

Keep NYC Free

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Walk Right Back

During what some observers might call the great debate over the [congestion tax](#), the [taxers](#) hurled just about every conceivable argument from [revenue](#) to congestion reduction to saving the [environment](#). Keep NYC [debunked all](#). Now they put forth the failed plan as a cure all to pedestrian fatalities. Perhaps the traffic engineer needs to, borrowing an Everly Brothers tune, [Walk Right Back](#) and make some on-site observations.

A City grows, develops one might say. More people, more traffic and to suggest that a toll-tax might relieve things begs the question. Unless one wants to create self-contained castle-like communities where one need not leave the space, something counter-intuitive to a city such as New York in all its vibrancy, we understand moving about no matter the mode might not always occur with the greatest of ease.

I can recall safely negotiating city streets using my legs or pedaling various bikes. Development in the same community proceeded far ahead of the necessary traffic safety infrastructure. Traffic Signals, paved islands, Four-Way "Stop" signs, Turn signals and the first two of their kind Rest On Red traffic signals all came much later, often after fatalities. No one suggested a toll off the Cross Island at 81st Avenue to deter the vehicles heading to the growing medical office and retail complexes that grew and grew all around. No one suggested tolling Union Turnpike or Hillside Avenue at the City line.

NYC's Department of Transportation, at its best, serves New Yorkers when it focuses on transportation planning; and a focus on safety. Think to the improvements along Queens Boulevard that reduce the likelihood folks cross anywhere. The next steps there obviously got to improving safety at the intersections where one can cross.

Some location in Manhattan have similar restrictions that prevent jaywalking that remains a prevalent mode for many pedestrians. At some locations, we see crossing safely setup mid-block.

What never made sense to this correspondent, the City might require a subway entrance and occasionally a traffic signal paid by a developer but develop does include traffic impacts. The environmental review required support that; so why not a bit more pro-activity when it comes to traffic safety planning in advance.

Ought that to be what the former traffic commissioner ought to be shouting about. Instead, he opts to [Walk On By](#), and without nary a justification, argue for the congestion tax. [Still, The Song Remains the Same](#).

Read [Gridlock Sam: congestion pricing will cut traffic deaths](#) (Capitol New York, January 23, 2014)