Central Park Drives | Status Update

Presented to Manhattan Community Board 8 and 7
January 2026

NEW YORK CITY DOT

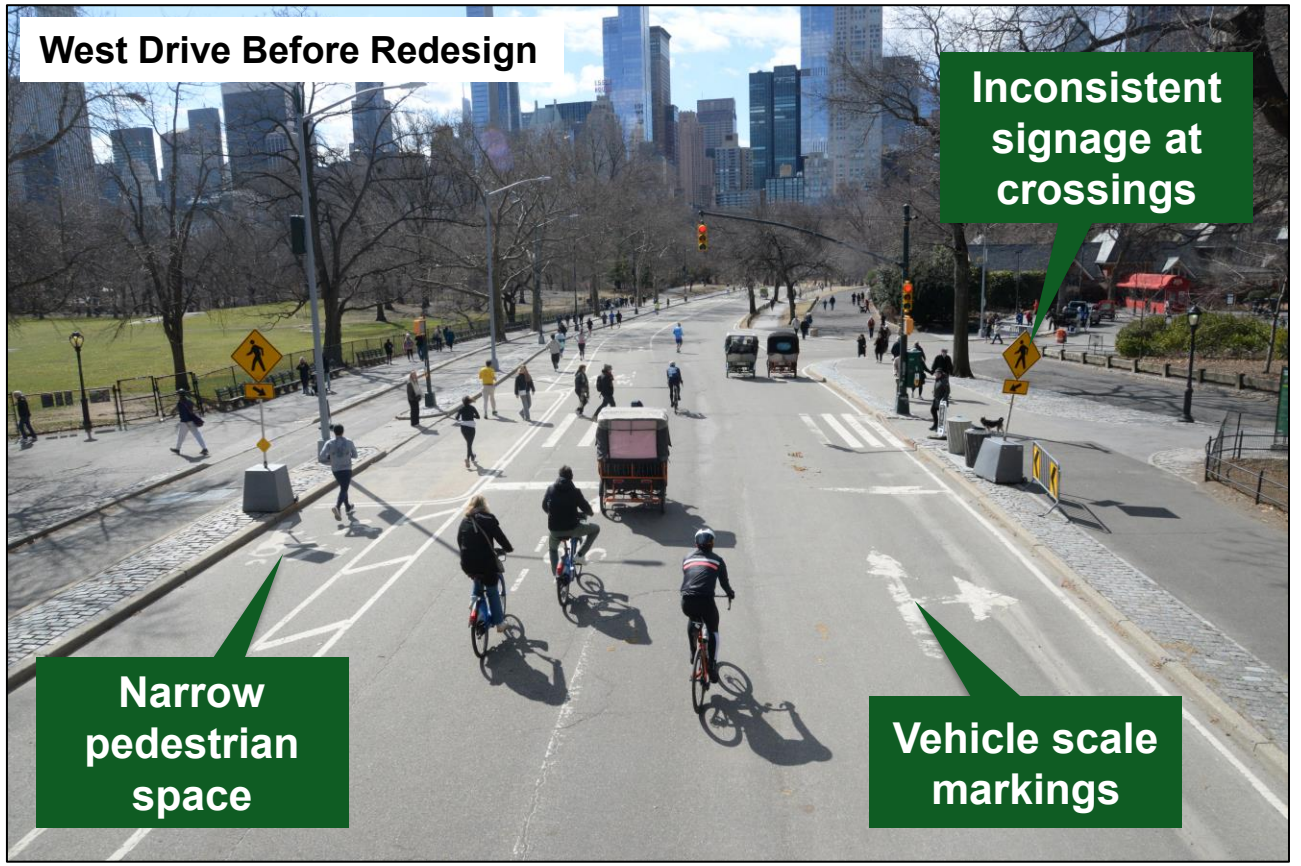
Central Park Drives

Background

- **Central Park Drives**
  - 6-mile loop road through the park
  - The needs of the Drives have changed overtime with changes in transportation

- **Car-Free since 2018**
  - However, holdover auto-centric markings, signage, and signal infrastructure
  - Conflicts between pedestrians and cyclists along the Drives and at crosswalks

- **Safety & Circulation Study (2024)**
  - Led by the Central Park Conservancy, in partnership with NYC DOT and NYC Parks
  - Set of recommendations to create safer and more comfortable conditions for all park users

