

**BMTS Article Digest**  
**September – October 2020**

BMTS Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee Members:

The following is a compilation of articles that may be of interest to BMTS Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee members. This and past digests can also be accessed in the Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee page of [www.bmtsonline.com](http://www.bmtsonline.com).

Scott

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## **Pedestrian & Bicycle Information Center (PBIC) Messenger e-Newsletter**

Go to <http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/newsroom/newsletters.cfm>.

Subscribe to the new monthly PBIC Messenger. Send news for future issues to editorial team member Linda Tracy.

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### **Come out and play in Broome County**

Go All Out Broome County is your simple guide to hundreds of places and thousands of acres in your own backyard or just down the road. Easily locate hidden gems and local favorites then map your next outdoor adventure in Broome County. Go to [www.GoAllOutBroome.com](http://www.GoAllOutBroome.com).



Explore more than a dozen state forests, 78 parks or 77 miles of paddle friendly waters. Give our antique carousels a go-round or enjoy a round of golf on courses worthy of professional competition. From challenging trails to hike or bike to riverside strolls or picnics, you can go all out in any way, in every season, in Broome County.

Now you're just a few clicks away from an awesome day.

Are you in? Then go all out in Broome County!

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See the **Two Rivers Greenway Pedestrian & Bicycle Counting Report** for **September** at <http://www.bmtsonline.com/sites/default/files/September%202020%20Report.pdf>.



More public art installations and streetscape improvements are being planned for downtown Binghamton.

Mayor Richard David is seeking comment from people interested in the future of the arts district.

An online survey is being conducted to allow residents and visitors to offer suggestions for future enhancements.

In a statement released by City Hall Wednesday, David said the goal is to make the area surrounding arts and entertainment destinations "more walkable and attractive."

The city has received a \$1.7 million state grant to create an arts and culture district covering portions of State, Henry, Washington, Water and Lewis streets.

A virtual public meeting on the project is scheduled for October 29.



Public art on display at Binghamton City Hall.  
(Photo: Bob Joseph/WNBF News)

***Click [HERE](#) to take the city's art district survey.***

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A little boy in Tioga County has a new bicycle thanks to the kindness of law enforcement officials after his birthday bike was stolen.

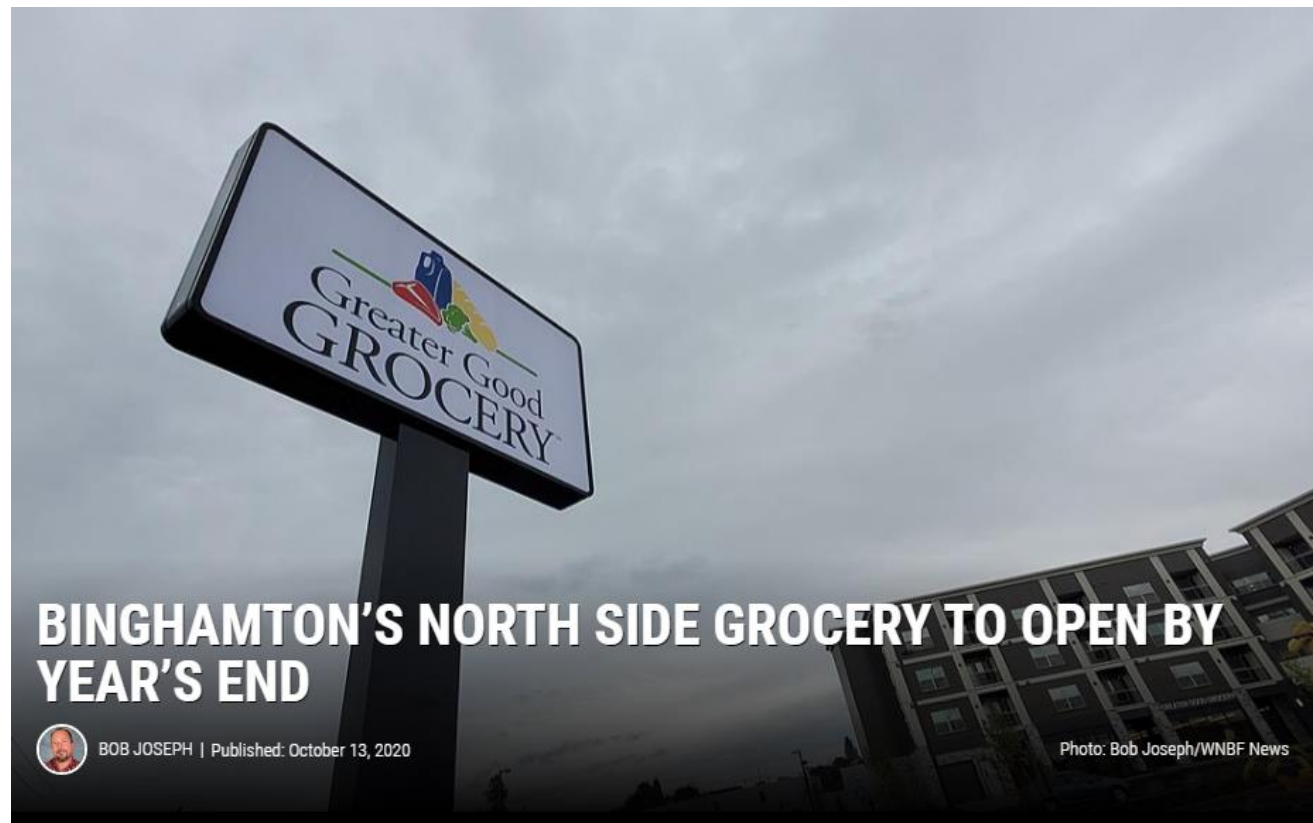
Sheriff's Deputies investigating the theft of the four-year-old Town of Tioga boy's bicycle were unable to find the bike but they and

