



October 21, 2004

Iris Weinshall
Commissioner, NYC Department of Transportation
40 Worth Street
New York, NY 10013

Dear Commissioner Weinshall,

The Manhattan BoroughWide InterAgency Council on Aging, Inc. (MBIAC) Inc., is a not for profit organization that represents a consortium of the eight inter-agency councils on aging located across the Borough of Manhattan. Part of our council's mission is to educate service providers and elected officials as to the needs, issues and concerns of older adults and to advocate on their behalf. Today, we are writing to you on behalf of the Washington Heights and Inwood senior community. Seniors in these communities feel threatened by crossing the street. Despite these fears, they want to continue walking to senior centers. We are asking for your help in encouraging this activity by making intersections safer for seniors when crossing.

While we have been fortunate to have few fatal crashes between senior pedestrians and motorists in the Washington Heights and Inwood sections of the City, we have had many injuries and numerous scares. There are many intersections along Broadway and Fort Washington Avenue, notably at West 178th, West 177th, West 170th and West 168th street where seniors do not have enough time to cross the street. While these specific intersections are the worst and need the most immediate attention, giving seniors additional time to cross the street at all senior centers would make the walking environment much safer for everyone.

We hope that the City Department of Transportation will study these intersections before the winter months of snow and ice. Ideally your agency will consider the intersections along Broadway in Washington Heights and Inwood as locations for installing leading pedestrian intervals. These extra seconds of "protected" walking time can alleviate some of the pressures of crossing and help reduce tripping and falls.

Thank you for your consideration of these matters. We look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,

Edith Prentiss
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