

“Is it about *Two New Yorks*?”
might just be the question of the day.
Many New York Times readers get it
when it comes to the unfairness, inequity and perhaps,
even “gentrification” (see post #12).

New York Times readers responded to the March 4, 2008 *City Room* post, “Council Members Urge Congestion Pricing Changes,” about “A group of 20 City Council members sent a letter to Mr. Bloomberg urging changes so that New Jersey commuters pay a partial fee or so that the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey use a portion of tolls it collects from Manhattan-bound drivers to pay for New York City mass transit, almost half the body which must, along with the State Legislature, approve the plan for it to qualify for federal financing.”

1. March 4th, 2008 [8:58 pm](#) *Am I the only one who thinks it is blatantly unfair that if you need to travel somewhere you can't get to by public transportation, you have to pay a penalty that would be double the fare of the subway. Lots of people in Brooklyn and queens have no choice to reverse commute to N.J. We should come up with a plan that reduces traffic. The Mayors plan only raises Money.*

— *Posted by Chris*

2. March 4th, 2008 [11:03 pm](#) *Someone has to pay Chris. Right now, we are all paying for excessive auto use, but not monetarily.*
Also, when you say that congestion pricing does not reduce traffic, and only raises money, it sounds like you haven't read a single thing on congestion pricing except the talking points of the folks who want us to keep sucking on tailpipe emissions and underfunding transit.

It amazes me how deeply uninformed some people are when it comes to congestion pricing. But that's not a knock on them (except for the politicians, who should know better). Rather, it's a criticism of the Mayor, who has done a poor job of promoting the plan.

— *Posted by mike*

3. March 5th, 2008 [1:02 am](#) *“Someone has to pay Chris.”*
But the ones who will “pay” are those who can't afford it. MTA bigwigs and the Mayor and the Central Park Conservancy crowd (and the Times owners?) don't care if they have to pay a few bucks a day more so their limos can still be sitting double parked all week.

You want to reduce congestion? Take away all the city, state and federal non-emergency, non law-enforcement vehicles, and take away their street parking

passes.

Let the Board members, the “inspectors” and their “managers” take public transportation to their meetings.

Those of us small business owners in the outer boroughs AND in Manhattan who have to deliver our goods and materials & services to midtown are going to take it in the rear for you condescending snobs who write that “it sounds like you haven’t read a single thing on congestion pricing”.

It sounds like Mike never had to work for a real living.

Every time a housepainter or a plumber or a baker comes across the “border” to drop off his paint or his pipes or his bagels to his customers he is going to pay, but of course the envirosnobs who really want to break NYC back to a walking mall don’t care, because they can afford it when we small biz owners have to raise our prices to cover the new daily “tolls”.

Cut the govt vehicles, create tax incentives (if you must) for businesses in 100% commercial neighborhoods to take their deliveries at night, but keep govt “planners” who have already screwed up our schools and almost everything else in NYC out of our streets.

— *Posted by jpeditor*

8. [March 5th, 2008 11:14 am](#) The letter from these council members recognizes a basic inequity (one of many) in the congestion pricing plan: while NYC taxpayers who support the building and maintenance of these roads will pay this regressive tax, commuters who don’t even pay a commuter tax any more, but use all city services, will get a free ride by deducting bridge and tunnel tolls. Thus, suburbanites are actually ENCOURAGED to drive under this plan, since it costs them nothing and their rides will be faster and easier thanks to removing city residents from their own roads. Exactly who is supposed to be representing the already maximally taxed residents of this city, the only ones stuck with both DOT maintenance costs and the full freight of this tax, among our elected representatives?

— *Posted by Susan*

10. [March 5th, 2008 11:37 am](#) The money from the CP tax is as likely to go to transit as the lottery money was to go to education (you may remember that we were in court for years to try to get equitable education funding for NYC). Cash is fungible—they can call it a “lock box,” but what insures against reducing appropriations for mass transit in proportion to the CP money available? Now that we are in hard financial times, and getting worse, you can be sure the state will grab the lion’s share. So what might the REAL motive for this misbegotten plan be? Just look at gentrification to find a clue. Congestion pricing is just another way to make Manhattan into a safe, convenient playground for the rich, for whom \$8 is trivial, but for whom being stuck in traffic is a drag.

— *Posted by Susan*

12.March 5th, 2008
[12:29 pm](#) Thank you Susan and neversleep for stating what I have been trying to tell others regarding this issue. It is all about gentrification and designed for this new class of homogenized snobs that tool around the city. Also, tolling the east river bridges would have a greater effect since it would cost less to set up and would immediately pay into the system. That being said, there ain't gonna be no lock-box once these politicians see this pool of money, sitting there. Even today's NYT editorial is mamby-pamby about this - it says that the money "should" be used for the MTA. Uh, a more emphatic "must" would have been more appropriate.

Also, doesn't the NYT have a sort of conflict of interest here? Increased ridership on public transportation means potentially increased sales of newspapers which means increased ad revenues. If you look, every newspaper in the city is for CP without question. I hate this issue because it is a battle of the boroughs and a battle of the old versus the new.

— *Posted by ed*

Click [here](#) to read the entire post on the New York Times website.