



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.ManhattanCB4.org

JEAN-DANIEL NOLAND

Chair

ROBERT J. BENFATTO, JR., ESQ.

District Manager

November 15, 2007

Borough Commissioner K. Bray
Department of Transportation
40 Worth Street
New York, NY 10013

Re: Upper Westside Traffic Study

Dear Borough Commissioner Bray,

Community Board 4 commends New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) for undertaking a traffic and transportation study of the West Side of Manhattan (Upper West Side). The southern portion of the study area is in Community District 4¹, and traffic flows in this area affect other parts of Community District 4 to the south.

The area surrounding 58th and 60th Streets is choked with vehicular and pedestrian traffic, much of it associated with the many large institutions and businesses in the area, including John Jay College, Fordham University, New York Institute of Technology, the Children's Professional School, Roosevelt Hospital, Lincoln Center, Time Warner Center and the Hudson Hotel. Residents of 58th Street between Eighth Avenue and Ninth Avenues suffer from the effects of vehicular conflicts between massive delivery trucks lining up to enter the Time Warner Center loading docks; taxis and black cars double and triple parked in front of the Hudson Hotel; and the many shuttle buses from new residential buildings on West End Avenue that circle the area during the morning and evening commutes carrying residents to and from the subway at Columbus Circle.

On 60th Street between Broadway and Columbus, the flow of pedestrian traffic is often so heavy that it is difficult to cross the sidewalk, while in the evening black cars are double and triple parked for events at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel or Jazz at Lincoln Center in the Time Warner Center.

In addition, a good portion of Lincoln Tunnel-bound trucks and buses comes from the Upper West Side, using 9th Avenue, a mixed-use residential corridor intended for local trucks only, to approach the tunnel instead of using the dedicated truck entrance on 11th Avenue. Finally, the western portion of the Special Clinton District has become a de facto charter bus parking lot for Midtown tourism. Charter buses park and idle illegally throughout the area, including across from playgrounds and on school and residential streets, putting the residents' safety and health at risk. In fact, according to the City's department of Health, Clinton/Hell's Kitchen has Manhattan's second highest rate of asthma hospitalization for children under 15 after Harlem.

¹ The boundary between CD4 and CD7 runs along 60th Street between Broadway and Columbus Avenue, and along 59th Street between Columbus Avenue and the Hudson River.

We request that the study address the following issues and evaluate the feasibility of these suggested approaches:

Relieve vehicular congestion on 58th Street:

- Identify Loading and unloading conflicts on 58th street and identify solutions.
- Extend the Hudson Hotel's taxi stand west to Ninth Avenue.
- Consider using the parking lane on the east side of Ninth Avenue between 58th and 60th for Time Warner Center truck queuing during the day and Hudson Hotel taxi queuing at other times.
- Provide dedicated shuttle bus loading/unloading space on the south side of 58th Street, west of Eighth Avenue during morning and evening commutes.

Relieve pedestrian congestion on 60th Street:

- Study the heavy pedestrian traffic and identify solutions (note: the environment study now being done for the Fordham University Master Plan is studying the same issue; this work should be coordinated)
- Recent signal changes at Ninth Avenue have improved pedestrian safety, but consider whether further pedestrian advantages including a Barnes Dance are appropriate.

Improve pedestrian safety at Ninth Avenue and 57th street

- This intersection is very dangerous, particularly with westbound traffic on 57th Street turning left down Ninth. Consider a Barnes Dance to isolate pedestrians from all unprotected turns. Consider a red phase for the left turn arrow to reduce pedestrian conflicts with cars turning left from 57th Street onto 9th Avenue

Reduce truck traffic in residential corridor

- It is critical that the Lincoln Tunnel bound traffic be properly directed as early as possible to the Lincoln tunnel truck entrance through a mostly manufacturing district (11th Avenue) rather than the more residential/retail 9th Avenue corridor. Major signage should be installed before the intersection of 57th Street and 9th Avenue directing the truck and Lincoln tunnel traffic to the western entrance.

Improve Residents' Health by addressing the need for a Charter bus Garage.

- The study should identify the total number of buses/ vans parked illegally on our streets - especially on Wednesday afternoons- and the current location of legal bus layover areas to evaluate their proximity to playgrounds, schools, seniors and low rise apartment buildings
- A short-term relocation of all the layover areas to appropriate locations should be developed using existing parking facilities.
- A long term solution must be studied similar to the two charter bus garages being built in lower Manhattan , consistent with the Hudson Yard EIS comments :

“Comment A-18 The plan does not provide for a consolidated bus parking facility. (CB4)

Response A consolidated bus parking facility is analyzed in the FGEIS with a build year of 2025. EDC, DCP, and the Port Authority continue to work together on a bus study which will identify more specific future bus storage needs.”

With the new policies outlined in PlaNYC 2030 encouraging the use of buses over private cars, and the demonstrated health impact of pollution on our community, the construction of a Charter bus garage must be addressed immediately.

Community Board 4 also encourages DOT to coordinate the findings and solutions of this study with those of the Hell's Kitchen – Clinton traffic study that started in July 2007.

Thank you again for listening to the community.

Sincerely,



Jean-Daniel Noland
Chair
Manhattan Community
Board No. 4



Jay Marcus
Co-Chair
Transportation Planning
Committee



Christine Berthet
Co-Chair
Transportation Planning
Committee

C.c.

NYC Department of Transportation, Seth Berman

Manhattan CB7, Andrew Albert

Sara E. Hearn
West Side Transportation Study/NYCDOT
C/o Howard Stein- Hudson Associates
517 West 35th street, 7th floor
New york, NY 10001