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Hon. Corey Johnson  
City Council  
224 West 30<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 1206  
New York, NY 10001

Hon. Ydanis Rodriguez  
City Council  
618 W. 177<sup>th</sup> Street, Ground Floor  
New York, NY 10033

Hon. Helen Rosenthal  
City Council  
563 Columbus Avenue  
New York, NY 10024

**Re: City Council Legislation Intro No.'s 1177, 1285, 1072-A**

Dear Councilmembers Johnson, Rodriguez and Rosenthal,

Manhattan Community Board 4 (CB4) applauds the introduction of individual bills that if enacted, will put the city a few steps closer to a rational implementation of Vision Zero. We support these initiatives that will bring more safety to many intersections and corridors in our neighborhood that experiences traffic congestion at twice the rate of Manhattan overall.

**Intro 1177 -2016 – A Local Law requiring a study on the feasibility of implementing Barnes dance pedestrian crossing systems at the top 25 priority intersections**

A Barnes dance (also known as a scramble) has three phases: one where all the vehicular signals are red, and pedestrians have the walk signal in all directions, including diagonally without any conflicts with vehicles; the next two vehicular green phases allow cars to cross the intersection, without conflicts with pedestrians. According to the Department of Transportation (DOT) there are 89 such Barnes Dances installed in New

York City.

Many of the top priority intersections DOT identified in its Vision Zero Pedestrian action plan are in CB4 and would benefit from this study, including:

- West 42<sup>nd</sup> Street and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue
- West 42<sup>nd</sup> Street and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue
- West 14<sup>th</sup> Street and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue
- West 57<sup>th</sup> Street and 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue
- West 23<sup>rd</sup> Street and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue
- West 14<sup>th</sup> Street and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue

In the spirit of Vision Zero, we recommend that the language emphasize that the Council's objective is to privilege pedestrian safety over vehicular flow at those dangerous intersections. Further, the results should be published for each intersection including the reason why a Barnes Dance is or is not feasible, supported by a detailed quantified analysis.

If Barnes' dances are not feasible at a given intersection, we would like to see an alternate analysis of safety measures, such as the feasibility of split phase signals for all left turns at that intersection.

The study should include ways to upgrade all such intersections to comply with the ADA guidelines and install Accessible Pedestrian Signals.

Finally, intersections equipped with non-traditional signals should be reported on the NYC open data portal (just like parking regulations are reported) and presented in visual format on DOT maps.

This reporting would include Barnes Dances, Lead Pedestrian Intervals (LPI), Split Phases, Split LPI, dedicated turn arrows etc., and the month and year of installation.

**Intro No. 1285 – A local Law requiring a study on reducing crowding in 10 locations with the heaviest pedestrian volume, and to develop strategies for improving safety and traffic flow at such locations**

With 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenues in our district, CB4 welcomes such a study. There are two screening locations in our district that are amongst the top 10 in the city for pedestrian volumes:

- Eight Avenue between 44-45<sup>th</sup> Streets, with 28,019 pedestrians at the peak period in May 2016, a 24% increase over the same period last year.
- Eight Avenue between 50-51<sup>st</sup> Street with 16, 529 pedestrians at the peak period in May 2016, a 35% increase over the same period last year.

While we are not surprised by these results, it is striking that Eight Avenue between 42<sup>nd</sup>

and 43<sup>rd</sup> Streets is not an official count location.

We recommend that the law be expanded to request the creation of a methodology (maybe adopted from the MTA) to accurately measure pedestrian congestion in addition to volume, and the expansion of the number of count locations in the city, as well as the institution of a program to collect pedestrian information on a regular and systematic basis.

In addition, the concept of a corridor must be added to the improvements: if one block is congested there is a good chance that the next one is as well. Any solutions need to encompass a few blocks so the language should refer to “improving safety and traffic flows at such location and associated corridor”.

Further, the proposed strategies should include a coordinated plan by various agencies for design/placement/removal of street furniture and other obstructions to the walk lane on such corridors in particular and on all sidewalks in general.

**Int. No. 1072-A – A local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York in relation to bicyclists following pedestrian control signals**

Lead Pedestrian Interval (LPI) protects pedestrians by giving them a head start over turning cars. Such a treatment has been very effective (- 56%) to reduce fatalities and severe injuries for pedestrians. LPIs are present at 400 intersections and soon will be present at 1,500 in the City. CB4 has more than 20 LPIs installed. Left turning cars are as serious a safety threat to bicyclists as they are to pedestrians. However, bicyclists do not benefit from such a protection from turning cars, since they follow the vehicular signals.

This change would allow bicyclists to follow the pedestrian signal on the adjacent street and start crossing the intersection at the same time as the pedestrians do. The law emphasize that pedestrians always have priority.

We support this bill (except in the case of Barnes Dances where bicyclists would continue to follow vehicular green signals), which gives bicyclists the same level of protection from turning cars as pedestrians. However, we do have concerns related to the safety of pedestrians when in conflict with turning bicycles or when they are still in the pedestrian crossing at the end of the walk cycles.

We recommend extensive training of pedestrians, bicyclists and NYPD at the intersections where an LPI is installed but we agree with DOT that more signage would not be a wise solution. Running a limited pilot program may be appropriate.

Another way would be to install Split Phase signals at all left turns on protected bicycle lanes – as was the case on the first bike lane with excellent results (-50% injuries). That design is much safer for both pedestrians and bicyclists than the current design with

mixed zones)

We appreciate the efforts of Chair Ydanis Rodriguez and our elected officials to further the goals of the Vision Zero program and make it become a reality on the ground.

Sincerely,



Delores Rubin  
Chair



Christine Berthet  
Co-Chair, Transportation  
Planning Committee



Yoni Bokser  
Co-Chair, Transportation  
Planning Committee

CC Hon. Jerrold Nadler, Congressman  
Hon. Brad Hoylman, Senator  
Hon. Adriano Espaillat, Senator  
Hon. Richard Gottfried, Assembly member  
Hon. Linda Rosenthal, Assembly member  
Luis Sanchez, Department of Transportation