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The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan
Transportation Committee
Wednesday, March 4, 2026 6:30 PM
Conducted Remotely on Zoom

Please note: The resolutions contained in the committee minutes are recommendations submitted by the committee co-chairs to the Community Board. At the monthly full board meeting, the resolution is discussed and voted upon by all members of Community Board 8 Manhattan.

Resolutions to be voted on:
Item 1A: TLC Requirement for Portable Step Stools in Licensed Vehicles (Unanimous)
Item 1B: TLC Vehicle Accessibility Specifications (Unanimous)
Item 2: Low Traffic Neighborhoods Study Request
Item 3: 63rd Street and 2nd Avenue Lane Configuration (Unanimous)

Minutes:

Present: Michele Birnbaum, Lori Bores, Alida Camp, DJ Falkson, Sebastian Hallum Clarke, Paul Krikler, Craig Lader, John McClement, John Phillips, Judy Schneider, TJ Stein, Charles Warren

Absent: Valerie Mason

Approximate Number of Public Attendees: 27

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 PM.

Item 1: Updates from the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) on the Green Rides initiative, and information provided to them by the Port Authority pertaining to airport access fees for licensed vehicles

David Rens, Senior Outreach Coordinator with the Taxi and Limousine Commission's Community Affairs Department, presented updates on the Green Rides Initiative and information on airport access fees.

The Green Rides Initiative was started in 2024 to require high-volume for-hire service providers such as Uber and Lyft to dispatch vehicles that are either wheelchair accessible or zero emissions by 2030. The program will proceed in annual increments: in 2026, 25% of trips must be completed by wheelchair accessible or zero-emissions vehicles; this increases to 40% in 2027, and 60% in 2028, 80% in 2029, and 100% in 2030. This initiative excludes other services under TLCs, such as livery vehicles and limousines. Yellow taxis currently have 50% of their active fleet as wheelchair accessible, with the agency working toward 100%, though there is no set timeline, as it is based on when current vehicles reach retirement dates and are replaced over time.

Mr. Rens provided information on upcoming airport access fee changes, which are the surcharges that appear on airport trip receipts. The fee schedule is as follows:

Vehicle Type	Current	March 15, 2026	2027	2028
Non-taxi trips (black cars, Uber, Lyft)	$2.50	$3.50	$4.50	$5.00
Pooled Rides	$1.25	$1.75	$2.25	$2.50
Yellow Taxis	$1.75	$2.00	$2.25	$2.50

Mr. Rens was then asked about accessibility challenges for passengers with mobility issues who do not use wheelchairs, particularly elderly passengers and those using walking aids who have difficulty entering and exiting higher-profile vehicles such as midsize SUVs. Mr. Rens suggested that those who experience challenges notify TLC of the make and model of such vehicles; he also explained that TLC does not purchase taxis, as drivers are independent contractors purchasing their own vehicles. He said that yellow cabs follow an approved vehicle list, with the fleet moving toward ADA accessibility, and that the agency now primarily approves wheelchair accessible vehicles - most commonly the Toyota Sienna minivan. For-Hire Vehicle services (Uber, Lyft) don't have a prescribed list of approved vehicles aside from having to pass a TLC inspection at their Woodside facility, though Uber and Lyft can set additional requirements, such as vehicle age limits.

Members of the public who spoke described specific challenges, including seats positioned too close to the front seat, creating insufficient legroom, older yellow cabs without side platforms being difficult to access, and SUVs being too high, even with running boards. Sliding doors on certain models were noted as very difficult to operate. Board members emphasized that this is not solely an ADA wheelchair accessibility issue but affects a broader population with mobility limitations, which are not simply addressed with the presence of a wheelchair. Frustration was expressed that identifying specific vehicle models is difficult, given the variety of Uber and Lyft vehicles, but the fundamental issue is that vehicles require steps too high for many passengers.

