

# 59th St. thru with turn ban

## Rule to end on Monday

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Amid complaints from drivers, the city is re-vamping its "thru-street" program that prohibits turns from certain midtown streets, officials said yesterday.

While declaring the experimental program largely successful in reducing travel times, Transportation Commissioner Iris Weinshall said drivers will be permitted to resume making turns from 59th St. starting Monday.

Another change will allow drivers to turn from most of the remaining express streets onto Park Ave.

"Some folks have come to us voicing concern that there's nowhere to get off the through streets if you've made a mistake," Weinshall said on Mayor Bloomberg's Friday morning radio show. "So we looked at the data and we've decided that on the through streets, we can allow people to make turns on Park Ave."

Other complaints came from the hotel industry and developer Donald Trump, officials said.

### Construction chaos

The program didn't work on 59th St. largely because of a major construction project on the old Alexander's site that will house Bloomberg LP.

The experiment, which was launched Oct. 15, bans most turns on 10 streets between

Third and Sixth Aves.

The streets that remain in the program are 36th, 37th, 45th, 46th, 49th, 50th, 53rd, 54th and 60th. There is no access to Park Ave. from 45th St.

Four weeks into the program, the average travel times on the streets other than 59th St. dropped to a little less than eight minutes from slightly more than nine, Weinshall said.

### It works, sez Mike

Some fared even better: On 60th St., travel time fell to seven minutes from nine even though traffic volume went up by nearly 25%, she said.

"This is a program that works," Bloomberg said.

"The numbers show that these streets are working very well. It takes less time to go across town, and more people are using these streets," Weinshall said.

In another move to help drivers, Crosswalks, the city-run cable network, will air live shots of traffic conditions in each borough weekdays from 6:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. starting Monday. The cable reports will help commuters pick the best routes, officials said.



**Iris Weinshall**