



CITY OF NEW YORK  
**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

P.O. Box 2622, New York, NY 10108  
www.mcb4.nyc

**LOWELL D. KERN**  
Chair

**JESSE R. BODINE**  
District Manager

October 19, 2020

Deputy Inspector Megan O'Malley  
Commanding Officer, Midtown North Precinct  
306 W. 54<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10019

Inspector Brendan Timoney  
Commanding Officer, Midtown South Precinct  
357 W. 35<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10001

Captain Robert Gault  
Commanding Officer, 10<sup>th</sup> Precinct  
230 W. 20<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10011

**Re: Pedestrian Access**

Dear Commanding Officers of Midtown North, Midtown South, and 10<sup>th</sup> Precinct,

Manhattan Community Board 4 (MCB4) welcomes you to your respective new commands and looks to build a working relationship with each of you. A recent issue that was of particular concern to MCB4, residents, and businesses was the unannounced barricading of the streets that each of your precincts are located on. MCB4 wrote to Commissioner Shea regarding the lack of any communication and lack of public access to the blocks<sup>1</sup>. More recently, the barricades have been re-configured so that they no longer impede access to the blocks, and more importantly, the screening of the public is done at the precinct entrances instead of the block entrance.

Encouragingly on October 6<sup>th</sup>, the Midtown North Precinct notified us of a new closure. An estimated duration would have been useful, but they also followed up with an update when the barricades were removed. This is helpful.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://cbmanhattan.cityofnewyork.us/cb4/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2020/08/15-TRANS-Letter-to-NYPD-Mayor-re-Precinct-Services-original.pdf>

However, we are still receiving complaints related to the obstructed access to the sidewalks on those blocks. Because of the perpendicular parking by NYPD personnel, pedestrians must walk in the street, creating a safety hazard. Parents with strollers, persons with disabilities, and groups of pedestrians cannot navigate the very narrow right-of-way which is sometimes reduced to two or three feet by the front-end of vehicles on the sidewalk. These narrowed sidewalks do not provide for pedestrian circulation under the 6-foot social distancing rules.

At its October 7<sup>th</sup> Full Board meeting, by a vote of 42 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstaining, and 0 present but not eligible, MCB4 requests that all NYPD vehicles park along the curb, and not on the sidewalk, consistent with the law<sup>2</sup> and with other vehicles parked in the district. This concerns the Tenth Precinct on West 20<sup>th</sup> Street between Seventh and Eighth Avenues; Midtown South on West 35<sup>th</sup> and West 36<sup>th</sup> Streets between Eighth and Ninth Avenues and Midtown North on West 54<sup>th</sup> Street between Eighth and Ninth Avenues.

If there is a shortage of parking directly in front of the precinct house on these blocks, the placards the City gives to officers provide them free parking on a myriad of neighboring streets. The placards do not give permission to park on the sidewalks, which are intended for pedestrian use, and this practice should be avoided.

This would conform with the law and be a visible step towards strengthening the respect and trust between the NYPD and the communities it serves. Pedestrian access and public space are important assets--particularly for our district, which has one of the lowest car ownership rates and highest proportion of pedestrian commuters in the city.

We look forward to working with you toward responding to this issue and your continued communications in compliance with the spirit and the letter of the City Charter. MCB4 is currently relocating our district office and requests that any future written responses be sent through email to the District Manager, Jesse Bodine at [jbodine@cb.nyc.gov](mailto:jbodine@cb.nyc.gov).

Sincerely,



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<sup>2</sup> New York City Administrative code of New York § 19-162.5 City vehicle obstructing a bicycle lane, bus lane, sidewalk, crosswalk, or fire hydrant. No vehicle operated on behalf of the city shall obstruct a bicycle lane, bus lane when bus lane restrictions are in effect, sidewalk, crosswalk, or fire hydrant, except as otherwise permitted by law.

§ 14-183 Parking permits issued by the police department. Parking with a permit shall be permitted in areas specified on or programmed into the permit, and may allow for parking in some or all of the following areas: (a) at parking meters; (b) in truck loading and unloading zones; (c) in "no standing/parking" except "authorized vehicles" or "authorized vehicle" only, when such permit authorizes such use; and (d) in "no parking" areas.

§ 14-184 Removal of vehicles obstructing traffic.

When a vehicle is situated so as to constitute an obstruction of a sidewalk, crosswalk, fire hydrant, bicycle lane, or bus lane and such vehicle is unattended or the person in charge of such vehicle has not arranged for its immediate removal, a person designated by the commissioner may direct its removal by a police department tow truck upon a determination that such vehicle poses a threat to safety or would inhibit the safe and expeditious passage of buses operated by the metropolitan transportation authority.

Lowell Kern  
Chair  
Manhattan Community Board 4

Christine Berthet  
Co-Chair  
Transportation Planning  
Committee

Dale Corvino  
Co-Chair  
Transportation Planning  
Committee

Cc: Hon. Jerrold Nadler, U.S. Congress  
Hon. Brad Hoylman, U.S. Senate  
Hon. Linda Rosenthal, NYS Assembly  
Hon. Corey Johnson, Speaker, NYC Council  
Hon. Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President  
Dermot Shea, Commissioner, NYPD