several members of the Road Patrol and Communications Divisions took up a collection to replace the boy's ride.

Authorities are still looking for whoever took the child's present on September 11 from a home on Robin Way.

Anyone with information is asked to call the Tioga County Sheriff's Office at (607) 687-1010 or leave a tip on the website at [www.tiogacountsheriff.com/send-tip](http://www.tiogacountsheriff.com/send-tip).

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Nearly a quarter-century after its last supermarket closed, a Binghamton neighborhood will soon have a grocery store.

Greater Good Grocery at the newly-constructed Canal Plaza on the North Side is expected to open in the next couple of months.

The Broome County Council of Churches is overseeing the store project. Council executive director Joseph Sellepack said the COVID-19 pandemic has caused delays in getting the store ready to open.

Delivery of refrigerators, freezers and checkout equipment has been held up.





The new North Side grocery store will be located on the street level of the Canal Plaza complex.  
(Photo: Bob Joseph/WNBF News)

Sellepack would like the 5,000-square-foot store at 435 State Street to open by Thanksgiving but he said it may not be operational until mid-December.

The store will carry basic food items including dairy, produce, bread and meat. It will not sell things like beer and cigarettes.

A view inside the future Greater Good Grocery in Binghamton on October 7, 2020.  
(Photo: Bob Joseph/WNBF News)



The neighborhood has been without a convenient place to buy groceries since a Grand Union store in the Binghamton

Plaza closed in 1996. A Great American store had operated until 1993 at the site of the new Canal Plaza redevelopment project.

The first residents of the Canal Plaza apartments moved in less than two weeks ago.

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## Why I'll Never Replace My 15-Year-Old Hybrid

"SET ASIDE THE CLICHÉ ABOUT NEVER FORGETTING HOW TO RIDE A BIKE, BECAUSE THERE'S A BIGGER TRUTH HERE: YOU NEVER FORGET HOW YOU *FEEL* WHEN YOU RIDE A BIKE."

BY KAREN STABINER

Sep 17, 2020



Michael Byers

The last time I felt this way about my bicycle I was 9; it was a thick-tired, teal blue Schwinn, and I secretly pretended it was a horse. Not just any horse: The Schwinn was the Godolphin Arabian from Marguerite Henry's *King of the Wind*, a book I checked out so often that the school librarian finally had to pry it from my hands and tell me to find something else to read.

On summer nights I pedaled to the end of the block, imagining that I lagged behind the field in a horse race that would determine the future of the breed. Right turn at the corner, right again one street over, and then, heading into the stretch, we kicked into a better gear. My horse and I galloped back toward Ewing Avenue at a dangerous tilt as the crowd came to its feet, cheering the little long shot until we reached the finish line, my family's house, victorious.

