



February 27, 2012

Corey Johnson  
Chair  
Community Board 4  
330 West 42nd Street, Suite 2618  
New York, NY 10036

**Re: Eighth and Ninth Avenues Complete Street Extension**

Dear Mr. Johnson:

This letter is in response to an October 5, 2011 letter from Community Board 4 (CB 4) regarding the above-referenced project, which was presented to the Transportation Committee on September 21, 2011. Please find below a recap of CB 4 requests from the October letter, and our respective responses in *italics*:

- Add split phases in locations well known for being dangerous to pedestrians and retain Lead Pedestrian Intervals (LPI) at existing locations.
  - Install split phases at the following locations:
    - W. 37th Street and 8th Avenue where the turning volume of vehicles going to the tunnel, as well as the pedestrians volumes are very large.
    - W. 43rd Street and Eight Avenue, a school street (one of the most dangerous to walk to school in New York City)
    - W. 49th Street and Eight Avenue, where a fatality occurred a few years ago
    - W. 38th Street and 9th Avenue, where there are a substantial number of vehicles turning left at high speed from the tunnel and a fatality occurred three years ago.
    - W. 58th and 9th, adjacent to Roosevelt hospital and Fordham University, where pedestrian and vehicles conflict often because of the presence of a hotel on the block.

*As you are aware, the new parking-protected bicycle path design features a "mixing zone" at most intersections where left turns are permitted across the curbside bicycle paths. This design improves visibility of both pedestrians and cyclists for left-turning vehicles. Increased visibility promotes yielding behavior and we believe that the treatment will be successful without the need for additional signal hardware. Moreover, the treatment is both efficient from a mobility perspective and straightforward from a usability perspective. Existing LPIs will be retained.*

- Install other LPIs, split phases and signal changes as recommended by the DOT Hell's Kitchen study.

*Safety improvements as part of the Hell's Kitchen Study will be implemented separately from the bicycle path project after final review and approval. The signal improvements associated with the study should have final approval by late March.*

- Increase pedestrian crossing time of 9th Avenue at 40th Street, where a pre-K school is located and children cross the avenue twice daily.

*DOT has assessed the signal timing at this intersection and will increase the walk time for pedestrians to cross Ninth Avenue at West 40<sup>th</sup> Street by 5 seconds during the 20-hour period between 10:30am and 6:30am on weekdays. DOT will also increase the pedestrian crossing time for Ninth Avenue at West 39<sup>th</sup> Street by 5 seconds at all times.*

Additional issues to share with CB 4 include parking regulation changes, pavement resurfacing, and DDC water main construction, discussed in further detail below:

Parking Regulation Changes:

- Metered commercial parking will be installed on Ninth Avenue, replacing “de facto” loading (No Parking) to further accommodate business loading and delivery needs. Eighth Avenue already has metered commercial parking on most applicable blocks, but metered commercial parking will replace “de facto” loading on four blocks. It should be noted that due to a delay in new Muni-meter machines, metered parking installation will likely occur after the street re-design.
- Evening and Saturday metered parking regulations may be added to both the east and west sides of both avenues. Non-commercial parking is allowed, however metering ensures turnover, which is also supportive of local businesses. It should be noted that due to a delay in new Muni-meter machines, metered parking installation will likely occur after the street re-design.
- PM rush hour regulations (No Standing 4p-7p) will be relocated from the east side of Ninth Avenue to the west side to accommodate the proposed floating parking design. This is also expected to channelize vehicle traffic heading to the Lincoln Tunnel entrance on the west side of Ninth Avenue during the morning and evening rush periods.

Pavement resurfacing:

Ninth Avenue will be resurfaced prior to new pavement markings installation, between West 47<sup>th</sup> Street and West 33<sup>rd</sup> Street, as part of this proposed project.

DDC Water Main Construction:

In April 2012, DDC is expected to begin the first phases of a 5-year water main project, including a segment on the east side of Ninth Avenue, between West 51<sup>st</sup> and West 48<sup>th</sup> Streets. This project may delay construction of the bike path in this section until completion of this phase. The remaining travel lanes in this segment would be re-designed in uniform with the remainder of the project corridor, as scheduled. DOT has been working with DDC to ensure that the street configuration will be standardized to the new Complete Streets design after completion of DDC work on Ninth Avenue.

As stated in the October 5, 2011 letter from CB 4, the following are not within the Complete Streets extension project area, but are included in the list of requests:

- We repeat an urgent request for turning signal/split phase installation at two locations on the existing protected bicycle path
  - W. 25th and W. 29th Streets and Eighth Avenues. These intersections were due to be completed as part of the last bike lane installation. These intersections are dangerous, they are located adjacent to a Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC); we have received a petition signed by 1,000 residents urgently requesting this change.

