The *Art* of Engagement

Andrew McFarland | LivableStreets Alliance | August 2, 2017

Question

Who has ever been to a public meeting for a transportation project and left frustrated about how issues were discussed by the community members present?

Do you think that meeting would have changed if other people had been a part of that conversation?

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Changing our transportation system requires changing how we talk to people about transportation

We need to move beyond our existing networks to increase contact and opportunities for new conversations

How do we continue (or even start) the conversation about improving transportation beyond our these networks?

Real-time, direct engagement

- Connecting with as many people as possible where they are
- Thinking of contact as the “anti-meeting”

Real-time, direct engagement

- Finding common ground
- Showing people you care
- Face-to-face interactions
- Importance of being vulnerable

Hacking your network

As a part of this committee, community members in your own right, and experts in your respective specialities, you have the ability to engage with your neighbors on important transportation projects

How you go about engaging the public in a way that fits your needs, skills, and audience?

The following are engagement tactics and approaches that I've applied in the past few years at NYC DOT & LivableStreets

Developing a strategy

- Why are you engaging?
- Identify your problem
- Identify your audience / target
- Identify where your audience gathers
- Create a timeline
- Develop the ask

Why are you engaging?

- Building support for a specific project?
- Educating community on an issue?
- Collecting feedback to build your case for a project?
- Mobilizing people to take action?

Identify your problem

What’s missing? In an ideal world, more people should care about your issue

What’s keeping that from happening?

Identify your audience / target

Whose support do you need but currently lack?

Who do you have to bypass or override to achieve your goal?

Identify where your audience gathers

- Community spaces & events
- Groups, organizations, etc.
- Example: Bus riders at bus stops

Create a timeline

- By when do you have to engage people to be successful?
- Are there events you have to be present at to be successful?
- Example: Are you trying to get feedback for a specific project or meeting?

Develop your ask

How are you engaging people?

- Are you collecting feedback?
- Are you educating?
- Are you building support?
- Are you mobilizing people?
- (it is very hard to do all of these at once)

Develop your ask

“You gotta tell a story, stupid”

Good engagement is good storytelling

What is the medium of your message?

Display boards - - - - - > Educating
Building support

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Building support

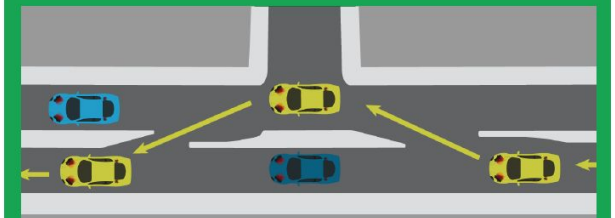
What We Know

Injury Summary, 2010-2014 (5 years)

	Total Injuries	Severe Injuries	Fatalities	KSI
Pedestrians	129	17	4	21
Bicyclists	19	2	0	2
Motor Vehicle Occupants	604	22	1	23
Total	752	41	5	46

Fatalities (1/1/2010-11/16/2015): 5

- Ranks in the top 10 percent of Queens streets for severe injuries and fatalities per mile (2010-2014 crash data)
- 46 persons killed or severely injured along 1.2 mile corridor since 2010; 46% (21) of which were pedestrians



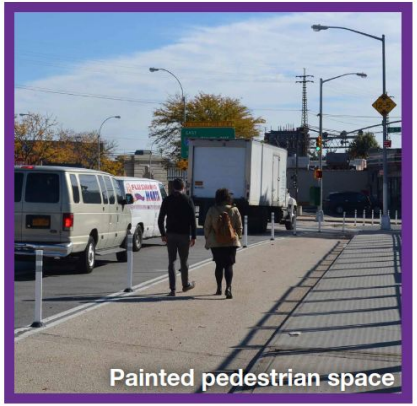
Roadway Shopping

Perception: Switching from the main line to service roads will get you to destination faster.

Reality: Causes conflicts between vehicles, increases congestion, reduces effectiveness of service road.

What We Can Do

Extend pedestrian crossing time


Painted pedestrian space

Mall-to-mall crossings

Median extension & widening

Buffered bike lane

Feedback boards - - - - - > Building support

Feedback boards - - - - - > Building support

Merchant Surveys

Intercept surveys

Surveys - - - - > Collecting feedback / building support

Merchant Survey Results

Here are a few highlights

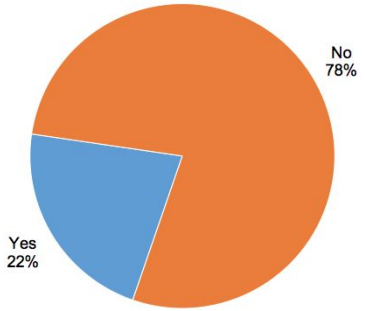
14% of delivery vehicles park on a side street/around the corner

44% park in a legal/loading space in front of business

17% double park in front of business

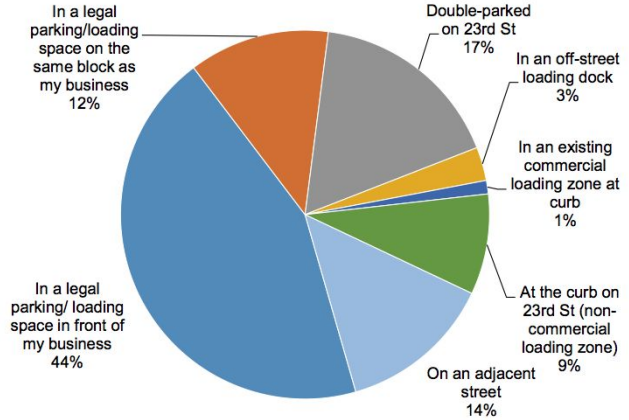
Most businesses cannot control when deliveries come

Are you able to control when deliveries arrive?



