

COMMENT 1: Vaidila Kungys, Myrtle Avenue Brooklyn Partnership

I haven't been involved in this study at all so excuse me if I've overlooked something. In briefly looking over the study, however, I didn't see anything about the following:

a) Truck traffic should be kept on truck routes. This is big problem in NYC as trucks barrel through community and neighborhood streets to make a short cut. There should be measures to keep them out of these areas with signage as well as physical barriers/traffic calming measures, like curb extensions. Enforcement of proper truck routes should be strict.

b) Also, this document doesn't seem to discuss more support for alternative modes of transportation to reduce the number of cars on the road. There should be something mentioned about changing transportation organizations' focus away from automobile-based transportation and toward more buses, BRT, light rail, bicycles, etc. This point is a perhaps a bit long-term but without the goal we are failing to address the real source of the problem: lots of cars.

RESPONSE 1a: The NYC Department of Transportation is actively working to address truck traffic in New York City. Having completed the Truck Route Study, NYCDOT is actively working on implementing several of the recommendations from the Study, as well as working with the Police Department on improved enforcement, which has risen significantly in the past few months. In addition, the Department is working on implementation of an improved signage program, as well as engineering improvements at many intersections throughout the city.

While there may be instances of illegal truck traffic happening, due to the nature of the truck route network and the dependence of trucks as a means of sustenance, it is inevitable that truck traffic will exist in residential areas. Physical barriers may not always be suitable to remove truck traffic from a street or may move it onto another street. Therefore improved enforcement, signage, driver education and appropriate engineering measures such as turning zones/Daylighting, improved geometries and other treatments when warranted, may be suitable. Information on these topics has been added to Section 5.4.2 – Enforcement Campaigns.

RESPONSE 1b: The Safety Advisory Working Group (SAWG) set out to address its number one topic, pedestrian safety, through a study to determine the status of pedestrian safety and the related investment needs in the region. Its also identifies the pedestrian safety issues and recommended countermeasures to improve pedestrian safety in the region. Although alternative modes to reduce the number of cars on the road is beyond the scope of this baseline regional pedestrian safety study, there are other venues and processes at NYMTC to address your concern such as Bicycle/Pedestrian Working Group, the Metro Mobility Network, and the Congestion Management Process. Greater information on these and other NYMTC efforts can be found on our website at www.nymtc.org.

COMMENT 2: Frederick Lavan

I skimmed through the report and I have some things I would like to mention. I find a problem of vehicles when they stop at the intersection often stop right in the middle of the crosswalk denying its use to pedestrians. Especially where there is a stop sign, I often see them stop not before the crosswalk but in the middle thereby forcing pedestrians onto the intersection. I wish you can go after those drivers and ticket them as I see it all the time. One place I see that is by the Rust St. / Maspeth Avenue intersection in Maspeth.

Also where I work in Maspeth, which is an industrial area, it is very lawless like the wild west where pedestrians seem to have no rights. Trucks and cars park in the bus stops and the sidewalks with impunity. The whole area in Maspeth, along Grand Ave and adjacent streets between 47th Street and 59th Streets, the local businesses are constantly parking on the sidewalk allowing no space for pedestrians. One company in particular that make life hard for me is Yang Shing Trading Inc. Company at 51-01 Grand Avenue. On the Page Place side of the business they are constantly blocking the sidewalk. Businesses like that should be heavily punished as they have contempt for pedestrians and unless you give massive fines or seize their vehicles they won't reform their behavior. But its not just that business but all the businesses in the area behave badly to pedestrians. Businesses (and the people who work or deal with those businesses) should not be allowed to park in bus stops or the sidewalk. Your report didn't really mention the problem of businesses parking on sidewalks. Also there are too many trucks and they are too big. Their should be a law limiting the size of these trucks which should be enforced as these modern trucks are so long that they often stick way out into the street forcing pedestrians in the middle of the street. When I complain I feel I am being ignored as the local authorities don't seem to being doing much. They tell me that all they can do is give a summons but big deal the local businesses just treat that as a cost of business and still block the sidewalks and even summons I don't think they get too often.

