



#FixCanal Street

By Adrian Mak, Andrea Pedersen, Jason Gers
Presentation at CB3, March 2021

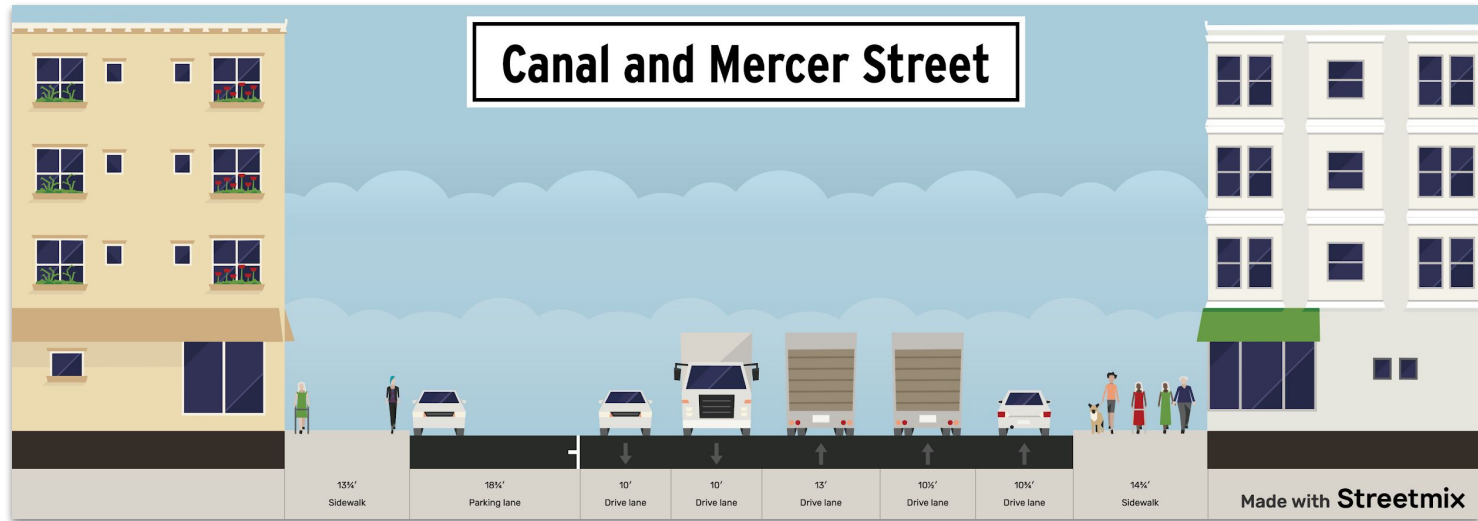
"The enormous amount of traffic on Canal Street is a public health crisis, clogging our streets as well as our lungs while car crashes become more and more frequent. This is a crisis that should not and need not exist in the era of Vision Zero."

—Margaret Chin

Tribeca trib oped₍₁₎

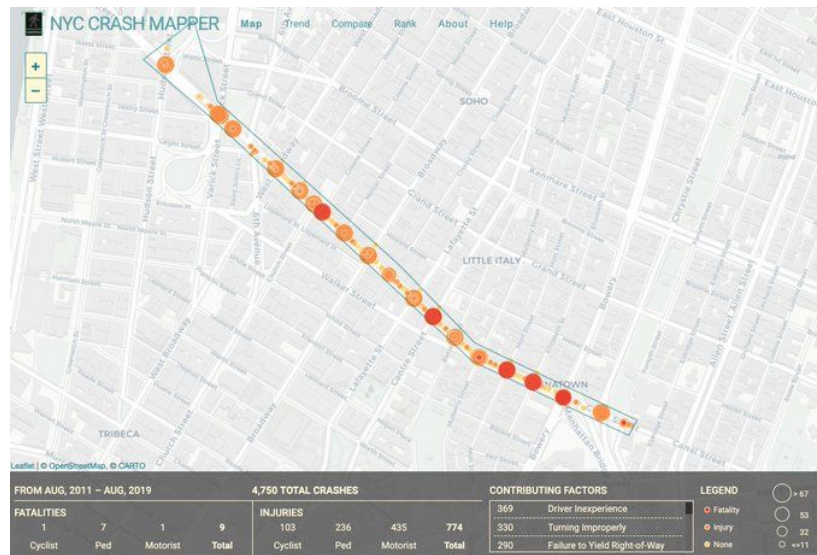
Why Canal Street?

