



MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FIVE

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David Siesko, *Chair*

Gary Parker, M.S.W., *District Manager*

July 13, 2007

Hon. Michael R. Bloomberg
Mayor
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Re: Congestion Pricing Proposal.

Dear Mayor Bloomberg:

At the regularly scheduled monthly meeting of Community Board Five on Thursday, June 14, 2007, the Board passed the following resolution with a vote of 24 in favor, 0 opposed, 2 abstentions:

WHEREAS, New York City has experienced a renaissance in the past decade with a population that has grown to more than 8 million people and which is expected to increase by more than a million more residents over the next 25 years; and

WHEREAS, After Los Angeles, New York City has the worst air quality of any U.S. city, caused in part by cars, buses and trucks idling in traffic, emitting pollutants that are a health hazard to residents and visitors to New York City; and

WHEREAS, Over 2 million people in NYC live within 500 feet of major roads, and studies have shown that living within 1,500 feet of major roads can aggravate asthma, increase hospitalizations and affect lung development; and

WHEREAS, Vehicular emissions contribute to more than 86% of the total cancer risk from hazardous pollutants in New York City; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Bloomberg is proposing a Congestion Pricing pilot program which would charge \$8 for passenger cars and \$21 for trucks to enter the Congestion Zone, running from 86th Street to the Battery, between the hours of 6 AM and 6 PM; and

WHEREAS, Congestion Pricing will decrease carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxide, volatile organic compounds and overall emissions dramatically within the charge zone; and

WHEREAS, New York City's roads, especially those in the Central Business District below 60th Street, are already overcapacity resulting in gridlock and traffic jams for much of the workday; and

WHEREAS, New York City and its surrounding suburbs are attempting to be a 21st Century region operating with a 20th Century transportation infrastructure, since it has been 50 years since a major subway or commuter rail line has been built; and

WHEREAS, The transportation infrastructure for New York City and its surrounding suburbs are already close to capacity on most train lines and above capacity on others and will need more than \$50 billion in the next 25 years to keep up with the expected population and job growth in the region; and

WHEREAS, On any given day 95% of people who commute into the Central Business District of Manhattan do so by public transportation, bikes, walking and other methods while the remaining 5% arrive by private cars; and

WHEREAS, The money raised from the congestion pricing proposal can be used to fund important transportation projects in the Central Business District including:

- The Second Avenue Subway
- Making sure that all existing tracks are in working condition
- Port Authority Bus Garage located at Galvin Plaza west of 10th Avenue for Port Authority and Chartered Buses
- Commuter rail projects including Access to the Region's Core and East Side Access; and

WHEREAS, Congestion Pricing has been instituted in a number of city's including London, Stockholm and Singapore and has been successful in reducing traffic, raising funds to finance public transportation improvements and improving air quality; and

WHEREAS, The Congestion Pricing proposal from Mayor Bloomberg is expected to result in a 6.5% reduction in the number of vehicles entering Manhattan south of 86th Street during peak hours, a 13% reduction in congestion and a 6.3% increase in traffic speed within the congestion zone; and

WHEREAS, Congestion Pricing is expected to help neighborhoods outside of Manhattan including a traffic reduction of 29% in Downtown Brooklyn, 24% in Williamsburg/Greenpoint, 27% in Long Island City, 14% in Harlem, 5% in the South Bronx and 3% in Flushing; and

WHEREAS, Enforcement of both the current traffic laws and any new ones from Congestion Pricing, including both traffic agent enforcement and the use of cameras, will key to the success of the program; and

WHEREAS, Abiding by the zoning restrictions related to parking currently in effect in the majority of the Central Business District, and expanding them to the full Congestion Zone, will be crucial to reinforcing the effects of Congestion Pricing; and

WHEREAS, Community Board Five would like the following items to be considered during the legislative and implementation process:

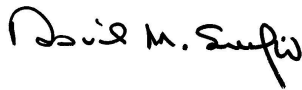
- Ensure that people with disabilities and special needs be exempt by the Congestion Pricing proposal
- Investigate applying the \$8 congestion fee to taxis and livery cabs
- Examine the level of the fee being charged to trucks coming into the zone
- Explore the London Congestion program which only charges people entering the Congestion Zone not those leaving it
- Investigate placing tolls on all crossings into Manhattan and ensuring that all vehicles of the same class entering the CBD pay the congestion charge of their class; and

WHEREAS, It is important that the New York State Legislature acts prior to the July 16, 2007 deadline for Federal Transportation funding so that New York City can be eligible for \$500 million to implement this project, to purchase Clean Air buses and create 12 new bus routes to help people commute into Manhattan by public transportation; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That Community Board Five **strongly supports** a 3 year congestion pricing pilot program and urges that the legislature act upon this proposal prior to the July 16, 2007 deadline.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this matter.

Sincerely,



David Siesko
Chair



John Mills
Chair, Transportation/Environment

Cc: Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer
Council Speaker Christine Quinn
City Council Member Dan Garodnick
City Council Member Gale Brewer
City Council Member Rosie Mendez
Assembly Member Richard Gottfried
Assembly Member Deborah J. Glick
State Senator Tom Duane
State Senator Liz Krueger
Margaret Forgione, Manhattan Borough Commissioner, DOT
Matthew Daus,, Commissioner, NYC Taxi & Limousine Commission
Manhattan Community Boards