So in summary I think you should not ignore vehicles blocking crosswalks, parking on sidewalks and bus stops, the fact that modern trucks are too big and long so they often stick way out into the street. Also Industrial areas need a heavy police traffic enforcement and should not be ignored as the local businesses tend to behave lawlessly and treat pedestrians with contempt. Local authorities should pay more attention to pedestrian complaints and not ignore them because it all too easy to get discouraged and give up when you don't get help and sooner or later I am afraid me or someone else is going to hit by one of these trucks as where are pedestrians going to go if they are denied the use of the sidewalk.

RESPONSE 2: There are length limits on trucks in New York City. As for loading and/or parking on sidewalks in industrial areas, the NYC Department of Transportation looks to maximize existing curbside regulations to allow for legal parking of these vehicles. However, any enforcement is the responsibility of the Police Department and should be done in coordination with the local precincts. In addition, the local industrial development corporations (or Mayor's IBZ) should also be involved. Information on truck parking has been added to Section 5.4.2 – Enforcement Campaigns.

COMMENT 3: Murray Bodin

One of the safely items should be the adoption of the crosswalk shown in your picture as the United States standard crosswalk design. It is standard in most of the rest of the world. In New York State there are a 1000 different crosswalk designs, from the drivers point of view. Somebody has to address this issue.



The Continental Bar crosswalk is the most visible to the driver, which is why they use it. What is a Zebra crosswalk? The "ladder" and the International Zebra crosswalks have the highest visibility. The "ladder" is ABSOLUTELY wrong. Absolutely is a mild word. How can two different designs make it easier for the DRIVER to know it is a crosswalk? The rest of the WORLD uses the BAR crosswalk. Whenever you speak of more than one, you are showing that you don't know what's really going on.

Go look at a "ladder" when it is NOT 90 degrees from the edge. It becomes another design. Go look yourself. Don't trust the "experts". Come to one of my AARP Safe Driving classes and ask the "older" drivers what they think. Next Monday, White Plains Senior Center. Come after lunch, so I have the class well warned up. Come at 1 pm and hear the questions they ask the White Plains police officer who comes to answer questions. If you want to make the pedestrian safer, then mandate ONLY the Continental BAR crosswalk. OK, sometimes the two parallel lines across the road. But rarely.

Section 7C.03 Crosswalk Markings

Support: Crosswalk markings provide guidance for pedestrians who are crossing roadways by defining and delineating paths on approaches to and within signalized intersections, and on approaches to other intersections where traffic stops. Crosswalk markings also serve to alert road users of a pedestrian crossing point across roadways not controlled by highway traffic signals or STOP signs.

The definition of a crosswalk was written many, many, years ago. It spoke of guidance FOR PEDESTRIANS in the first paragraph. In other words, it was written primarily for the pedestrian. Now we need to tell the road users where the crosswalk is. The "high visibility" ladder crosswalk referred to the crosswalk from the point of view of the PEDESTRIAN. Time to fix that. Would it help if I sent you a few pictures of "ladder" crosswalks, pictures taken from the driver's seat? They sure do not appear all the same TO THE DRIVER. <http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/HTM/2003/part7/part7c.htm>

RESPONSE 3: Your comment concerning crosswalk markings was forwarded to a national pedestrian instructor who is an FHWA Engineer that sits on a national committee that addresses engineering standards. His response was: *Your point is a valid one; as the "ladder" and the International Zebra crosswalks have the highest visibility and the nominal two 6" lines has the least visibility to approaching drivers.* In addition, he forwarded your comment to a member of the MUTCD team for consideration by the National Committee's Marking committee for a future MUTCD.

Pedestrian crosswalk markings are already standardized in the MUTCD. The City utilizes three types of crosswalk markings - standard consisting of two parallel lines perpendicular to the direction of traffic, high-visibility consisting of a series of parallel lines running in the direction of traffic, and school crosswalks that combine the markings of both the standard and high-visibility crosswalks. Each type has its appropriate application and purpose and all three should continue to be used.