A basic bicycle can be anything you want it to be.

Many decades later, my ride is a Trek 7300 Multitrack, a model that was discontinued in 2012, though I imagine its descendants live on, even as the Arabian's line still carries riders to victory, somewhere. "Multitrack" seems to be a euphemism for not anything special, or even current: It lacks the sleek lines of the racing bikes favored by men in Italianate jerseys and bike shorts, and it's not as clever as the electric bikes that shift into power mode if you want to cruise without pedaling. It's not one of those efficient aero bikes stripped of anything that would slow it down, the cycling equivalent of an Armani suit and about as expensive.

I used to have a thin-wheeled racer, and occasionally I'd grab the dropped handlebar, flatten my back, and reminisce about those made-up childhood horse races. But in truth, I always felt that the racer was more than I needed. I was an occasional urban rider, a nice, solid cyclist. The Trek is a nice, solid bike; we are on good terms.

I left it behind when I moved to New York City from Los Angeles 11 years ago, because I thought I'd be gone months, not years. But I was wrong, and eventually vertical living took its toll on my spirit, so I splurged and shipped the bike east. Early on Sunday mornings we'd hit the West Side bike path to confirm that I could bike the roughly 100 blocks from Chelsea to the Columbia University campus where I taught, if I so chose, and then return home.

## **You never lose the memories tied to the fleeting experience of being more mobile than you really are.**

When I moved back to L.A. a year ago, done in by homesickness, the bike finished the round trip with me. It has to be about 15 years old by now, but that's a prime age for a pleasure horse, and there's something to be said for loyalty.

I ignored it when I first got back, distracted by the move and a new job; it had two flat tires and a pump lost in transit. But this past February I finally walked it over to a nearby bike boutique—cooler heads than mine suggested that it was perhaps unwise to tackle L.A.'s bike paths before a professional could confirm that the brakes had survived the move. I felt a twinge of defensiveness: The bikes in the window were fancier in every way, with price tags to match. I asked the guy behind the counter if they'd mind giving my Trek the once-over.

He shot me an inside-baseball smile. "This is a great bike," he said, loud enough for everyone in the shop to hear. "It'll last forever." Four days later, my great bike and I were ready to hit the road with functional brakes and gears, perfectly inflated tires and a polished frame.

Set aside the cliché about never forgetting how to ride a bike, because there's a bigger truth here: You never forget how you feel when you ride a bike, never lose the memories tied to

the fleeting experience of being more mobile than you really are. Being able to pedal and steer is not much of an accomplishment, but being able to summon your 9-year-old self, to feel not only today's breeze but breezes from your past? That's something.

Within weeks, the world as we knew it shut down because of the pandemic, and riding became one of the few things I could do safely, past abandoned beaches and bike paths, on streets that had never been safer because no one was driving. I went from the occasional 20-minute ride to four miles, to six, almost every day. By the time the paths reopened in May, I was riding 10 miles round trip, easy, and only because that was the distance from my starting point to the northern end of the bike path. At some point I'll add mileage in the opposite direction; maybe I'll do the whole length.

The folks who pass me on the bike path have their own inner stories to tell. The man-packs in fancy jerseys are clearly in the midst of a race through the Tuscan countryside. The e-bike riders, at least in my Santa Monica neighborhood, are high-speed tourists, shooting videos as they roar past. Some of the people on fancy bikes are famous enough to merit the attention of paparazzi—the standout bike the equivalent, for now, of a red-carpet gown.

And the people on single-speed beach cruisers, let's not forget them, seem to yearn for the beach vibes of yesteryear, the simplicity of gearless bikes, coaster brakes, a burger, fries and a surfboard.

## **Being able to summon your 9-year-old self, to feel not only today's breeze but breezes from your past? That's something.**

Me, I just want to move through space at a clip, like I did long ago, on a bike that does what I ask, more than well enough. The wind in my hair—okay, in the ventilation slats on my helmet—and the feeling of being slightly less earthbound than normal are especially nice these days, when we are so dug in. I still ride too fast, sometimes, the legacy of my early dreams, but the Trek handles it without so much as a wobble, and does not sneer when I eventually kick back into a more reasonable speed.

