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Sobyanin Mulls Rooftop Roads

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UPDATE: A city hall spokeswoman said after The Moscow Times went to press that no such plans are being considered.

Mayor Sergei Sobyanin is considering resurrecting plans to erect apartment buildings that double as highways.

The concept, developed by German engineer Roland Lipp, would see highways built on top of two-story structures, which would also carry power transmission lines. The structures would also contain parking spaces and commercial property, Moskovskiye Novosti reported.

The East German-born, Russian-educated engineer proposed the idea of elevated multipurpose highway construction, called "Strassenhaus," in 2007. The notion won some interest from Mayor Yury Luzhkov, but nothing came of the concept before Luzhkov left office in 2010.

Power lines usually give off so much radiation that you cannot build within 600 meters of them, according to the paper, but the proposal is to encase them in specially shielded tunnels under the highways.

The 1 billion ruble ($31 million) per kilometer roads would mostly be used for the planned expansion of Moscow on its southwestern flank. City Hall declined to confirm or deny the story when The Moscow Times contacted it Friday.

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