Yes	*39*	*22%*
No	*138*	*78%*
TOTAL	***177***	***100%***

Where do delivery vehicles typically park?



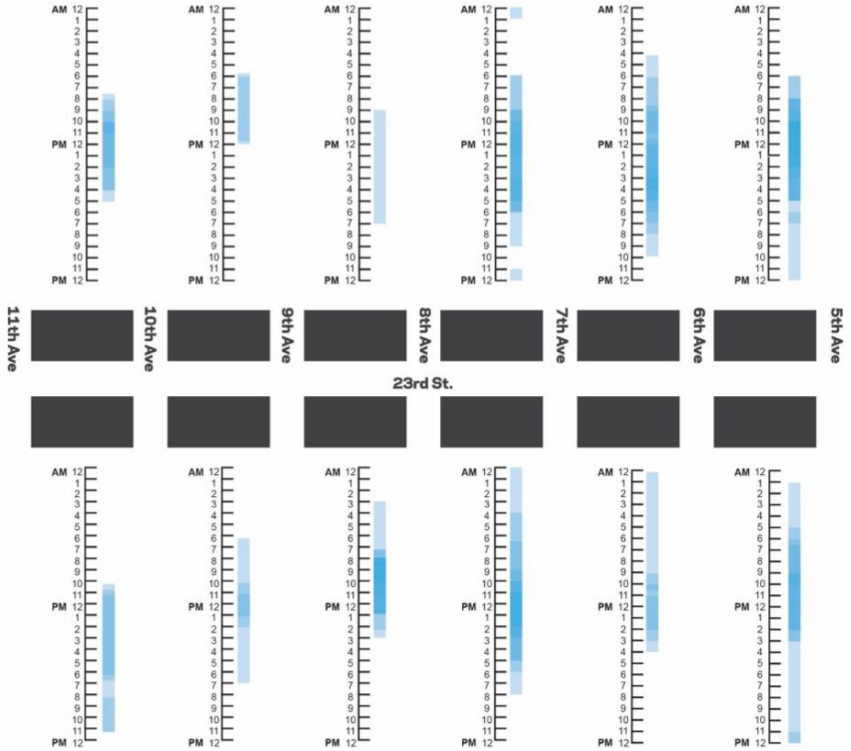
In a legal parking/ loading space in front of my business	*75*	*44%*
In a legal parking/ loading space on the same block as my business	*21*	*12%*
Double-parked on 23rd St	*29*	*17%*
In an off-street loading dock	*5*	*3%*
In an existing commercial loading zone at curb	*2*	*1%*
At the curb on 23rd St (non-commercial loading zone)	*15*	*9%*
On an adjacent street	*23*	*14%*
TOTAL	***170***	***100%***

Merchant Survey

Delivery Times

23RD ST. MERCHANT DELIVERY TIME RANGES

11th Ave to 5th Ave



Legend

N

- Delivery window indicated by 1 business
- Delivery window indicated by 2 to 3 businesses
- Delivery window indicated by more than 3 businesses

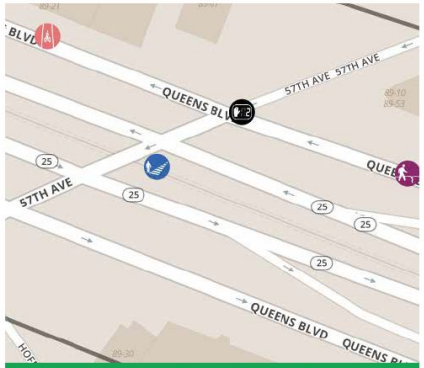
Field Notes

For this survey, merchants along 23rd St. were asked to estimate the window of time in which they typically receive deliveries.

The data is broken down by block, and organized into the north and south sides of the street.

All data was collected on 01/11 & 01/13, 2016

What We've Heard



Queens Blvd & 57th Ave

"There's not enough time for pedestrians to cross the street! This street is extremely wide and needs reconfiguration to make it safer for pedestrians, especially older people and people with disabilities."

Queens Blvd & Woodhaven Blvd

"This space is much too wide with too many travel lanes in front of the Mall. The result is that drivers speed and change lanes recklessly. Very dangerous for the ton of pedestrians in this area and exceptionally so for people on bikes."

Queens Blvd & 51st Ave

"Aggressive drivers fly through slip lane from main road to service road putting bicycles, pedestrians and other motor vehicles at risk. Need to eliminate or dramatically slow down merge."

Flyers & Palm Cards - - - - > Educating

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Petitions / Feedback Cards - - - - > Mobilizing

But most importantly

STOP MAKING SENSE

Embracing meaningful inefficiencies

Interactive games - - - - > Sparking imagination

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Ongoing efforts

LivableStreets' Street Ambassador program

Questions?