My recent riding began with an imperative: I needed something that involved motion, because I am congenitally incapable of sitting still all day, but would enable me to evade strangers at a moment's notice. Then the old feelings kicked in, and riding once or twice a week became riding almost every day, whether it's a coffee-break sprint to the Santa Monica pier or that round trip to the end of the bike path and back. Riding provides temporary release, when there is precious little of it.

The only constant, no matter what route I take, is a right turn at Pico Boulevard near the end of the ride. Pico dead-ends at the beach, so it's a one-block detour to catch a glimpse of the Pacific and see what color it is at this exact moment. It changes all the time; I like to take note.

Then I circle over to the main street, the ocean breeze at my back, and race myself back home.

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# Coronavirus: How pandemic sparked European cycling revolution

By Kate Vandy  
BBC News, Brussels

Published October 2, 2020

**From Bucharest to Brussels, and from Lisbon to Lyon, the coronavirus pandemic has triggered unprecedented investment in cycling around Europe.**

More than €1bn (£907m; \$1.1bn) has been spent on cycling-related infrastructure and 2,300km (1,400 miles) of new bike lanes have been rolled out since the pandemic began.

"Cycling has come out a big winner," says Jill Warren of the Brussels-based European Cycling Federation. "This time has shown us the potential cycling that has to change our cities and our lives."

But what has all this money been spent on? And what might the long-term impacts of this investment be? This is what four major cities have been doing.

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## Milan changes direction

"We tried to build bike lanes before, but car drivers protested," says Pierfrancesco Maran, Milan's deputy mayor for Urban Planning, Green Areas and Agriculture. "Someone said to me: 'You needed coronavirus to [introduce them] here!'"

This industrial hub in northern Italy was one of the first cities in Europe to invest in cycling as a way to get people moving around again. There are 35km of new cycle paths, although many of these are temporary.

"Most people who are cycling used public transport before. But now they need an alternative," Mr Maran says. "Before Covid we had 1,000 cyclists [on the main shopping street], now we have 7,000."

But this rise in popularity has put pressure on many bike-related businesses.



IMAGE COPYRIGHT  
GETTY IMAGES

New cycle paths have proved popular in Milan.

Alessandro, a young apprentice at 92-year-old bike manufacturer Pepino Drali, says their business reopened in early May. "People were standing on the streets with their bikes in their hands and the line was

right around the corner," he recalls.

"It's been complicated to keep manufacturing our bikes; coronavirus meant we couldn't find a lot of parts anymore," he adds.

Despite the boost to businesses, not everyone is happy. Many think the changes don't go far enough.

"There have been a few lanes that have been built, but compared with the need and the necessity of this city and the will of people they are really a drop in the ocean," Anna Germotta, an environmental lawyer, says.

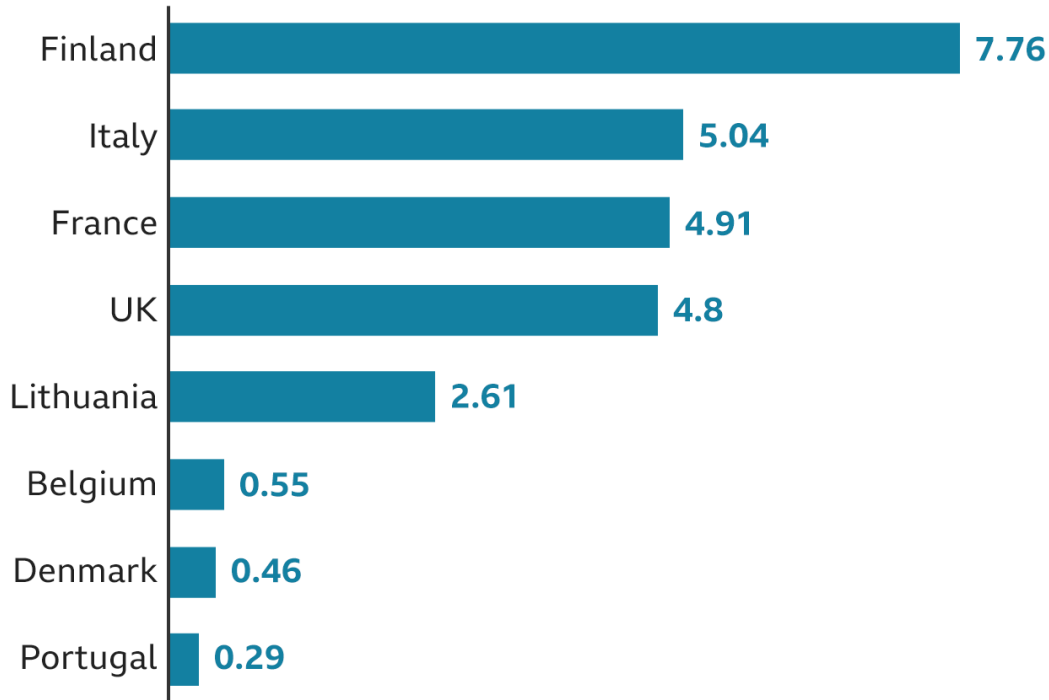
She, like many others, believes this is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to redesign our cities so they're suitable for all cyclists.

