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Steinway St. Among NYC's Most PVB Ticketed

BY RICHARD GENTILVISO

If you parked along Steinway Street on the day after Thanksgiving, there's a very good chance you got a parking ticket.

The reason is twofold. First, many people don't realize Black Friday, the traditional kickoff day to Christmas shopping, is not a holiday and all Parking Violation Bureau (PVB) regulations are in effect, and second, Steinway Street is among the heaviest ticketed thoroughfares in the city, with an average of 12 or more tickets issued every day, according to data from a November 28 *New York Times* report.

From July 2007 to July 2008, 2.1 million tickets were issued in Queens for a total of \$141 million in fines, according to the *Times* report.

Citywide, almost 10 million tickets were issued last year (from July '07 to July '08), with the city collecting more than \$624 million in parking fines, more than the city spends to run the Department of Transportation.

Manhattan had 4 million tickets for \$357 million in fines, Brooklyn, 2.3 million for \$160 million in fines, The Bronx, 1.3 million for \$100 million, and Staten Island 200,000 tickets for \$11 million in fines.

Last year, city traffic enforcement agents wrote more than 41,000 tickets on Black Friday, Nov. 23, 2007, about 50 percent for violations of alternate side of the street cleaning infractions.

The top 10 violations for tickets issued by traffic enforcement agents are: 1. Expired meter, 2. No parking: alternate side parking, 3. No standing: day or time limits, 4. No parking: day or time limits, 5. Inspection sticker expired or missing, 6. Double parking, 7. No Standing: bus stop, 8. Fire hydrant, 9. Traffic lane, 10. No standing, except truck loading.

The number of parking tickets issued has risen 42 percent since Mayor Michael Bloomberg took office in 2002. Since then the city has hired 793 more traffic enforcement agents and doubled the fines on some penalties, resulting in collections 64 percent higher in Fiscal 2008 than collected in 2002.

The city has 2,529 traffic agents and about half that number are assigned to issuing tickets. Traffic enforcement agents are now equipped with handheld computers that print out violations quick-

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ly and with fewer errors. However, the Transportation Division of the New York Police Department (NYPD), which oversees traffic agents, maintains their mission is not to raise revenue for the city but to keep traffic moving and reduce the number and severity of accidents.

The NYPD has canceled its next Police Academy class of 1,067 in order to save \$36 million, Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly said in testimony to the City Council on November 24.

However, Kelly did say the NYPD does plan to hire 200 additional traffic agents, according to a November 25 *Daily News* report. The agents will be used to enforce a new law that will summons drivers caught "blocking the box" at intersections.

The new violations will cost \$115 per ticket and are expected to generate about \$61 million.



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