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December 15, 2022

Ed Pincar
Manhattan Borough Commissioner
NYC Department of Transportation
59 Maiden Lane, 37th Floor
New York, NY 10038

Re: 10th Avenue Bike Lane, West 14th to West 52nd St

Dear Borough Commissioner Pincar,

Thank you for presenting your initial plans for the installation of a parking-protected bike lane on Tenth Avenue from West 14th to West 52nd Streets. Our community has long advocated for this stretch to be made safer for all, and we are delighted that the Department of Transportation (DOT) has put this project on its 2023 schedule.

By a vote of 36 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstaining, and 0 present but not eligible to vote, Manhattan Community Board 4 (MCB4) supports the implementation of a bike lane on Tenth Avenue provided that our many concerns about cyclist and pedestrian safety, signal improvements, and treatment of unique conditions are fully addressed. We request a presentation of detailed plans by February 2023 so that we may be assured that the lane's design and implementation:

- Meet the evolving standards of safety and accessibility for a 21st Century Bike Infrastructure.
- Ensure safety, security and accessibility for cyclists, pedestrians, and residents with disabilities (ADA compliance) across and along the bike lane.
- Is tailored to the specific challenges of the corridor (itemized below) among them the convergence of Tenth Avenue and West Street (State Route 9A) at the southernmost portion and the conflicts arising from Lincoln Tunnel entry points and congestion from West 34th to West 42nd Street.

We also have concerns about the project timeline, which we ask you to address at that time.

We are pleased to learn that the proposed lane will be 8-ft wide with a 3-ft buffer lane. With the increased usage of bike lanes, we have seen higher volumes as well as wider bikes, such as cargo and recumbent. We are also pleased to see offset pedestrian crossings at every intersection.

Safety and Vertical Protection: Though the bike lane is presented as “parking-protected” as we are learning on Eleventh Avenue, this approach doesn’t work when the parking lane is not consistently occupied, as is the case on Tenth Avenue. We request that the lane be equipped with vertical separations and protections using every approach in DOT’s toolkit, including flex-posts, armadillos, and/or bike rack sleds on painted pedestrian islands to ensure daylighting and prevent illegal parking. The flex-posts installed in the buffer zone along the new Eighth Avenue bike lane north of 43rd Street are reportedly effective. We understand that the DOT’s Better Barriers pilot is testing hardened lane separation strategies and we would like to see them implemented along this corridor. This is a critical component of a safe, self-enforcing design.

Pedestrian Safety: painted islands are not perceived as safe by pedestrians and thus not used. As a result, the effective crossing length is not reduced. With many schools directing their students to Tenth Avenue, improving pedestrian safety is critical. We ask that raised pedestrian refuges be provided at every intersection, not just at the three intersections initially identified (West 27th, West 41st, and West 42nd Streets, and possibly West 23rd, West 29th, and West 34th Streets). If the operational challenges limit your ability to do so, please provide us with a schedule for concrete installation over the next few years. In the interim, please provide vertical protections for these islands, including bike rack sleds, flex-posts, and/or Quick Kurb delineators.

Further, we are aware that the installation of tree pits is subject to subterranean conditions; we would like to see them installed wherever possible. In locations where tree pits are not possible, we’d like to work with identifying reliable partners to maintain shallow planters on the pedestrian refuges. We would also seek to make use of permeable paving and/or other storm-water mitigation/integrated management practices where possible.

Signalization: We request bicycle and pedestrian green wave signal timing along the corridor and additional exclusive split-phase signals at the intersections of West 15th, West 23rd, West 34th, West 39th and West 42nd Streets, in addition to those proposed for West 27th, West 41st, and West 42nd Streets. We also request adjustments to signal timing along the corridor to reduce Lincoln Tunnel-related accumulations at 30th and 41st Streets.