"Coronavirus is a moment in which every policy maker can change their own cities," she believes. "The failure to have the courage to change now, in a situation in which you have some time to prepare the people, could be really disastrous."

In an attempt to prepare people, the regional government in this part of Italy has spent €115m to stimulate cycling. The government has pledged subsidies of up to €500 if citizens want to buy a new bike or an e-scooter in a bid to keep people off public transport and out of cars.

# Additional cycling funding

Euros per person



Source: European Cyclists Federation

**BBC**

## Paris leads the way

More than 800km away, Paris Deputy Mayor David Belliard talks of a big transformation in the French capital, with €20m invested since the start of the pandemic.

"It's like a revolution," he says.

"The most iconic change is on the notoriously busy Rue de Rivoli, which stretches across Paris from east to west. Some sections of this road are now completely car-free. The more you give space for bicycles the more they will use it."



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In Paris, the deputy mayor speaks of a revolution on two wheels

Cycling levels have increased by 27% compared with the same time last year. This is partly due to the extensive approach taken by the French government, which is offering a €50 subsidy towards the cost of bike repairs.

"It's like paradise for me now," says Rémy Dunoyer, a bike mechanic in downtown Paris. "It's really becoming so popular."

His repair shop stayed open throughout the whole of lockdown and, while other businesses were furloughing and shedding staff, his actually expanded. "We had to hire more employees just because of the level of repairs," he explains.

And in an attempt to establish a cycling culture here, the government is also offering free cycling lessons.

"Normally, we have about 150 adults each year learning to cycle and now we have easily doubled to 300 people," says Joël Sick, a teacher at Maison du Vélo, on the banks of the River Seine.

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## An uphill battle in Brussels

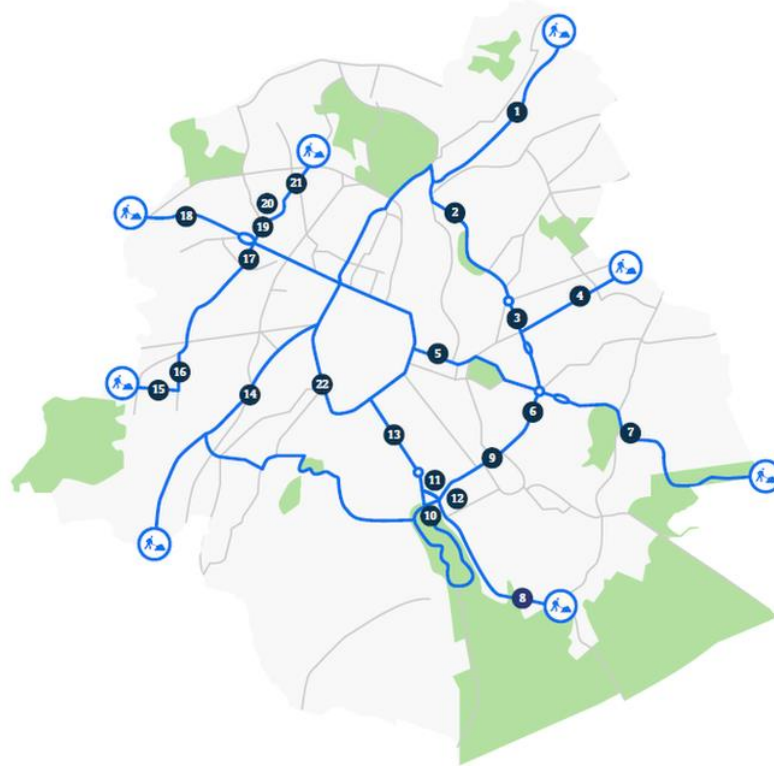
Further north in Brussels, 40km of cycle lanes have been installed along some of the city's busiest roads.