The purpose of the NYMTC Pedestrian Safety Study is to establish the state pedestrian safety in the NYMTC Region and to provide guidelines and countermeasures for improving pedestrian safety. While it is not appropriate for the Study to mandate one specific countermeasure, the section on “Marked Crosswalks” will be modified to include more information and to emphasize the value of standardizing the marking.

COMMENTS FROM THE MARCH 26TH SAWG MEETING:

COMMENT 4: Linda Black, NYC Department of the Aging

Please don't let this report be another study on the shelf. Suggested recommendation: Transportation agencies should stay in contact with agencies for the aging and human service agencies. The program described on p. 32 of the report was developed by NYCDOT and Department of the Aging (DFTA) together. The material was collected at DFTA senior centers and the DVD was tested at DFTA centers. (A one-page description was provided.)

RESPONSE 4: The final report will correct the accuracy with regards to DFTA. SAWG does not intend to leave this study on the shelf as it will be used in addressing future items such as update of the safety element of the Regional Transportation Plan. Also as a reference document, it is intended to be referred to often. To that extent, the SAWG is looking to a wider distribution to the implementers such as the municipalities within NYMTC and not just the NYMTC agencies.

COMMENT 5: Christine Berthet,

CHEKPEDS Clinton/Hell's Kitchen Pedestrian Safety Coalition

Congratulations again on the final report on Pedestrian safety. It is an enormously useful resource for anyone involved in this worthwhile project. We are grateful that NYMTC has undertaken this much needed study and gives us the opportunity to comment on the stuffy. CHEKPEDS applauds the excellent suggestions the study makes. The study is thorough and a solid foundation to build upon and a major step forward.

By following your recommendations, pedestrians will be fully educated on how to avoid cars and accidents. However, educating only the victims will not be enough to win this battle. Here are some suggestions:

5a) Driver's education: In the current test, the questions related to pedestrians are few and far between. Have each chapter of the manual address pedestrians. In the penalties section, more questions are needed relating to penalties for pedestrian injuries and deaths. The driver's license examination must include new questions for both new drivers and those renewing their permits: as part of the test, there should be a minimum of five questions related to the responsibilities of the drivers vis-à-vis pedestrians.

RESPONSE 5a: Your comment with regard to including questions about the driver's responsibility toward the pedestrian on the written test for the driver's license is very appropriate for this study. We will include it in Section 5. 3.1 Changing Behavior, under "Changing Driver Behavior." Your comment has also been forwarded to our contact at DMV for their consideration.

5b) Complete statistics: The statistics show that in 67.5% of the crashes in New York City, there were no "contributing factors by the pedestrians", which generally means no fault by pedestrians. There are no comparable statistics of whether there were "contributing factors by drivers". It is imperative that such information be collected and data analyzed to improve driver education and make changes to the traffic laws. In order to do so, the "contributing factor report" that is filled by the police after a crash occurs, must be redesigned. Currently the top four questions deal with actions by pedestrians (who are deceased and therefore the information is provided by the driver). Only question 23 starts to deal tangentially with drivers' behavior. The report needs to be rebalanced so that the first ten questions cover both driver and pedestrian. The police must change their thinking, to consider pedestrians as victims.

RESPONSE 5b: The uniform traffic ticket is revised periodically, usually by a committee of traffic safety practitioners. We will also forward this suggestion to DMV for consideration. NYC uses its own version of the accident report which actually requires more information than the NYS form. Police responding to an accident site must deal with multiple details in a short period of time. Caring for the injured and securing the site take precedence over writing the report. Every element on the report cannot be a priority element. Changing reporting will take thought and time to consider what data "trade-offs" we are willing to live with.

The NYPD reports include a comprehensive analysis of driver behavior and considers factors such as driver inattention and condition (e.g., sobriety) as well and vehicle operation (e.g., speeds, yielding right-of way). NYPD does a comprehensive investigation for each fatality.

Consideration should be given to conducting similar comprehensive investigations for severe injury accidents.

5c) Community Input: Engineers who are themselves drivers design all decisions related to pedestrian safety at locations they are not familiar with. It is regrettable that the extensive community knowledge accumulated through thousands of observations is not taken in account to make these decisions. It should be mandatory that field surveys performed by DOT and elected officials after a crash include community members.

