wayfinding in their renovations

Bike Lane Condition and Safety

What Local Spokes will do:

- > Conduct a survey and mapping project of existing bike infrastructure with the Youth Ambassadors to identify conditions that need improvement, locations for additional city racks, or potential new bike lanes

Local Spokes recommends:

- > DOT implement specific safety and infrastructural improvements recommended by the Youth Ambassadors
- > Replicate Delancey St. Working Group to study bike and pedestrian safety on other major corridors - Bowery and Houston St.

Space for Community Activities around Biking

What Local Spokes will do:

- > Create a design for a mobile cart for community education, outreach, and bike repair that can be deployed at community events throughout the neighborhood.
- > Pilot mobile outdoor bike repair workshops at First Street Green, a new park at Houston and 2nd Avenue.

Local Spokes recommends:

- > Include biking support facilities in East River projects: NYCEDC's Rutgers Slip Pavilion and/or NYC Parks Pier 42 project

Bike Education in Schools

What Local Spokes will do:

- > Identify and meet with three neighborhood schools, P.S., M.S., and H.S., curriculum using Recycle-A-Bicycle's fleet of youth bicycles
- > Pilot Local Spokes Bike Education program in 2012-2013 school year

Local Spokes recommends:

- > NYC Department of Education and DOT partner to replicate Local Spokes Bike Education program in 25% of District 1 schools by 2015

Public Education and Safety

What Local Spokes will do:

- > Create a guerilla education campaign using magnets, spoke cards, seat covers, or other easily removable "take-aways" that each depict a single message about sharing the streets or rules of the road

- > Distribute through 'Bike Friendly Businesses'

Local Spokes recommends:

- > DOT continue to conduct community engagement using multi-lingual and multi-modal education materials
- > Enforcement should equitably target dangerous behavior by drivers and cyclists, and include thorough investigation of accidents
- > Enforcement should ensure that bike infrastructure is clear of obstruction and safe
- > Deploy police officers on bicycles for enforcement around biking behavior

Job Creation

What Local Spokes will do:

- > Create a local job training program around bike mechanics and workplace skills (Recycle-A-Bicycle and Henry Street Settlement) that attracts local residents

Local Spokes recommends:

- > Alta / Citibike should hire mechanics that have completed the Local Spokes job training program