- 7 highway-sized lanes of traffic in the heart of America's most historic and walkable neighborhoods: Chinatown, Little Italy, Soho and Tribeca
- Vibrant pedestrian foot traffic connecting the surrounding neighborhoods, but **sidewalk space is limited and congested**



People are getting injured

- **Crossing the street is dangerous** due to the wide highway-like nature of the street,
- **Vehicles block intersections** and crosswalks as NYPD traffic agents struggle to maintain order and safety
- Almost **two crashes per day** on Canal Street between the Manhattan Bridge and Hudson Street - a one mile segment (2016-2019; 2,567 reported crashes)
- **Serious Injuries / Traffic Deaths** on Canal Street (Between Bowery & Hudson Street) from 2016 - January 2020
 - Pedestrians: 109 / 1
 - Motor Vehicle Occupants: 229 / 1
 - Cyclists: 54 / 1



Bad environment for business

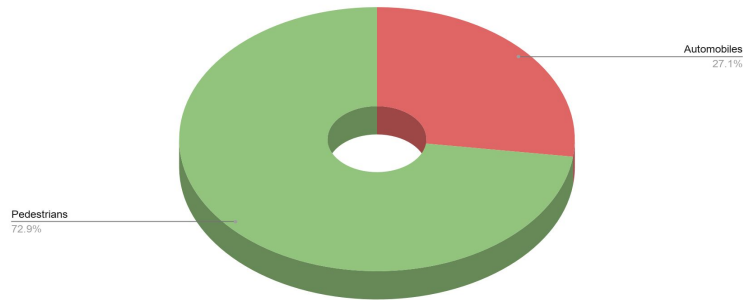
- Hard to receive deliveries
- Increased Cost & Frustration
- Noisy & polluted -- inhospitable to outdoor dining
- Less attractive for foot traffic
- Conflicts with street vendors



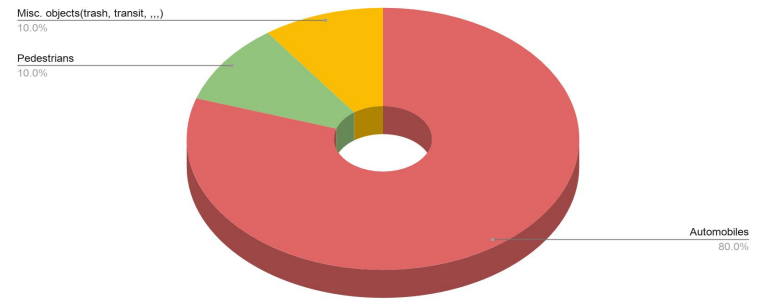
There are **3X** as many pedestrians as vehicles using Canal Street...

...But **motor vehicles get up to 90% of street space**

Peak hour volume of users at the intersection of Canal and Bowery




Allocation of Street Space at the Intersection of Canal and Bowery

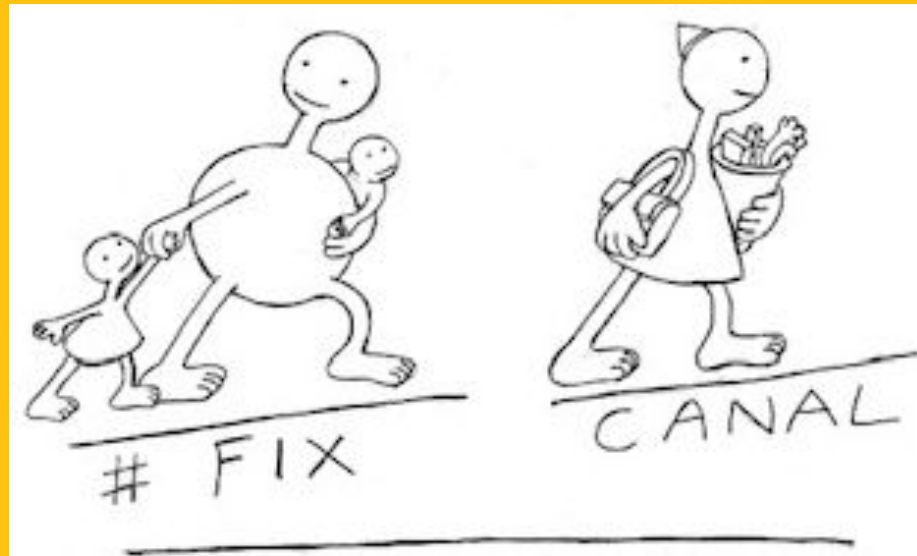


 Pedestrians

 Automobiles

 Miscellaneous; incl. trash, transit

Solutions for Canal Street



Previous traffic studies have not been implemented

Canal Area Transportation Study II (CATS II, 2011)

