

**Clinton/Hell's
Kitchen
Pedestrian
Safety
Coalition**



400 W 43rd Street - #33-N
New York, New York
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(212) 714-0186
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Coalition Members:

- Hell's Kitchen Neighborhood Association
- Hudson Crossing Tenants Association
- 44th Street Block Association
- 45th Street Block Association
- 46th Street Block Association
- 47th/48th Street Block Association
- 55th Street Block Association
- Members of Community Board 4



www.chekped.com

Deputy Mayor Daniel Doctoroff
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

May 11, 2006

Dear Deputy Mayor Doctoroff,

The Clinton/Hells Kitchen Pedestrian Safety Coalition applauds the city's efforts to spur development. The Coalition calls on the administration to work together with advocates and invested community members to formulate and implement a comprehensive transportation plan. We urge you to put pedestrians, mass transit commuters and cyclists first, to leverage New York City's superb mass transit system into the competitive tool it is, and to link development and tourism to transportation infrastructure improvements.

Our Coalition supports well-planned growth. However, worsening private car traffic (60% of vehicles in Manhattan are commuters) and transportation capacity problems are limiting that development. Skeptics counter that cars are necessary to drive the economy, yet a recent analysis of the New York State Households Survey and US Census data shows that 94% of shopping trips in Manhattan's Central Business District are made via mass transit and by walking, and 90% of Manhattan bound drivers have transit alternativesⁱ.

Throughout Clinton/Hell's Kitchen, overwhelming traffic has had negative impact on quality of life, the environment, and public safety. In 2004, 15,316 pedestrians and cyclists were injured in the City, costing the City roughly \$918 million annuallyⁱⁱ. Numerous studies connect traffic's effects to increased risk of heart disease, diabetes, cancer, and asthmaⁱⁱⁱ. What's more, New York has the dirtiest air of any city in the country! Approximately 80% of the cancer risk linked to poor air quality in all five boroughs can be attributed to pollutants spewing from an unprecedented concentration of vehicles.^{iv}

We urge you to implement a people-first policy in our city, i.e. a **community driven planning process** to make movement of people and goods as efficient as possible.

Institutional Change: The DOT is staffed with engineers trained at modeling car flows. Instead of concentrating on facilitating the flow of vehicles, the DOT needs a **new mandate** to induce targeted modal shifts to higher occupancy and more efficient modes of personal travel.

Development and Growth: The City's street network is over capacity at crucial areas for many hours of every day, and the burgeoning demands of development and tourism threaten our competitiveness as an international commercial center. With its population expected to hit nine million by 2020^v[5], the City must adapt to growth with a modern transportation policy or become a victim of its own success.

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Better Performing Streets: By reapportioning streets to favor pedestrians, bus riders and cyclists, and by introducing new traffic allocation schemes, our streets can more efficiently accommodate deliveries and trips. Better management of curbside parking to achieve a critical level of vacancy/turnover further enhances performance. "Parking cruising" traffic and double parking can be significantly reduced.

Enforcement: The worst menace to safety on our streets comes from drivers who do not heed the law. We ask the City to use the winning "broken windows" techniques to upgrade enforcement. The City could allocate senior level personnel from the NYPD traffic division to enforce laws – running red lights, unnecessary noise, illegal trucks, and certainly, gridlock. EMS vehicles are routinely trapped in traffic here.

We would appreciate a reply from your office. Given the urgency, we eagerly look forward to your response. We understand that institutional shifts within City government can be complex and delicate changes to implement; if, however, such change is necessary to improve the health and save the lives of New Yorkers, we encourage you to proceed in that direction.

Sincerely,

For
Clinton/Hell's Kitchen Pedestrian Safety Coalition

cc: Scott Stringer, Manhattan Borough President
Christine Quinn, New York City Council Speaker
John Liu, Chair of New York City Council's Transportation Committee

^[i] *Necessity or Choice, The Auto's Use in Manhattan, Schaller Consulting, 2006*

^[ii] *Estimating the Costs of Unintentional Injuries, 2004, National Safety Council*

^[iii] *On the Move, London Health Commission, 2000*

^[iv] *Environmental Protection Agency, February, 2006*

^[v] *New York Times, 2/19/06*