One co-chair noted that while TLC could mandate portable step stools through rulemaking, Mr. Rens indicated this would be challenging given the vast number of regulated vehicles. Mr. Rens acknowledged that TLC has an accessibility coordinator and that the Safety and Emissions unit reviews vehicle dimensions and sets parameters. He offered to bring concerns to the accessibility team, but noted that regulatory requirements for steps based on vehicle type would be difficult to implement. When asked about interior space specifications, he indicated there are some requirements, but did not have specifics readily available.

The following resolutions were then put forward:

WHEREAS, people with mobility challenges who do not use wheelchairs have expressed their difficulties entering and exiting TLC-licensed vehicles, especially higher-profile vehicles such as SUVs and minivans; and

WHEREAS, the step-up height into many TLC-licensed vehicles presents a significant accessibility barrier for passengers who use walking aids such as canes or walkers, or who have conditions affecting their mobility; and

WHEREAS, vehicles equipped with running boards are still reported to be too high for some users; and

WHEREAS, portable folding step stools present a simple and inexpensive solution, as they can assist passengers in safely entering and exiting higher-profile vehicles; and

WHEREAS, such step stools are widely available at low cost and can be stored flat alongside the driver's seat without interfering with vehicle operations; and

WHEREAS, a requirement for vehicles to have step-stools available can be enacted through the rulemaking process;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Community Board 8 Manhattan calls on the Taxi and Limousine Commission to require TLC licensed vehicles to carry a portable step stool for passengers if the passenger compartment in that vehicle is higher than can be comfortably accessed by a person with limited mobility.

Yes (12): Birnbaum, Bores, Camp, Falkson, Hallum Clarke, Krikler, Lader, McClement, Phillips, Schneider, Stein, Warren

No (0): None

Abstain (0): None

Another motion was then put forward:

WHEREAS, the Taxi and Limousine Commission establishes specifications and guidelines that determine which vehicles are permissible for licensing; and

WHEREAS, current vehicle specifications, although in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, do not adequately address accessibility concerns for passengers who are ambulatory but have difficulty with high vehicle entry points, inadequate legroom, or doors that are difficult to operate; and

WHEREAS, these specifications should take into account the diverse needs of New York City's riding public, including elderly passengers and those with mobility impairments who do not require wheelchairs; and

WHEREAS, specific concerns have been raised regarding vehicle height and step-up requirements, ease of operating doors (particularly sliding doors), and adequate interior space including legroom (distance between front partition and rear passenger seats);

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Community Board 8 Manhattan calls on the Taxi and Limousine Commission to establish specifications and guidelines that ensure TLC-licensed vehicles are accessible to people with mobility issues beyond wheelchair accessibility, including considerations for vehicle height, step-up requirements, ease of operating doors, and adequate interior legroom.

Yes (12): Birnbaum, Bores, Camp, Falkson, Hallum Clarke, Krikler, Lader, McClement, Phillips, Schneider, Stein, Warren

No (0) None

Abstain (0) None

Item 2: Informational Presentation: Low Traffic Neighborhoods

Emily Chingay, Advocacy and Engagement Associate at Open Plans, presented the concept of low traffic neighborhoods and street design to reduce cut-through traffic. The presentation was requested by CB8M Transportation Committee member DJ Falkson.

Ms. Chingay explained that Low Traffic Neighborhoods (LTNs) are a localized approach to managing traffic by redirecting traffic patterns to prioritize local drivers while encouraging through-traffic to remain on boundary roads and corridors. With the increased reliance drivers have on navigation apps such as Google Maps and Waze that often direct drivers through residential streets to save time, it has increased pressure on local streets with increasing congestion and safety concerns. She cited data indicating that about 74% of traffic in Community District 8 is cut-through and doesn't stop in the neighborhood.

The key principle of LTNs is redirecting through traffic while maintaining access to all homes and businesses on impacted streets - they encourage shared spaces that lead to slower speeds for all vehicles which result in safer and more accessible streets, and more greenery to improve the streetscape. LTNs that have been introduced in other major cities worldwide feature diagonal diverters which shorten crossing distances, street trees, and plaza blocks that can connect schools to parks and allow outdoor learning and community gathering; intersection daylighting is also a common element.