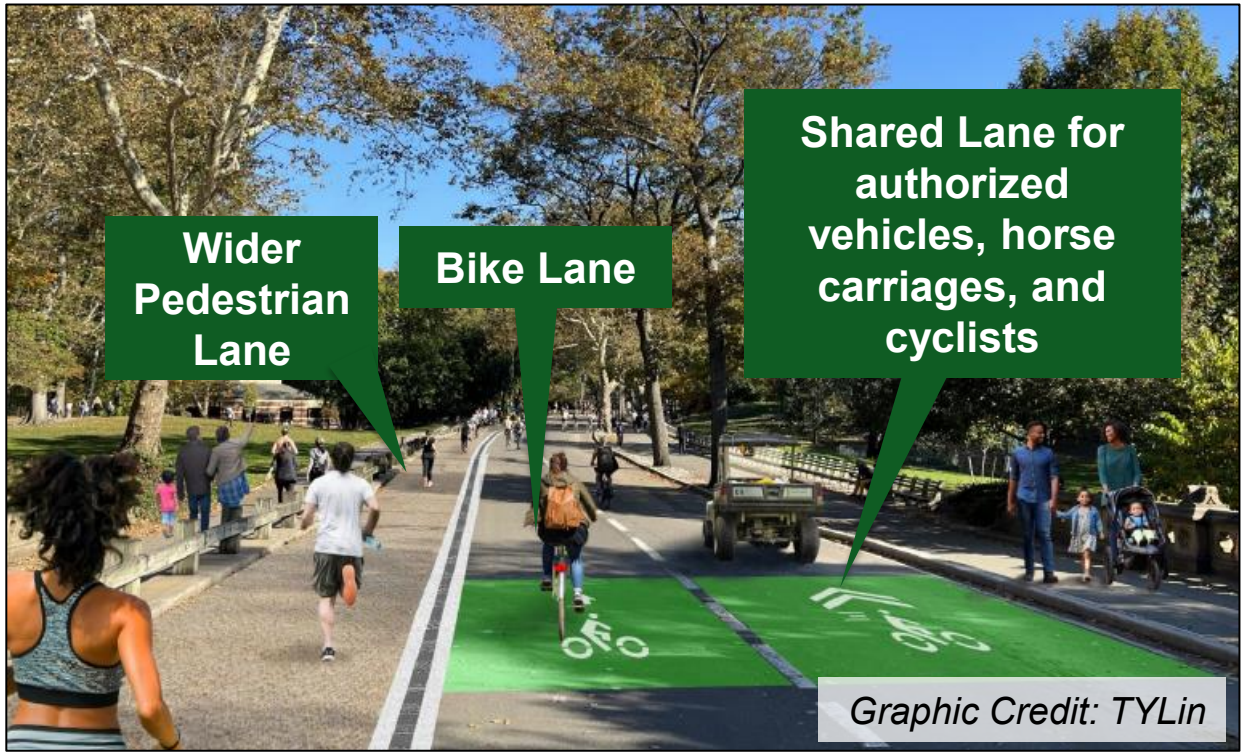


Central Park Drives

Goals & Objectives

- **Project Goals**
  1. Improve Safety
  2. Improve Mobility
  3. Maintain the Character of the Park

- **Objectives**
  - Allocate space consistently across the Drives
  - Provide better separation between pedestrians, cyclists, and other park users
  - Modify signage and signals at crossings to improve safety and comfort
  - Reduce conflict points along the Drives



