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DOT AND PARKS TO INCREASE CAR FREE HOURS IN CENTRAL PARK

New York City Department of Transportation Commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan and Parks & Recreation Commissioner Adrian Benepe today announced further restrictions on vehicular traffic in Central Park. Beginning on Monday August 6, 2007, vehicles will only be allowed to use the West Drive from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

“Central Park is busy in the mornings with walkers, joggers and cyclists,” said DOT Commissioner Sadik-Khan. “I am pleased we will be able to provide additional time for everyone to utilize the park free from vehicles.”

“These new traffic hours will continue to improve the quality of life and safety for all park visitors,” Parks Commissioner Adrian Benepe said. “I’d like to thank Commissioner Sadik-Khan and the Department of Transportation for continuing their work to balance the needs of all New Yorkers.”

Currently, vehicular traffic is allowed on the West Drive of Central Park between the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., while the East Drive is only open from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. (the East Drive from Sixth Avenue to 72nd Street and Fifth Avenue is open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.). Under the new restrictions, effective August 6, 2007, morning vehicular access will be limited to the West Drive from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. The park will continue to be closed to motor vehicles overnight and during the weekends.

The speed limits at both parks will remain 25 mph. The HOV restrictions for Central Park’s West Drive, in effect since November 29, 2004, will also remain in place. These reductions will further improve the parks’ overall traffic flow, minimize potential pedestrian/vehicle conflicts, and make available additional space for non-vehicular uses.

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