- At 15th Street, MCB4 is on record asking for the installation of a signal to protect pedestrians crossing north-south on the west side. With the addition of cyclists, such a signal is even more justified to protect them from the many left turns by highway bound drivers of vehicles, buses, and trucks.
- At 23rd and 34th Streets, the standard treatment for intersections with two-way streets should be used and exclusive split-phase installed. Road users expect it, and a uniformity of treatment is important to safety and compliance.
- At 39th Street, a pedestrian was killed which caused the DOT to install a large neck-down. There is a high volume of trucks turning onto the street to reach a towing company and a storage facility.

- Further, the Board is on record asking for exclusive split-phase signals on eastbound 23rd, 34th, and 42nd Streets to prevent conflicts with pedestrians crossing on the north side.

We will work with DOT to develop block-specific regulation changes for the corridor, and to identify best uses for the parking lane, including commercial regulations, loading zones, Citibike stations, bike racks, restaurant sheds, street seats, trash containers, etc.

We would also like to see this project designed for the future implementation of a designated bus lane for M11 service.

Installation Timeline: Our concerns about the project timeline are borne of the fact that we have had several stretches of incomplete bike lanes (without green paint, buffer zone markings, hardening, or vertical protection) in our district: Ninth Avenue from 34th to 51st Streets for the last 18 months - which was just mostly completed with some exceptions, Tenth Avenue north of 50th Street, and, until recently, Eleventh Avenue from 43rd to 57th Street. Temporary markings are confusing and give scofflaw drivers the cover to park and even drive on bike lanes. The prolonged incompleteness has only exacerbated a citywide non-compliant atmosphere. Sadly, it's become clear that we cannot rely on NYPD Traffic for consistent enforcement. We worry that it will be difficult to ever get back to higher degrees of compliance. Therefore, we ask that you look at the best way to get to 100% completion in a timely manner. The project may well need to be broken up into zones: 14th - 30th Streets, 30th - 42nd Streets, and 42nd - 52nd Streets. Based on parallel projects contemplated by the Meatpacking district, it may make sense to start from the north in order to connect with the existing lane.

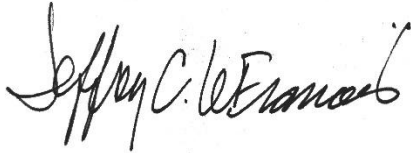
Site-specific considerations along the corridor that were identified at our first meeting, from north to south:

- There is a Target delivery zone at the NW corner of West 44th Street.
- There are high volumes of truck traffic crossing at and turning onto West 41st Street. There is also a charter school on the SW corner, with corresponding high pedestrian volumes.
- Lincoln Tunnel: as stated, we will seek to remediate Tunnel-related choke points at West 30th and West 41st Streets.
- Avenues School between 25th and 26th Streets has concentrated periods of school bus and black car arrivals/departures and pedestrian volumes. The school is working to discharge the buses on the side streets.
- There is a parking garage entrance between 24th and 25th Streets.
- There is a car wash at the SW corner of 24th Street. Sidewalk parking and queuing present persistent obstructions to pedestrians and cyclists.
- The CVS at the SW corner of 23rd Street and Tenth Avenue has frequent truck deliveries.
- There is a parking lot entrance between 19th and 20th Streets.
- We note frequent and very high pedestrian and cyclist volumes, to the point of overflow, at the 14th Street crossing of West Street (Route 9A), particularly following the opening of Little Island and other attractions.
- The Meatpacking BID is developing a comprehensive plan, the Western Gateway, which includes a raised 2-way bike lane in the middle of 14th Street and a protected bike lane

along the south curb of West 15th Street between Tenth Avenue and West Street (Route 9A), leading to an existing pedestrian crossing. We request that the DOT coordinate its planning with the BID.

We look forward to a detailed presentation and to working with you to ensure that the Tenth Avenue Bike Lane is optimally designed to ensure the same high level of safety DOT has deployed on the Eighth Avenue corridor.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey LeFrancois
Chair
Manhattan Community Board 4



Christine Berthet
Co-chair
Transportation Planning Committee



Dale Corvino
Co-chair
Transportation Planning Committee