- Left-turn restrictions along much of Canal Street
- Curb extensions on Elizabeth/Mulberry and Baxter/Lafayette

2017 Hudson Square Study

- Widen crosswalks
- Intersection improvements
- Improved Bus access



Vehicle left turns are **three times likelier to lead to death or serious injury** than right turning vehicles

Source: NYC.gov Pedestrian Safety Study Action Plan, 2010(8)

Proven DOT solutions to improve Canal Street (Manhattan Bridge & West)

Pedestrian safety improvements may include:

- **Wider sidewalks**, even painted extensions.
- **Neckdowns** to shorten crossing distances
- **Leading Pedestrian Interval** at lights, aka the “Pedestrian Head Start”



Neckdowns, 8th St, Manhattan

Proven DOT solutions to improve Canal Street (Manhattan Bridge & West)

Curbside Reform

- Increase high turnover **commercial loading zones** and **managed curb regulations**
 - Double parking effectively removes 2 lanes of car traffic at peak hours
- Designated space for street vendors

East-West Bicycle Corridor

- **Protected bicycle lanes** to allow safe crosstown travel from the Manhattan Bridge to Tribeca, Hudson Square, and the Hudson River Greenway.
- Not limited to Canal Street

Expand Canal / Warren triangle: Make Gateway to Chinatown inviting by freeing up space taken by cars and/or parking

Potential of public space dramatically limited by unfriendly aggressive vehicle traffic on three sides

CANAL STREET TRIANGLE

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT: BOSQUE



CANAL STREET TRIANGLE

PROJECT LOCATION



NEW YORK CITY

Manhattan Bridge inbound traffic drives the entire dynamic of Canal Street as highway

Current design:

- + 1 bike lane
- + 1 walkway
- + 4 train lines
- + 0 bus lanes
- + 2 outbound car lanes
- + 5 inbound car lanes
- + 2-way tolling on VZB
- + Congestion tolling

= 1 historic opportunity to create more space for:

- ★ Buses
- ★ Bikes
- ★ Walking



Lower-level car lanes could become:

- Bus Rapid Transit lane
- Additional bike capacity
- Pedestrian-only summer streets

Unused space in the Manhattan Bridge plaza could be given to pedestrians, cyclists, and trees



Possible bikeway entrance through the plaza

Currently inaccessible Plaza space may be converted to pedestrian use



Possible BRT lane and station

Opportunity to close Bowery Slip lane to cars; Possible connection to new bike lane on bridge lower roadway

Manhattan Bridge Plaza with BRT

Manhattan Bridge Plaza with BRT on lower level of bridge and station and gardens in plaza

