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# Moscow Mayor Apologizes for Massive Road Reconstruction

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The renovation, which has turned some of the city's streets into dust-spewing and impassable trenches, has irked many Muscovites.

Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin has apologized to local residents for the "inconveniences" caused by his massive — and widely criticized — street renovation projects, and pledged much of the work would be completed by Sept. 5.

The months of construction work that have torn up most of the city center — including Myasnitskaya Ulitsa, Bolshaya Ordynka Ulitsa and the entire Patriarch's Ponds neighborhood — throughout the summer should be finished by City Day, Sobyanin said in an interview with state-owned Channel One television. Moscow celebrates its annual holiday on the first Saturday of September.

"I do, of course, ask for Muscovites' forgiveness for the inconveniences we are inflicting," Sobyanin was quoted as saying. "But these are temporary inconveniences, and later it will be

a completely different space, comfortable and convenient."

The renovation, which has turned some of the city's streets into dust-spewing and impassable trenches, has irked many Muscovites, though broadened sidewalks have transformed some of the city's streets for pedestrians in recent years.

The mayor said the city's streets will see increased traffic capacity following the reconstruction, and separate bike lanes will be added "where possible," Channel One reported.

But the way the City Hall has handled its attempts to bring cycling to Moscow's streets has been among the projects with which critics have found fault.

Each bike in the city's bike-sharing scheme, launched two years ago, has cost Moscow some 233,333 rubles ($4,320 at the time), according to estimates by opposition figure and anti-corruption blogger Alexei Navalny.

City Hall denied any wrongdoing, according to local news website The Village, and suggested Navalny should do a better job of checking his facts.

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