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MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 11

369<sup>TH</sup> REGIMENT ARMORY

CIVITAS

CHASHAMA, INC.

THE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION OF  
THE EAST HARLEM TRIANGLE

EAST HARLEM BUSINESS  
CAPITAL CORPORATION

EAST HARLEM PRESERVATION

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ESPLANADE GARDENS  
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HOPE COMMUNITY

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NEW YORK RESTORATION PROJECT

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THE URBAN DIVERS  
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TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

TRI-STATE TRANSPORTATION CAMPAIGN

SENATOR ROBERT F. WAGNER  
HOUSES RESIDENT ASSOCIATION

WEST HARLEM ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

April 19, 2007

Mr. Joel Ettinger  
Executive Director  
New York Metropolitan Transportation Council  
199 Water Street, 22nd Floor  
New York, NY 10038

Re: Harlem River Drive Entrance Ramp (a.k.a. Flyover) –  
125<sup>th</sup> to 132<sup>nd</sup> Streets  
Agency: NYCDOT, PIN: X071.48, Work Type: Bridge.

Dear Mr. Ettinger,

We are writing to continue our request of two years ago that the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council remove the Harlem River Drive Flyover project from its Transportation Improvement Program until a community supported alternative has been designed. As you know, if built, this large, elevated highway structure would have serious negative environmental, health and economic impacts on the East Harlem community by:

- Causing vehicular exhaust fumes and particulate matter to travel farther into the community, increasing asthma throughout the east side of Harlem, a community already suffering from the highest asthma rates in the country
- Negatively affecting the residents of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development funded apartments along Lexington Avenue. These buildings house low-income children and elderly residents, many of whom already suffer from health problems
- Encircling Each One Teach One Park basketball courts with elevated vehicles, reducing the air quality for park users, shadowing the park, creating an environmental “hot spot”, and generally making the park unsafe
- Creating an environmental hazard for the children playing in the baseball fields adjacent to Harlem River Drive and for the children attending Public School 30/31
- Further separating East Harlem from its waterfront by creating a permanent visual barrier
- Removing waterfront property planned for Harlem River Park

Mr. Joel Ettinger  
April 19, 2007  
Page 2 of 2

- Positioning Phase III of Harlem River Park in permanent shadow during the afternoon; its peak period of use.
- Elevating vehicular noise in the community.
- Ignoring urban planning best practices and building an elevated highway structure on the waterfront when other municipalities are tearing theirs down.

You are aware that the Chairman of the U.S. House of Representatives Ways and Means Committee, Charles B. Rangel, has explicitly expressed his opposition to this project in a letter dated June 9, 2005 (see attached), as have former New York State Senator now Lieutenant Governor David Paterson, former New York City Council Member and now State Senator Bill Perkins, New York State Assembly Member Keith Wright, former New York City Council Member Philip Reed and local community and citywide groups.

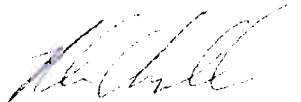
While we received assurance by New York City Department of Transportation Manhattan Borough Commissioner Margaret Forgione on February 15, 2007 that the Flyover will not be constructed, and that several at-grade alternatives are being reviewed, we have not had the opportunity to review nor participate in the development of these alternatives. Therefore, until such time, we want to continue to be on record opposing this project.

Please take these concerns seriously and remove this project from the Transportation Improvement Program until a "Context Sensitive Solution" can be supported by the East Harlem community. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,



Thomas Lunke  
Co-Chair



Robin Chappelle  
Co-Chair

#### Attachments

cc: Honorable Judith E. Bergtraum, Acting Commissioner, NYC DOT  
Honorable Margaret Forgione, Manhattan Borough Commissioner, NYC DOT

CHARLES B. RANGEL  
15TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
New York

COMMITTEE  
WAYS AND MEANS  
RANKING MEMBER

JOINT COMMITTEE ON TAXATION

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515-3215

2354 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-3215  
TELEPHONE: (202) 725-4385

DISTRICT OFFICE:  
MS. VIVIAN E. JONES  
DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

163 WEST 125TH STREET  
New York, NY 10027  
TELEPHONE: (212) 863-3800

PLEASE RESPOND TO  
OFFICE CHECKED

June 9, 2005

Mr. Joel Ettinger  
Executive Director  
New York Metropolitan Transportation Council  
199 Water Street, 22nd Floor  
New York, NY 10038

Re: PIN/ALT ID: X071.48, Work Type: Bridge.

Dear Mr. Ettinger:

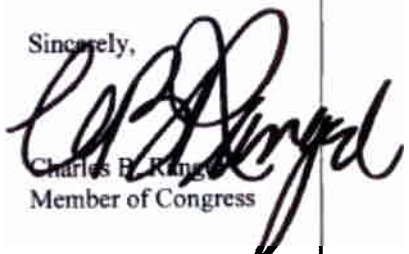
I am writing to urge the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council to decline approval of funding for the Harlem River Drive Flyover in East Harlem. I, along with other elected officials in the district have written to NYC Department of Transportation in opposition of this project.

I have received many complaints from community residents who believe the "Flyover" will have long term negative environmental, health and socioeconomic impacts in their neighborhood. This is a community already hit hard by unprecedented asthma rates among its residents. As cities all over the country move away from building elevated structures because they see the damage caused by increased exposure of vehicular emissions and the separation such structures create between communities and waterfronts, there is no reason to build one here.

Since the "Flyover" will impact a small portion of the Harlem River Drive traffic flow, it appears the negative impacts outweigh any benefits. Located in the vicinity of parks, a school and residential buildings, this project will not only affect the health of the residents but the economic growth as well. The waterfront is an asset to this community and should not have a large structure blocking the view of the riverfront and reducing the area planned for Harlem River Park.

This community deserves better, so I request that you deny funding for this project.

Sincerely,

  
Charles B. Rangel  
Member of Congress

CBR/db