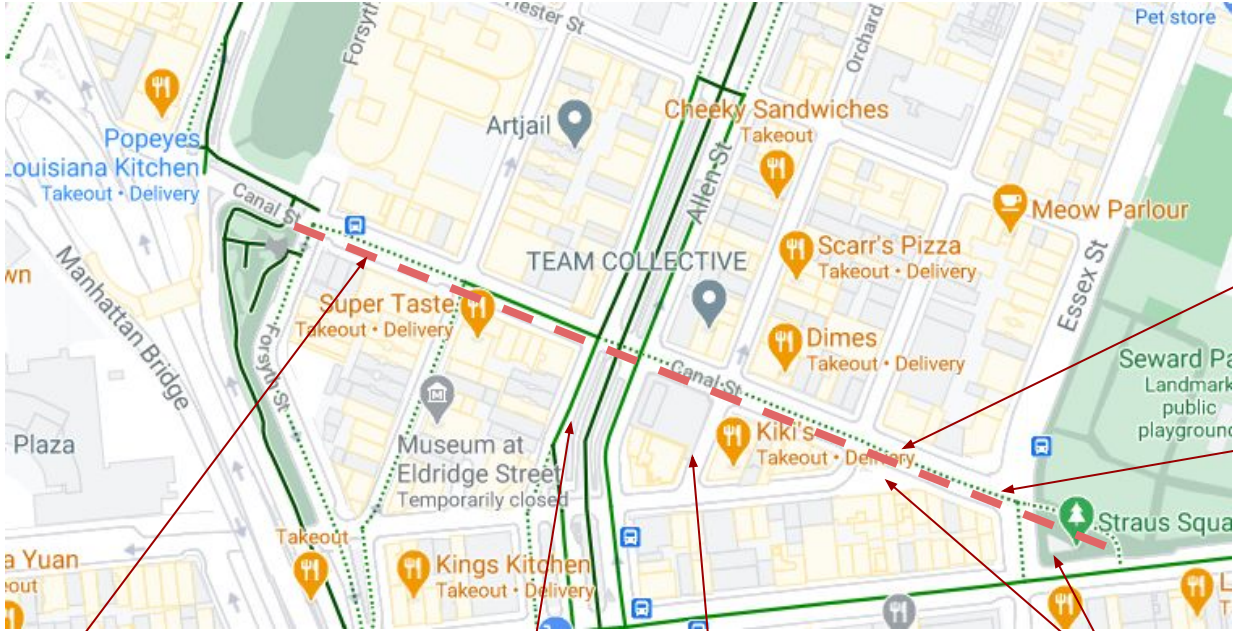



Traffic Calmer
merging mobility + civility


PEOPLE
ORIENTED
CITIES

East Canal issues & opportunities

60-75 Foot wide, low traffic street leaves ample opportunities to add bike lanes, dining, greenery, etc



Current
Open Street
Restaurants

Natural gateway /
extension of
Seward Park public
green space

Possible protected
bike route to bridge;
currently sharrows

Unfinished Pike/Allen Mall

Illegal USPS
placard parking
@ Jarmolowsky

Existing plazas

*If we
don't
act...*

Today...

Feb 21, 2020

Woman severely injured
after being struck by a car
on Canal Street⁽⁴⁾



New York, NY | amny.com | 7d



Trying to cross a Chinatown street proved fatal for a 90-year-old man fatally struck by a driver in an SUV on Saturday morning, police reported. Law enforcement sources said the collision occurred at 6:30 a.m. on Jan. 25 at the corner of Canal and Elizabeth Streets.

Jan 25, 2020

90-year old man fatally struck by
driver on Canal Street⁽⁵⁾



Aug 11, 2019

Cyclist Injured By Truck Driver On
Canal Street⁽⁶⁾

The Community Wants to #FixCanal

- Council Member Margaret Chin publishes op-ed in the TriBeCa Trib, Sept 2019
- Community Board 1 passes #FixCanal Resolution in March 2020
- CM Chin writes Letter to NYC DOT asking for #FixCanal in August 2020
- Community Board 2 passes #FixCanal Resolution in December 2020
- Pedestrians, cyclists and drivers say it's a safety hazard



*“The City can **act today**. By implementing wider sidewalk expansions, commercial loading zones, signal improvements and left-turn bans, **we could dramatically improve safety**. Best of all, none of these safety improvements would require capital investment. It is time to **put pedestrians first**.”*

—Margaret Chin

Tribeca trib oped⁽¹⁾

#FixCanal Street!

Thank You, CB3

References

- (1) Tribeca Trib oped: <http://tribecatrib.com/content/opinion-councilwoman-canal-st-congestion>
- Canal & Bowery -- up to 1800 pedestrians per hour at peak hour
 - http://web.mta.info/capital/sas_docs/deis/chapter_9h.pdf
- Canal & Bowery -- up to 670 motor vehicles per hour at peak hour
 - <https://data.cityofnewyork.us/Transportation/Traffic-Volume-Counts-2014-2018-/ertz-hr4r>
- (4) <https://twitter.com/ScooterCasterNY/status/1230947806682271744>
- (5) <https://www.amny.com/manhattan/90-year-old-man-killed-by-driver-in-suv-along-a-chinatown-street-cops/>
- (6) <https://nyc.streetsblog.org/2019/08/11/fixcanal-cyclist-injured-by-truck-driver-on-chaotic-canal-street/>
- (7) http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/downloads/pdf/nyc_ped_safety_study_action_plan.pdf