*At the request of the CB, DOT has been evaluating these locations for LPI feasibility and results are expected to be published in approximately 6-8 weeks.*

- Enlarge sidewalks on Eighth Avenue from 34th to 40th Streets and from 42nd to 48th Streets and remove all pedestrian barriers above 42nd Street. If DOT would like to try this on a trial basis, markings on the ground and flexible bollards could be a good first step. It should be noted that this has been a long-standing request from CB4. The “pedlock” on the west side of Eight Avenue has been thoroughly documented in the course of the various rezoning, with pedestrian service levels of D3. As a result, today pedestrians use the bicycle lanes to walk from 34<sup>th</sup> to 48th streets as a matter of course, especially at rush hour with commuters in a hurry to catch a bus or a train. The safety of a protected bike lane adjacent to the curb will entice many more pedestrians to use the lane and will result in increased pedestrian/cycle conflicts or, as occurred on Broadway south of West 42nd Street, very limited bicycle use.

*DOT will widen the sidewalk on the west side of 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue between West 42<sup>nd</sup> and West 43<sup>rd</sup> Streets by 11 feet. The pedestrian fence will be relocated to the new sidewalk edge. In addition, we are working with DoITT to have pay phones relocated from this block, to further increase the pedestrian capacity.*

- Engage the NYPD, jointly with DOT for a real campaign of enforcement against cyclists who do not respect the rules of the road: run red lights, go the wrong way, do not yield to pedestrians, and/or ride on the sidewalk. Businesses who do not equip their bikes with identifications and proper equipment or do not train their personnel, should also receive summonses. We look forward to a meeting with DOT and the Precincts involved to review the program, how the outreach will be done and how much personnel will be allocated to these tasks. We also request that bicycle ticketing information be posted on the NYPD website.

*DOT has increasingly partnered with NYPD, and will continue to do so, to enforce unlawful cycling behavior and lack of required bicycle equipment. DOT has significantly increased educational outreach to cyclists in the past few years, including on-street education, bike light/bell giveaways, and distribution of cycling education materials, such as the Bike Smart brochure ([www.nyc.gov/bikesmart](http://www.nyc.gov/bikesmart)), and adding cycling rules of the road to the NYC Cycling Map ([www.nyc.gov/bikemap](http://www.nyc.gov/bikemap)), which is updated and released annually. Prior to implementation we will meet with PD and develop an enforcement plan and update the Community Board.*

- We also request that pedestrian education be undertaken at the major residential buildings on the avenues.

*DOT will develop and distribute a street re-design educational flyer for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists in the residential buildings adjacent to the parking-protected bicycle path extension streets. Distribution will occur before installation of the proposed projects.*

- Provide for bicycle racks/corrals located on the floating parking lanes, to remove excessive bike parking from the sidewalks. CB4 intends to make recommendations for locations for these bicycle racks/corrals in the next few months.

*DOT looks forward to working with CB 4 on establishing bike corrals in the Board.*

- Present to CB4 well before implementation (December 2011 or January 2012) the revised plan, based on the above comments as well as the detailed parking regulation plan and the list of businesses

consulted. Several merchants voiced concern at the Transportation Committee hearing on this proposal. We cannot approve any proposal that does not include the specific recommended parking regulation changes design to best meet their needs.

*In September 2011, DOT staff walked both avenues in the project area and discussed the proposed design with every merchant that was available, and left flyers inviting merchants to the September Community Board meeting. In February 2012, DOT re-visited merchants with businesses in proposed "mixing zone" and left-turn treatment areas to assess parking/loading needs and provide commercial loading zones with appropriate delivery curb regulations wherever possible.*

Six months after installation, present to the community board statistics related to safety, parking compliance and speed on each segment, and adjust any outstanding issue remaining with the lanes.

*To provide a comprehensive and accurate post-implementation assessment of bicycle projects, DOT will provide an evaluation one-year after complete installation of the proposed project. This timeline is necessary to gather traffic and safety data that correctly reflects geometric and traffic behavior changes to the street.*

In conclusion, DOT is committed to the improvement of safety for all road users on the project avenues through evaluation of LPI feasibility; street re-design education; collaborating on lawful cyclist enforcement with NYPD; and developing commercial loading zones for merchants and businesses. Installation for the parking-protected bicycle path on Eighth Avenue is expected to begin in May 2012 and Ninth Avenue is expected to begin in July 2012. We would like to revisit the Board in March to discuss the points in this letter and to present the final plan. Please let us know if you can put us on the agenda.

Sincerely,



Margaret Forgione  
Manhattan Borough Commissioner

MF:hl/ni

cc: C. Berthet (CB 4 Transportation Committee Co-Chair), J. Marcus (CB 4 Transportation Committee Co-Chair)  
bc: A/C R. Russo, J. Benson, H. Lord, A. Ma, N. Iwasaki, N. Haiman, C. Chattergoon