



CITY OF NEW YORK

**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

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**JOHN WEIS**  
Chair

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

December 7, 2009

Ms. Margaret Forgione  
Manhattan Commissioner  
Department of Transportation  
59 Maiden Lane, 37<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, New York 10038

**Re: Green Light for Midtown follow-up**

Dear Commissioner Forgione:

Manhattan Community Board 4 (CB4) is anxious to review the results of the Department of Transportation's (DOT) study of what impact the closure of Broadway has on 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue and its cross streets and what solutions will be implemented, including a possible dedicated turn lane on 47<sup>th</sup> Street.

While the majority of neighbors have not seen a noticeable difference in the traffic, which remains extremely congested on 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue, some neighbors have complained of sustained honking on West 47<sup>th</sup> Street between 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenues at peak hours (evenings, matinees and weekends). There is a brand new turn lane on 47<sup>th</sup> Street and a handful of parking spaces were removed.

While the logic behind the painted lane is not entirely clear, the honking is apparently due to the inability of the turning cars to proceed, either because 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue is backed up or because pedestrians are crossing the south segment of the avenue. Since the turning lane is very short, the turning cars block also the through lane when the traffic is heavier.

As you proceed with your study of the closure of Broadway, we would appreciate your focusing on this area and propose solutions to the backups and their causes. Amongst other solutions, we request that you study the installation of an exclusive turn from 47<sup>th</sup> street south to 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue. This would include an extension of the turn lane up to 344 West 47<sup>th</sup> Street and a further feathering down of the traffic on 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue to create spare capacity between 47<sup>th</sup> and 46<sup>th</sup> Streets.

While we expect that a dedicated turn signal will protect pedestrians and the red arrow will prevent honking, this should not be achieved at the expense of the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue pedestrian crossing time, which was

recently increased to 45 seconds.. It makes for a much safer crossing at this intersection, less than 500ft away from the school.

Again, we look forward to a presentation of the results of your study and solutions, early next year.

Sincerely,



John Weis  
Chair  
Manhattan Community Board No. 4



Christine Berthet  
Co-Chair  
Transportation Planning Committee



Jay Marcus  
Co-Chair  
Transportation Planning Committee

CC: Mayor Bloomberg  
Christopher Ward  
Margaret Forgione  
CB4 elected officials