



**Lowell D. Kern**  
Chair

**Jesse Bodine**  
District Manager

CITY OF NEW YORK

**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

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Hon. Bill de Blasio  
Mayor of the City of New York  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Rick Cotton  
Executive Director  
Port Authority of New York & New Jersey  
4 World Trade Center, 150 Greenwich Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Fl.  
New York, NY 10006

**Re: Lincoln Tunnel Congestion on Ninth, Tenth, and Eleventh Avenues**

Dear Mayor de Blasio and Mr. Cotton,

Manhattan Community Board 4 (MCB4), at its Full Board meeting on July 28<sup>th</sup> by a vote of 33 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstaining, and 0 present but not eligible, requests that drastic measures be taken immediately to alleviate the extraordinary traffic congestion and air quality degradation due to the considerable increase in Lincoln Tunnel bound vehicular volume since the beginning of the COVID recovery period. Every day, seven days a week for a total of eight hours, mornings and evening, the community endures gridlock, honking, and unhealthy air quality. Businesses are directly affected as the situation is an order of magnitude worse than pre-COVID conditions.

The corrective measures should provide immediate relief to the community by assigning traffic agents to prevent and enforce "blocking the box," and aggressive ticket issuing for horn citations. We also recommend swift implementation of a High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) only policy at the New Jersey entrance to the tunnel, or at a minimum, HOV priority lanes in the tunnel, on Ninth and Eleventh Avenues, at the southbound entrances to the Lincoln Tunnel off Ninth and Eleventh Avenues, and on Tenth Avenue from 23<sup>rd</sup> Street to 41<sup>st</sup> Street.

As the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey (PANYNJ) is installing cashless tolls on the New York side, PANYNJ should explore adding tolls to exit the city and applying variable rates to reduce congestion at peak hours.

Manhattan Community District 4 is home to all the entrances and exits to the Lincoln Tunnel. Decades ago, those roadways tore apart our community. While the Port Authority has begun to engage community stakeholders in its planning of the Bus Terminal replacement, we continue to struggle with the Lincoln Tunnel traffic in our streets.

As the city emerges from the COVID-19 Pandemic, this surge in traffic is threatening the fledgling economic recovery: businesses complain of losing customers and deliveries due to traffic, restaurants cannot take advantage of the Open Restaurant program as honking chases away patrons, and customers are staying home to avoid the chaos, the poor air quality, and lack of safety. A recent study ranked Ninth Avenue as one of the 60 most dangerous stretches in the USA. Many studies have proven that traffic and congestion stifle the economy and severely damage the environment. This situation is a case in point. Many businesses remain closed and the conditions in the area deters new entrepreneurs.

Our observations are that a vast majority of the Tunnel-borne private vehicles are single occupancy, which suggest an ongoing reluctance to use public transit post-pandemic. A single occupancy private vehicle takes up a minimum of 35 square feet of roadway and the resultant congestion dumps tons of toxic pollutants into the air. To make matters worse, drivers stuck in the congestion of their own making constantly honk their horns. Single occupancy vehicles must be disincentivized, while the City concurrently encourages a return to mass transit and car-pooling.

The City and the PANYNJ have the opportunity to help our district's economy recover from the pandemic. We look forward to the swift implementation of greater enforcement and HOV or more effective road pricing measures.

Sincerely,



Lowell D. Kern  
Chair  
Manhattan Community Board 4



Christine Berthet  
Co-chair  
Transportation Planning Committee



Dale Corvino  
Co-chair  
Transportation Planning Committee

CC: Hon. Brad Hoylman, NYS Senator  
Hon. Linda B. Rosenthal, NYS Assembly Member  
Hon. Corey Johnson, Speaker, NYC Council  
Hon. Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President  
Ed Pincar, Manhattan Borough Commissioner, DOT  
Kim Y. Royster, Chief of Transportation, NYPD