RESPONSE 5c: Everyone, even engineers are also pedestrians at some point. The engineers possess the technical expertise to enable them to recommend measures to improve safety conditions. Community Boards and local representatives are consulted when NYCDOT performs area-wide or corridor safety studies (e.g., Queens Boulevard). NYCDOT works with Community boards and elected officials and school representatives for the implementation of speed reducers (humps) and treatments in the vicinity of schools. We will further emphasize the importance of getting community input to the study by adding it to the recommendation for “safety impact teams” in Section 7.2 “Promote Coordination and Collaboration.”

5d) Penalties: On the legislative side, why not start with the concept that a driver is “In control of his vehicle”, especially in the city where speeds cannot exceed 30 mph- and therefore is responsible for his actions. The current penalties for failure-to-yield are woefully inadequate. Highly advertised jail terms would ‘wake drivers up’ – as would publicizing the strict revocation of the privilege to drive for two years.

RESPONSE 5d: Stronger penalties are constantly being progressed such as photo enforcement at intersections and work zones. However, this item requires legislative action which is beyond the purview of this agency.

5e: Hot spots: Statistics on specific road conditions on the most dangerous corridors would be very useful:

- Is there a correlation between traffic congestion and pedestrian safety?
- Is there a correlation between two-way streets with left turns and pedestrian safety?
- Is there an increase in pedestrian injuries or deaths in neighborhoods where highways convert into city grids (tunnel, bridge etc) where drivers need time to adjust to the change in conditions? NYMTC statistics **have demonstrated** that traffic volume increased at crossings into New York City that connect to street grids, while volume decreased where highways connect to highways. The presence of tolls in the latter generally explains the latter.

RESPONSE 5e: Yes, there is a study correlating congestion and total crash but not congestion and pedestrian safety.

The national experience is that one-way streets tend to be safer as the driver and pedestrian only need to look one way, but gets more complicated in a dense City environment. According to a recent Designing for Pedestrian Safety workshop hosted at NYMTC, turn movements account for most crashes at traffic signals (left/right turns ratio is roughly 2:1). Converting permissive left turns to protected only left turns has a crash reduction factor of 70% (all crashes).

One would tend to believe that there is an increase in pedestrian injuries or deaths in neighborhoods where highways convert into city grids because with higher speeds there is less reaction time to adjust for errors. Speed management is probably the single most effective way to increase safety for all modes. Geometry of the interface is one way to deal with this issue.

NYCDOT is developing a study to examine correlation of fatal and severe injury accidents to a range of factors and is working with FHWA and NYMTC on this initiative.

COMMENT 5f: Traffic Safety Board - New York City has the highest proportion of pedestrian casualties per crash, but still New York City counties (except Queens) do not have a Traffic Safety Board. Currently, the traffic safety education officer reports to the NYCDOT Commissioner and this structure does not afford the visibility and the autonomy required for the pedestrian safety mission, which is political rather than technical by nature. Such boards are sorely needed to address the unique circumstances of each county and raise awareness at all levels of agencies and government. A coordinator is not enough; rather the pedestrian safety equivalent of the Surgeon General is required.

RESPONSE 5f: Although the City does not utilize the formal Safety Board as a mechanism for discussing safety issues, there are meetings held on a regular basis that include stakeholders involved in traffic safety. However, this is done on a subcommittee basis in NYC. It is essentially the Same process as TSB but is more functional in NYC given the number of issues, neighborhoods, and the need for agency integration on a local level.

DOT Reporting Structure - Because of the importance of the issue of safety and of the development of educational programs to improve traffic safety within the City, the Chief of the NYCDOT Traffic Safety Education Office reports directly to the Commissioner's Office.

COMMENT 6: Pamela Tamaddon, Prospect/Albin Traffic Calming Initiative

As requested the following are our comments on Pedestrian Safety and Transportation Planning/Funding as it impacts our neighborhood.

Roadways

A portion of our neighborhood street, as per NYMTC is a local road Albin/Glen Cove and just over the municipal line Prospect/Sea Cliff, it becomes a Minor Arterial despite the same restrictive geometric conditions, blind turns, narrow pavement, steep inclines, residential access and no sidewalks.

