

**City Hall Misses Another Restroom Deadline:
Why Cabbies Still Rely on the Street Code
The Voice of the New York Cab Driver
By Abe Mittleman**



When the Taxi & Limousine Commission released its driver survey revealing that 27.1% of drivers ranked bathroom access as the single biggest factor impacting their daily workday, anyone who has ever spent a 12-hour shift behind the wheel of a yellow cab had the same reaction: Tell us something we didn't know.

For decades, the city has offered the same cycle of promises—studies, pilot programs, dynamic maps, and modular toilet rollouts. Yet just this week, City Hall announced that its long-promised strategic plan to double public restrooms has missed its deadline. Officials blamed "extensive cross-agency coordination" for the delay.

While bureaucrats write letters explaining why they can't meet a deadline to write a report, working drivers are out on the pavement facing the exact same reality we've faced for half a century: If you cannot legally leave your car without getting written up by NYPD Traffic, none of the city's grand plans actually exist.

The problem isn't just a lack of toilets; it's a lack of legal curb space to step away from the meter for three minutes without taking a \$115 financial beating.

The Game of Cat-and-Mouse

Long before City Hall started forming "interagency working groups" to talk about toilets, drivers built their own survival network. It wasn't written down, and it certainly wasn't published—because the second a safe haven becomes common knowledge, it gets burned.

Driver survival has always relied on an unspoken physical map of the five boroughs:

The Unpoliced Corners: Dead-end streets in industrial waterfronts, quiet spots beneath elevated subway tracks, and loading zones in West Chelsea back when the neighborhood was still factories instead of luxury high-rises.

Building Alliances:

Knowing which night-shift doorman, diner owner, or garage attendant would look the other way. Places like the iconic Punjabi Deli in the East Village didn't just sell hot chai; they became legendary because a cabbie could double-park for a quick minute without getting chased off.

The Evasion Cycle:

The moment three or four taxis started lining up on the same quiet side street at 2:00 AM, traffic enforcement inevitably noticed, swept the block, and posted a fresh "No Standing" sign.

When trapped in Midtown gridlock with zero legal curb options, the plastic bottle on the floorboard wasn't a choice—it was the only defense against a ticket or a ruined shift.

Real Solutions Require Curb Protection

The city can pass "Bathroom Bills" and write reports all day long, but until traffic enforcement recognizes a 10-minute emergency bathroom grace period or actively keeps designated Relief Stands clear of non-taxi vehicles, drivers will continue relying on street smarts over city policy.

While City Hall stays "backed up" on red tape, the street code will remain the only survival guide that actually works.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

What's your take on the city's latest missed deadline?

How do you manage relief on a 12-hour shift in Midtown today? Have you ever gotten slapped with a ticket just trying to take a three-minute break?

Reply directly to this email or leave a comment on the article at NYCTaxiNews.com to join the conversation. Your stories keep the real voice of the street alive.

Thank you for reading NYC Taxi News. Share this issue with a fellow driver on the road today! nyctaxinews@aol.com

Credit to gemini.google