Ms. Chingay emphasized that LTNs don't require removing parking or adversely impact response times for emergency vehicles that must access streets; LTNs also maintain the ability for passengers and goods to be dropped off as they do today. Unlike the Open Streets program, LTNs are not intended for pedestrianization, and are self-policing rather than requiring barriers to be installed and maintained by a local stakeholder; they are also relatively inexpensive to implement using treatments such as paint, bollards, flex posts, and planters.

Ms. Chingay noted LTNs have been implemented globally, including London, Colombia, Spain, Germany, and here in the USA in Oregon. The New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) has implemented similar elements at 34th Avenue in Jackson Heights, in Sunnyside, and on Berry Street in Williamsburg, but these have been done intersection-by-intersection rather than through holistic neighborhood approaches. She indicated that benefits in LTNs include safer streets, improved air quality, and boosted active travel, along with significant reductions in traffic volume while traffic on boundary roads remains approximately the same. As LTNs are self-enforcing, unlike open streets requiring barricades and volunteers, they can return space to the community.

The presentation generated a mixed response from meeting participants. Those who expressed interest in LTNs were intrigued by an approach that aimed to balance efforts to calm traffic on residential streets and improve quality of life while not impacting parking or the ability of deliveries and emergency vehicle operations. They appreciated the data-driven approach showing how it could benefit neighborhood residents and cited examples of successful community gathering spaces like James Cagney Plaza on East 91st Street, although it was acknowledged that a study is needed before it could be advanced further. Some speakers identified potential locations of interest for LTNs, including by 67th Street by Julia Richman Education Complex and St. Catherine's Park), East End Avenue near Carl Schurz Park and Gracie Mansion, and areas with existing school streets, and in the Hunter College area.

Those not supporting the concept of LTNs questioned restricting neighborhood streets and pushing traffic to boundary roads in Manhattan, noting CB8 has the Queensboro Bridge off-ramp (the only toll-free route into Manhattan) and concerns about manufacturing congestion on remaining streets. The high density of hospitals on York Avenue raised concerns about blocking connections, with questions about

FDNY coordination. Additional concerns included skepticism that this would work in busy Manhattan streets versus residential outer boroughs, doubts about statistics showing no traffic increase elsewhere, pollution displacement to other areas, and whether this is an effort to prioritize bikes over cars and pedestrians.

The following resolution was then put forward:

WHEREAS, Low-Traffic Neighborhoods are an approach that redirects non-local "cut-through" traffic away from residential areas to enhance safety and quality of life while maintaining full vehicle access for residents and emergency services; and

WHEREAS, data indicates that over 70% of traffic in Community District 8 is cut-through traffic from people not stopping in the neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, cut-through traffic on residential streets in Community District 8, especially those in the vicinity of schools and parks, creates safety concerns, increases congestion, and negatively impacts quality of life for residents; and

WHEREAS, potential benefits of Low-Traffic Neighborhoods include safer streets, improved air quality, and prioritization of access for residents and local destinations; and

WHEREAS, low traffic neighborhood concepts have been successfully implemented in other cities globally and could potentially benefit select locations within Community District 8; and

WHEREAS, any implementation would need to be carefully studied and tailored to the specific characteristics of Manhattan's grid system and Community District 8's role as a major corridor area;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Community Board 8 Manhattan supports efforts to reduce through traffic on residential streets, and calls on the New York City Department of Transportation to study options for low traffic neighborhood treatments in Community District 8, with a particular focus on select residential blocks near schools, parks, and areas where cut-through traffic creates safety concerns.