Within the Village of Sea Cliff & the City of Glen Cove there are three main arties, all with continuous sidewalks the entire length, with sidewalks on both sides along Sea Cliff Avenue & Glen Avenue. These wider, superior and safer roadways however are classified "Collector Roads".

a.. Sea Cliff Avenue connects Prospect Avenue to Glen Cove Road & RT 107. It runs through the downtown business district, a light industrial zone to the LIRR station and LI MTA Bus service

b.. Glen Avenue is also a LI MTA bus route, and provides access to houses of worship, municipal ball fields and the business district along Glen Cove Avenue.

c.. Cliff Way, NC Road #7, recently improved, Shoreline and Commuter Access Grant pin #075817 provides access to a County Waterfront Park, village beach pavilion, a yacht club, commercial marinas, restaurants and in the future access to the Glen Cove ferry. Cliff Way and Shore road are also "Emergency Evacuation Routes"

Of equal concern is the effort to make Cliff Way a permanent ONE WAY. Altering the traffic pattern on this county road will funnel all west and southbound traffic up Albin/Prospect. The only other alternative up from Cliff Way/ Shore Road, Carpenter Avenue, has been closed due to collapsing road & sidewalk pavement. In fact the current closure/conditions on Carpenter Avenue, will literally make Shore Road which becomes Cliff Way, a Dead End from Memorial Day to Labor Day when a “Seasonal One Way” takes effect. A practice that for even three months given the increase in area density is no longer viable.

Furthermore diverting traffic off Cliff Way puts our neighborhood at increased risk and is an unacceptable use of state & federal funding.

Area Data & Transportation

In addition we are particularly concerned with the inaccurate data in NYMTC’s 2005 emissions analysis and the development inventory. Density has increased with the Avalon Bay I & II, Sterling Glen in Roslyn, all SOV dependent projects. Density is slated to increase drastically given the 2005 zoning change for the Glen Cove Waterfront allowing for well over 1000 residential units. It is particularly disturbing that NYMTC and the FHWA have not been updated on this significant zoning change and all development in a non-attainment area. An area already overstressed by limited roadway capacity, and a public transportation system just able to accommodate current demand.

Pedestrian Impact

All of these factors and the decisions being made at the local and county level are having a direct negative effect on pedestrian safety in our neighborhood. Parents choose to drive their children to school rather than have them wait at bus stops or walk along our narrow street dominated by cut through commuter and heavy truck traffic. A walk to the post box, a neighbor’s or for exercise is considered seriously by all, but has had the greatest impact on our many senior residents and families with young children. Bike clubs, walkers & joggers once prolific, no longer risk using this street. Residents many times opt to put family pets in the car and drive to safer streets for walks.

With that despite millions of dollars in recent state and federal funding for intermodal projects in this area mobility by car is fast becoming not only the safest option, but the only option.

Thank you for your time & considerations.

RESPONSE 6: Roadways – In following up on your comment, we have seen several correspondences with Federal and State agencies on this item. We will reach out to the village concerning the safety aspect you raise.

Area Data and Transportation: NYMTC is required by law to forecast the regional emissions impacts of its plans and programs. To do this, regionally significant development plans are inventoried annually and used as an input into regional development forecasts, which are developed for each update of NYMTC’s Regional

Transportation Plan. At the scale of the region, it is not required, nor is it possible to capture all potential local development impacts. Localized impacts are accounted for in the environmental assessment of individual development projects and/or zoning changes and should be used as input into local land use decisions.

Pedestrian Impact: Over the past several years, NYMTC has developed a program of community workshops for topics such as Walkable Communities, Parking Management and Safe Routes to Schools as a means of encouraging local municipalities and stakeholders to reconsider and improve their planning in these areas. NYMTC has also hosted Designing Pedestrian Safe Streets training workshops for the transportation professional of implementing agencies to address successful countermeasures. As an organization, NYMTC has no jurisdiction over local decisions on development and local road design and can therefore only offer incentives and information for these types of local decisions.