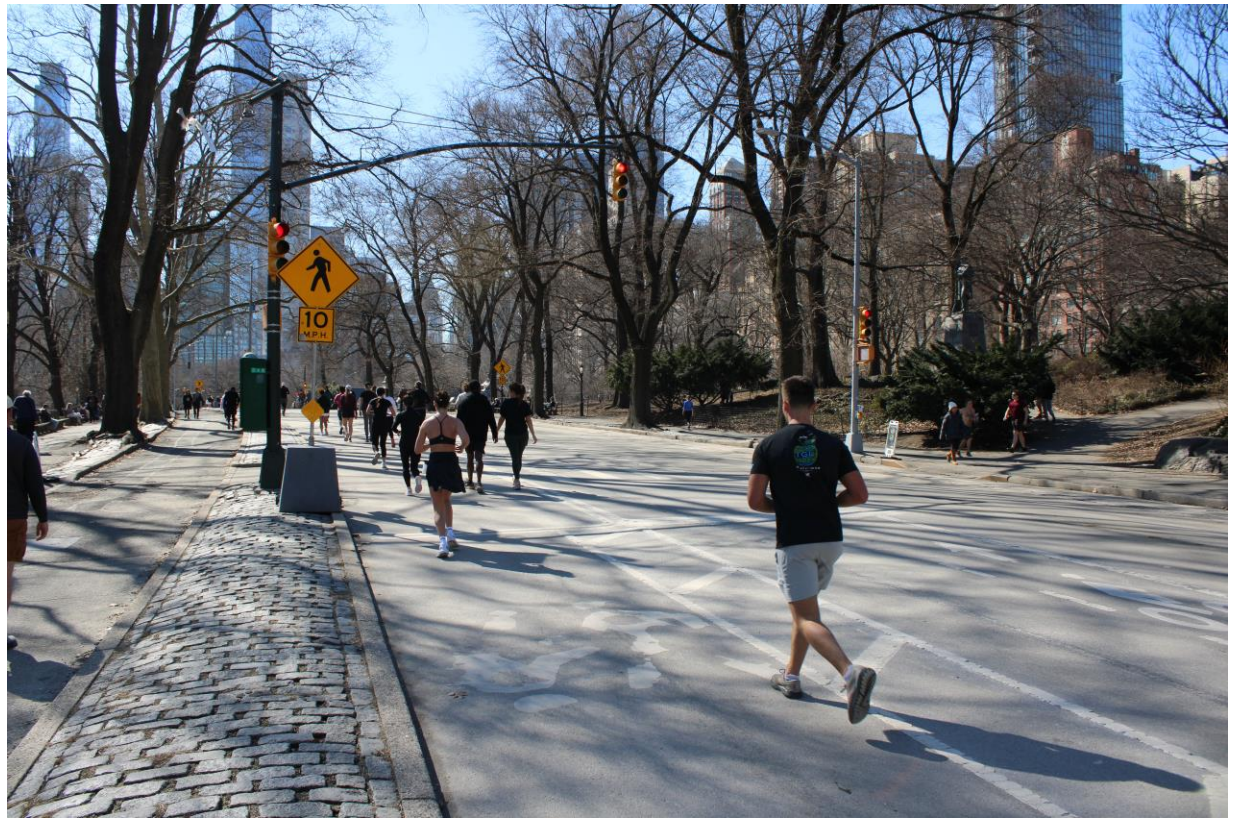
Central Park Drives

New Speed Limit

- DOT to reduce the speed limit on the Drives from 20 MPH to 15 MPH
- This speed limit applies to all vehicles on the Drives
- Notification was sent to local elected officials and community boards on 12/15
- New speed limit goes into effect in February