## 40 km extra bike lanes for Brussels

- 1 Vilvoordselaan
- 2 Lambermontlaan
- 3 Boulevard Auguste Reyers
- 4 E40 Parkway
- 5 Rue de la Loi
- 6 Boulevard Louis Schmidt
- 7 Avenue de Tervueren
- 8 Delleurlaan
- 9 Boulevard Général Jacques
- 10 Lloyd Georgelaan
- 11 Avenue Emile De Mot
- 12 Kongolaan
- 13 Avenue Louise
- 14 Veeweyde
- 15 Boulevard Sylvain Dupuis
- 16 GroenInckx-De Maylaan
- 17 Boulevard Louis Mettwie
- 18 Avenue Charles Quint
- 19 Jacques Serron Laan
- 20 Lakenselaan
- 21 De Smet de Naeyerlaan
- 22 Krulspunt Zuidlaan

*Elke Van den Brandt*  
Brussels Minister of Mobility, Safety and Public Works



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New bike lanes have been introduced around Brussels

In order to free up space so that social distancing rules can be adhered to, there is a zone where pedestrians and cyclists have priority over cars. Speed limits have also been reintroduced across the entire city.

Back in April, regional Transport Minister Elke Van den Brandt wrote an open letter to residents asking them to avoid public transport.

"Packed buses at peak hours is definitely not what we want," he said. "The only alternative would be to ask people to take a car. That isn't a solution."

And it seems the latest measures have encouraged people to take up cycling. Bike use is up by 44% on last year.

"Everyone has a bike now," says Diana, who is queuing outside a repair shop. "I had one before the crisis but now I use it every day."



New bike lanes in Brussels have extra space to ensure social distancing is maintained.

But there's been an unforeseen challenge as a result of the pandemic/

"I had this image of myself buying a beautiful new bike with a matching helmet... but there were no bikes," explains Brussels resident Vesselina Foteva. "I wanted to order one, but they said I would need to wait at least two months."

She moved to Brussels two weeks before the start of the pandemic and saw the city change before her eyes. "I decided I wanted to take all the measures I could to stay healthy and avoid public transport."

Unable to get her hands on a new bike, Ms Foteva turned to subscription-based bike service Swapfiets. "Our business grew by 60% in Brussels during the lockdown," its founder Richard Burger says.

"Milan and Paris have invested in a major way in infrastructure during this time, so that is where we will open shops next."

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## Cycling grows in Amsterdam

Unlike most big cities, Amsterdam already had a cycling infrastructure long before the pandemic. The Dutch capital famously has more bikes than people and 767km of well-established cycle lanes.

But the impact of coronavirus on urban mobility has been far-reaching, and it has still had an impact here.

"It's been crazy to see what we thought would happen in the next 10 years suddenly happening in three to six months," says Taco Carlier, whose electric bike brand VanMoof sold more bikes in the first four months of 2020 than it did in the previous two years.

"People saw how much more beautiful their city could be and how much more liveable it would be with more bikes and less cars," Mr Carlier says. "Now they don't want to go back."



The e-bike is now the most commonly sold type of bicycle in the Netherlands. And cargo bike sales are surging too - up 53% since the start of the pandemic.

Judith and Johan Hartog bought their cargo bikes right at the start of lockdown. "It didn't feel right to go by public transport anymore, and so it was actually the right time now to get a cargo bike," Judith says.

They wanted to keep their family safe from the risks public transport posed, she says, and like many others they invested savings into cycling they otherwise wouldn't have had.

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## So will this shift last?

Many cities are preparing for an uncertain future - unsure if the old way of living will be possible again. "A pandemic really shifts mindsets very quickly," says Jill Warren of the European Cycling Federation.

Cycling is proving to be a solution for more and more people.

But the question is whether they will keep it up once the fear of coronavirus subsides and whether the move to the bicycle is permanent.

"It takes political will, it takes investment, it takes activism on the part of citizens who want that," argues Ms Warren. And she believes it will need courage from politicians to make the changes stick.

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