



NEW YORK CITY TAXI & LIMOUSINE COMMISSION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
 Industry Notice #05-33
 November 28, 2005

HOLIDAY SEASON TRAFFIC INITIATIVE FOR MIDTOWN MANHATTAN

The New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) is pleased to share with its licensees a number of highlights from the 2005 Holiday Traffic Mitigation Plan, as implemented by the New York City Police Department (NYPD), Department of Transportation (DOT) and TLC. The Holiday Traffic Plan is developed each year to address the unusually heavy vehicle traffic associated with the holiday season, which begins the week before Thanksgiving and lasts until the Sunday after New Year's Day.

"Thru Traffic Only" express lanes will be established on both Fifth Avenue and Sixth Avenue (Avenue of the Americas) in the vicinity of Rockefeller Center and Radio City Music Hall. This initiative is designed to ease traffic congestion and is scheduled to run from November 26, 2005 to January 2, 2006.

The center lane of Fifth Avenue and Sixth Avenue will be designated as express lanes for through-traffic only and will be distinguished from regular traffic lanes by the placement of highly visible lane markers. Both express vehicles and local traffic will benefit from this plan by reducing lane changes.

Vehicles entering the express lane on 5th Avenue at 57th Street and will not be permitted to exit until 47th Street. Vehicles entering the express lane on Sixth Avenue at 43rd Street cannot exit until 53rd Street. Vehicles may enter the express lanes at any cross-town intersection if sufficient room exists. However, these vehicles cannot exit until the end of the express lane. A traffic officer will be assigned to each intersection to help facilitate the plan.

Motorists traveling on Fifth Avenue and Sixth Avenue should be familiar with the plan and be prepared to enter the appropriate traffic lanes necessary to reach their particular destination. For instance, southbound vehicles on Fifth Avenue needing to turn left (eastbound) MUST be in the easternmost (left) lane BEFORE they reach 57th Street. Moreover, vehicles traveling south on Fifth Avenue and intending to turn right onto westbound streets, MUST be in the westernmost lanes south of 57th Street. Through-traffic will remain in the center lanes.

The express lanes on Fifth Avenue and Sixth Avenue will operate under the same rules. On both avenues, motorists must anticipate the direction they will be turning and position their vehicles on the appropriate side of the avenue well in advance of making turns.

Traffic Officers will NOT allow motorists to exit the center express lanes for any turns. Vehicles outside the express lanes can travel straight or turn onto streets from the side of the avenue on which they are traveling.

In addition, TLC personnel will be deployed to ensure that licensees are not blocking traffic lanes.

Other aspects of the holiday season traffic initiative include **Operation Safe Streets**, in which the NYPD will focus on making this the safest holiday season ever, with the goal of reducing accidents, injuries and fatalities. Enforcement will be increased in midtown and in other key areas of the City and will focus on hazardous violations, such as: driving while intoxicated, speeding, disobeying traffic signals, improper turns, seatbelt violations etc. In addition, special focus will be given to the taxi population as well as delivery trucks to ensure that they are complying with all traffic laws. Increased activity will take place at tourist attractions, hotels, and other places where taxis frequently stop.

The **Midtown THRU Streets Program**, which began in the Fall of 2002 and was made permanent in March 2004, provides an incentive to drivers who seek a reliable and consistent cross-town route. The program designates four pairs of Midtown streets, as well as 60th Street, for "express" or "through" operations on weekdays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Turns are prohibited between Third and Sixth Avenues, except at Park Avenue. The THRU Streets program increases travel speed and enhances pedestrian safety by creating protected intersections where pedestrians can cross avenues without the risk posed by turning vehicles.

The streets designated for the program are:

- 36th and 37th Streets
- 45th and 46th Streets
- 49th and 50th Streets
- 53rd and 54th Streets
- 60th Street