



CITY OF NEW YORK

**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

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**JOHN WEIS**  
Chair

**ROBERT J. BENFATTO, JR., ESQ.**  
District Manager

April 6, 2011

Margaret Forgione  
Manhattan Borough Commissioner  
New York City Department of Transportation  
40 Worth Street  
New York, New York 10013

**Re: Clinton/Hell's Kitchen Neighborhood Traffic Study Delay**

Dear Commissioner Forgione:

Manhattan Community Board (CB4) requests the expeditious completion of the **Clinton/Hell's Kitchen Neighborhood Traffic Study** (Study), which is now two years late. We ask that the Department of Transportation (DOT), who is performing the study with federal funds, prioritize resources accordingly, accelerate the implementation of already recommended short-term improvements and commits to a firm completion date. Time is of the essence if we do not want another year to pass by without improved results.

In January 2007 the Study received federal funding and was listed as Project PTDT07G00.21 in the Federal Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). It was to be performed by New York City DOT, starting in July 2007 with a Final Report deliverable in early 2009. The project is described as follows:

- ...This study will comprehensively consider traffic conditions and safety issues for a wide variety of users, including pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, local residents, and motorists, and develop improvement plans to address these issues. Areas of particular concern will include improving pedestrian safety (particularly for children and seniors), reducing conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles (particularly trucks), ensuring emergency vehicle access, promoting safe bicycle use, managing access to/from the Lincoln Tunnel in coordination with the Port Authority, accommodating the various functions of Ninth Avenue, and improving public transit access. The overall study area for this project is the area bounded by W 34th Street to the south, W 55th Street to the north, Eighth Avenue to east and the Hudson River to the west.

In a June 2007 resolution, CB4 requested of the DOT a study of the feasibility of traffic calming and pedestrian safety measures to be part of the Study such as:

- "Shortening crossing distances, reducing risks associated with turning cars (neck downs and dedicated crossing phases), keeping pedestrian crossings clear from traffic and installing traffic calming devices on residential streets (mid blocks and end of blocks neck downs).
- Improving access to all users by dedicating a wide buffered lane to buses and bikes, by sharing parking areas on the avenue between fast turnover pickup and deliveries for businesses, bike parking and sanitation.

- Experimenting on short-term remedies, such as changes in Traffic signal timing, signage and plastic bollards, which do not require capital financing.”

In December 2007, based on the recommendation of the Project Advisory Committee the southern Study boundary was changed from 34<sup>th</sup> Street to 29<sup>th</sup> Street in order to include all Lincoln Tunnel access roads.

The Project Advisory Committee has only praises for the project manager, Andrew Lenton, and the community consultation process. However, the resources assigned seem insufficient. At the last project advisory committee meeting (June 2010) the DOT promised our elected officials and Community Board 4 that two meetings would take place in the fourth quarter of 2010, but they did not take place. DOT also announced a delayed completion date of July 2011, fully two years later than the original completion date of July 2009. Now, we understand that the DOT plans to complete the Study, in December 2011.

These delays are stalling CB4's efforts to improve pedestrian safety: Ninth and Eighth Avenues are congested corridors with the two most dangerous intersections for pedestrians<sup>1</sup> in the entire City according to DOT, but no intersection redesign has been undertaken, pending the Study completion. Similarly most of the "Safe Street for Seniors" initiative that Speaker Quinn kicked off with AARP is on hold pending the Clinton/Hell's Kitchen Study completion.

We welcome the implementation of interim and short-term measures to improve traffic safety in our neighborhood. However we ask the DOT's commitment to complete the whole Study without which this project will continue to stretch out indefinitely while our streets continue to be seen more as entryways to the Lincoln Tunnel than serving vulnerable residents, and our neighbors will continue to be killed and injured in the streets.

Sincerely yours,



John Weis  
Chair  
Manhattan Community Board No. 4



Christine Berthet  
Co-Chair  
Transportation Planning Committee



Jay Marcus  
Co-Chair  
Transportation Planning Committee

Cc:  
G.Brewer,  
T.Duane,  
R.Gottfried,  
L.Rosenthal,  
C.Quinn,  
S.Stringer

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<sup>1</sup> 42<sup>nd</sup> Street and 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenues, High Pedestrian Crash Locations, Pedestrian Safety Improvements at the top 20 Intersections, March 2010