



Burt Lazarin
Chair

Jesse R. Bodine
District Manager

CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR
330 West 42nd Street, 26th floor New York, NY 10036
tel: 212-736-4536 fax: 212-947-9512
www.nyc.gov/mcb4

January 15, 2019

Hon. Corey Johnson
NYC Council Speaker
224 W. 30th Street, Suite 1206
New York, NY 10001

Re: Increasing Pedestrian Walking Space

Manhattan Community Board 4 (CB4) at its January 2nd Full Board meeting with a vote of 34 in favor, 0 against, 0 abstaining and 0 present but not eligible to vote, requests that you convene a task force to preserve and increase the pedestrian walking space in the City and in particular in the Central Business District.

In many places in Manhattan, pedestrians walk in the street at great risk to their lives. Sidewalks were installed in Manhattan when the majority of the buildings were limited to six stories. Now buildings have grown from six to sixty stories. In 1910, and again in 1940, many sidewalks were shrunk to give more space to the automobile.

Many factors contribute to the ever-increasing encroachment on the pedestrian space: newsstands, news boxes, street vendors, food vendors, phone booths, sandwich boards, storm enclosures, tourists' luggage, and five-foot high piles of garbage bags. A myriad of jurisdictions is charged with enforcement of disjointed or conflicting laws and enforcement methods. And now, the proliferation of bikes/bike parking, scooters, and dock-less bike-share further threatens the walking space, making walking even more dangerous for all New Yorkers, particularly for vision and mobility impaired pedestrians.

The task force would make recommendations to:

- Update and rationalize regulations for sidewalks obstructions
- Clarify enforcement procedures
- Create a process to identify overcrowded sidewalks
- Create a plan to widen the walking lanes. – Initially focused on Manhattan Central Business District (CBD)

This task force, hosted by the City Council Speaker would include participation of elected officials, ADA Activists, Community Boards, Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), and NYC Department of Transportation (DOT) officials. Other agencies would be invited as needed.

Now that all other modes of transportations are being embraced, it is time to focus on the 7 million New Yorkers who commute by walking or mass transit every day and give them the simple solutions that will greatly improve their commute.

Sincerely,



Burt Lazarin
Chair
Manhattan Community
Board 4



Christine Berthet
Co-Chair
Transportation Planning
Committee



Dale Corvino
Co-Chair
Transportation Planning
Committee