Before & After

West Drive South of 72nd St



Before

After

Before & After

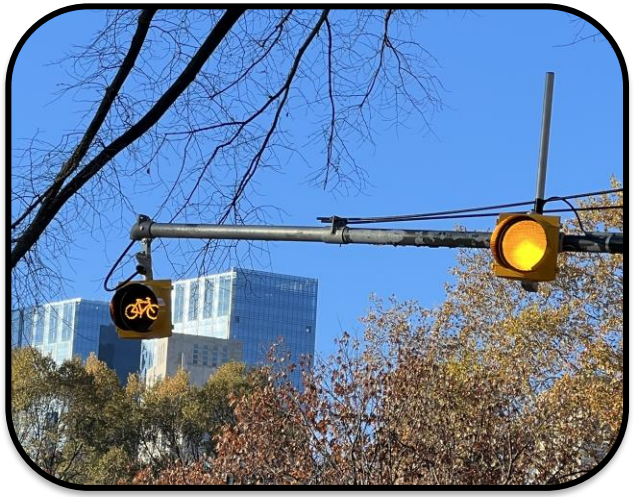
East Drive & Terrace Drive

Before

After

Central Park Drives

Other Updates



Bike Signal Lens

Painted Rumble Strips

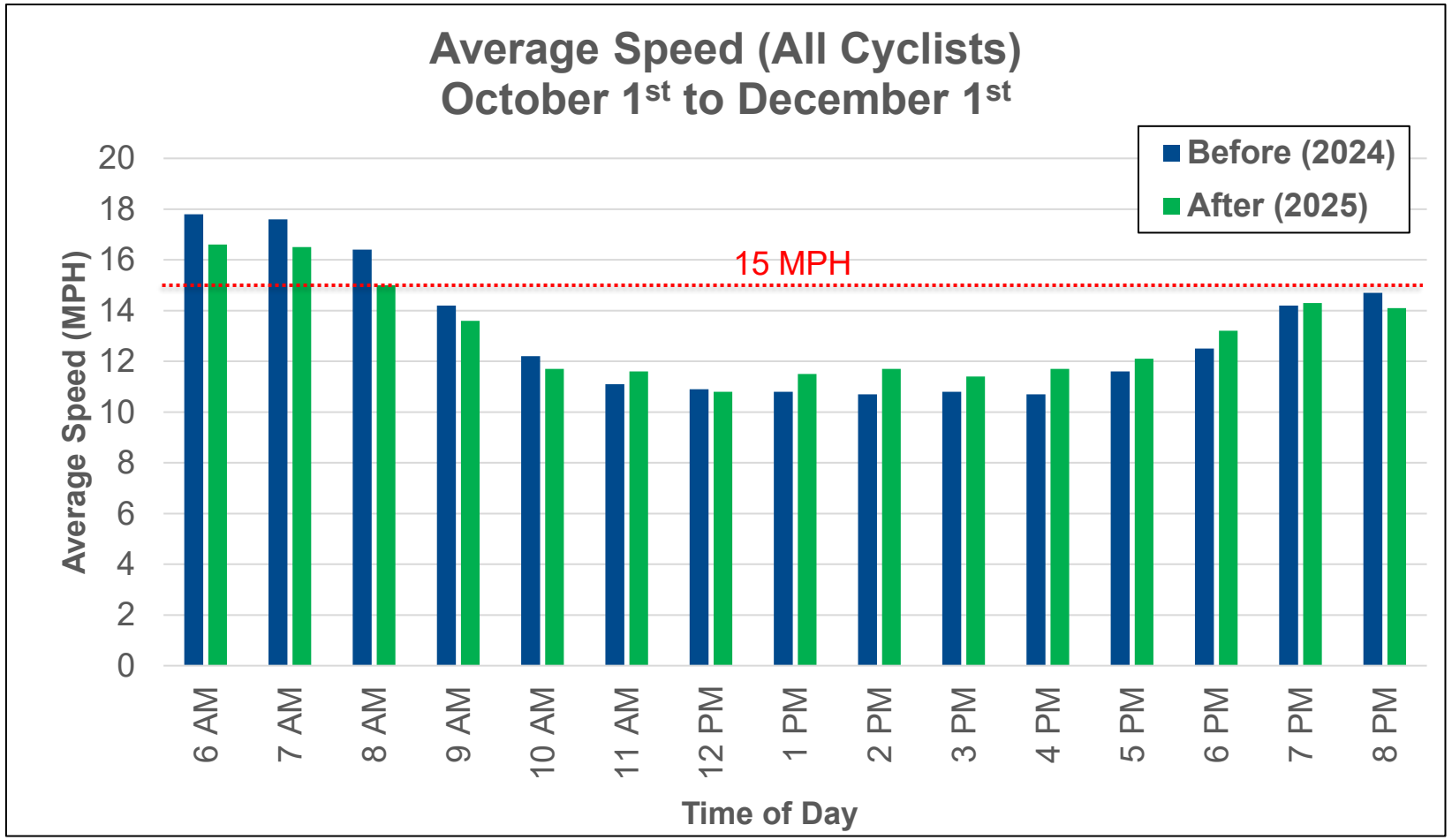
"Stop For Peds" Messages

"Look!" Stamps

Project Evaluation

Cyclist Speed

- Average Speeds have not significantly changed
- Speeds remain slightly higher in the early morning when there are fewer people in the Park
- Data collected at the Columbus Circle entrance



Source: Viva

Project Evaluation

Pedestrian Delay

- Share of pedestrians waiting more than 10 seconds to cross the Drive decreased with change from timed signal to flashing amber signal

- Timeframe
  - Weekday Counts
    - Before Date (August 2025)
    - After Date (October 2025)
  - Saturday Counts
    - Before Date (August 2025)
    - After Date (December 2025)

- Limitations
  - Small sample size
  - DOT to continue to collect more observations at additional locations