Yes (5): Bores, Hallum Clarke, Krikler, McClement, Warren

No (2) Birnbaum, Phillips

Abstain (2) Camp, Schneider

Item 3: NYCDOT Updates

Rafael Escano, NYCDOT liaison to CB8M, provided the following updates:

East 62nd Street between the Queensboro Bridge Exit and 1st Avenue: As of March 4, 2026, NYCDOT has changed the parking regulations on East 62nd Street between the Queensboro Bridge and 1st Avenue to “No Standing Anytime”. Mr. Escano noted that it was understood that CB8M didn’t pass the resolution that came out of the December 2025 Transportation Committee, but the field work and assessment performed by NYCDOT resulted in the conclusion that this action was justified and necessary for safety purposes. One of the Committee Co-Chairs acknowledged a letter that Borough Commissioner Danielle Zuckerman sent earlier that day to notify CB8M of the actions to change the parking regulations and to install additional signage emphasizing that the “left lane must turn left” at 1st

Avenue. The letter also noted that bike lane implementation along East 62nd Street was a direct result of CB8M guidance from past resolutions supporting crosstown bike lanes, the street having been identified as a "vision zero priority corridor", and significant outreach to CB8M and local stakeholders that resulted in changes to the design that was originally proposed while maintaining the same number of travel lanes.

East 63rd Street at 2nd Avenue: Modifications to the intersection of East 63rd Street and 2nd Avenue have continued, with a pedestrian signal now installed for the south crosswalk, a split-phase signal now operational, and signage now installed. Lane usage markings will be marked on the roadway when the weather permits.

In response to Mr. Escano's update regarding East 63rd Street, there was extensive discussion regarding the increase in congestion and horn honking since the changes had been made, largely stemming from there now being two dedicated left-turn lanes onto 2nd Avenue that are delayed in order to allow pedestrians to cross 2nd Avenue on the south side of the intersection. The need for two turning lanes was questioned, especially given that Congestion Pricing implementation has likely reduced the number of vehicles that would logically make a left turn onto 2nd Avenue. It was also noted that there will be a new school opening this month at 307 East 63rd Street, and there is a need to maintain a second lane of through traffic at the intersection during times when students are being dropped off or picked up. Mr. Escano suggested that those concerned with the situation should wait until the project is fully completed before judging, but there were concerns expressed that doing so would just delay a potential solution from being put into place.

The following resolution was then put forward:

WHEREAS, following an October 2025 presentation to Community Board 8, NYCDOT has implemented changes to the intersection of East 63rd Street and 2nd Avenue that include the removal of a pedestrian fence, a split-phase signal, and a reconfiguration of traffic that includes two dedicated left-turn lanes and one through lane; and

WHEREAS, concerns were raised during the October 2025 meeting that the changes would result in increased congestion; and

WHEREAS, since being implemented, residents and users of the intersection have reported experiencing increased traffic congestion horn honking; and

WHEREAS, the two left-turn lanes create unnecessary congestion as vehicles intending to go straight are delayed behind vehicles turning left, particularly given the delayed green phase required for the pedestrian crosswalk; and

WHEREAS, a new school is opening in March 2026 at 307 East 63rd Street between the bridge exit and Second Avenue, which will add buses and parent drop-off/pickup traffic and further exacerbate congestion concerns; and

WHEREAS, a configuration with one left-turn only lane and two straight-through only lanes would better match actual traffic patterns and reduce congestion; and

WHEREAS, the demand for two left turn lanes in in conflict with the manner in which vehicles exiting the upper level of the Queensboro Bridge are likely to behave based on the proximity of the congestion pricing toll zone and it being the only free option for entering Community District 8 from Queens;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Community Board 8 Manhattan calls on the New York City Department of Transportation to configure the intersection at 63rd Street and Second Avenue with one left-turn only lane and two straight-through only lanes.

Yes (10): Birnbaum, Bores, Camp, Falkson, Hallum Clarke, Krikler, Lader, Phillips, Schneider, Warren

No (0) None

Abstain (0) None

Item 4: Old Business

- A Board member asked about the status of the York Avenue Traffic Study following the CB8M resolution from February 2026, calling for the data collection to resume. Mr. Escano said it was still scheduled to resume when the weather permitted.

Item 5: New Business

- A public attendee asked whether there were any red-light cameras near the Queensboro Bridge, as it is a dangerous location. Mr. Escano said that he would investigate.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Charles Warren & Craig Lader, Co-Chairs