West Drive North of Columbus Circle

Percentage of Pedestrians Waiting More than 10 Seconds to Cross

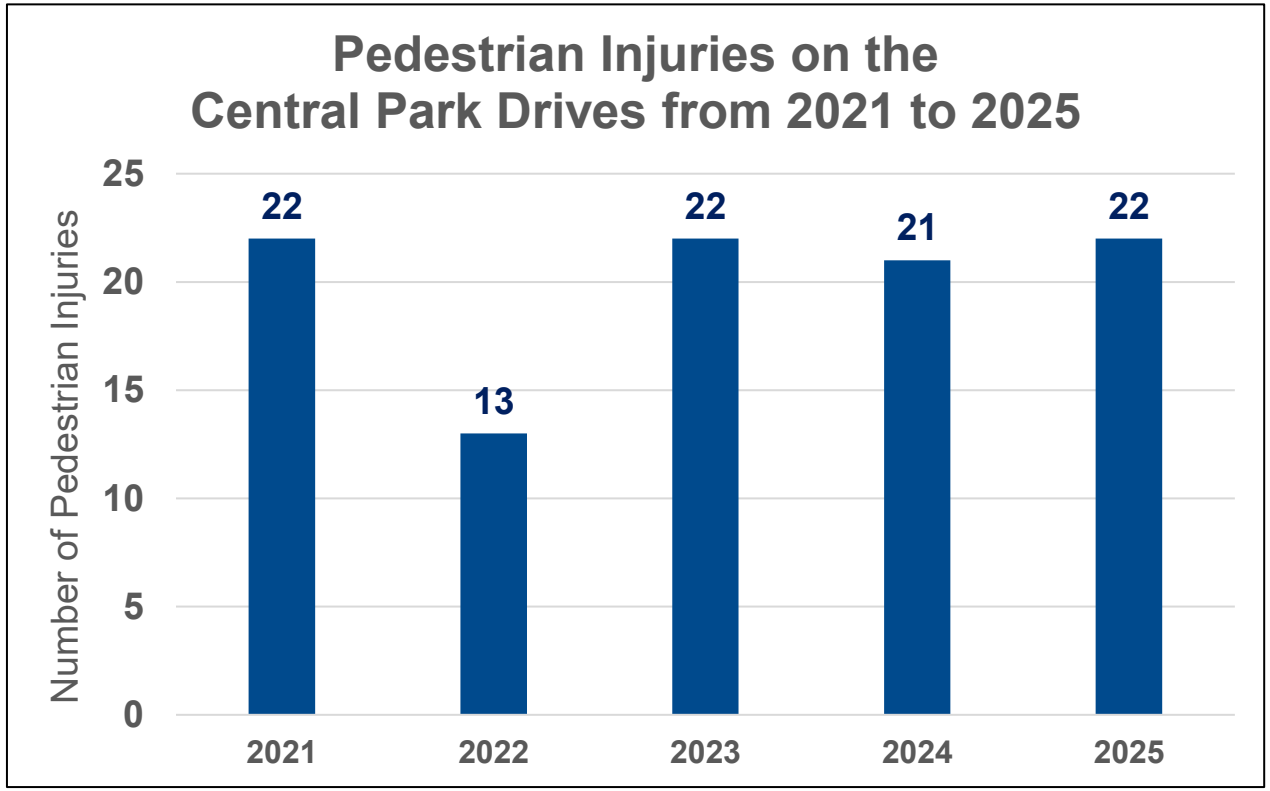
Day of the Week	Time of Day	Before Signal Change	After Signal Change	Difference
Weekday	Morning (7-8a)	17%	12%	-5
	Afternoon (12-1p)	23%	8%	-15
	Evening (5-6p)	14%	8%	-6
Saturday	Morning (7-8a)	10%	3%	-7
	Afternoon (12-1p)	14%	9%	-5
	Evening (5-6p)	14%	8%	-6

Project Evaluation

Pedestrian Safety

- Pedestrian injuries have remained at similar numbers over the past five years

- Project started in early 2025 and is still in implementation. DOT will continue to monitor safety data on the Drives



Source: NYPD

Central Park Drives

Implementation Schedule

2025	March	Begin Resurfacing Phase 1 Extents
	May	Begin Installing Pavement Markings
	August	Start Updating Signals and Install New Signs
	December	Complete Phase 1
2026	February	15 MPH goes into Effect
	March	Resurface Phase 2 Extents
	Spring - Summer	Install Pavement Markings, New Signs, and Update Signal Infrastructure
	Ongoing	Project Evaluation

Phase 2 (2026)

Phase 1 (2025)

Thank You

Questions?