

City Councilman Jimmy Vacca, chair of its Committee on Transportation, raised concerns about DOT's [plaza](#) schemes, including traffic diversion impacts, and air quality and business impacts. Chairman Vacca's comments during a hearing he convened of his committee to review the plaza scheme. Keep NYC Free, in [testimony](#) to the committee emphasized that [plazas](#) require a review first.

http://www.nypost.com/p/news/local/plazas_ain_sweet_on_the_street_pol_KoRl4zHnjdGaIgUTy5HrQK#ixzz1N8rL6J8H

Plazas ain't sweet on the street, **pol fumes**

By SALLY GOLDENBERG

Last Updated: 1:12 PM, May 5, 2011

Posted: 3:09 AM, May 5, 2011

A city lawmaker faced off with Mayor Bloomberg's transportation officials over the city's expansion of pedestrian plazas yesterday, claiming they haven't done enough research on the impact of the plazas on surrounding neighborhoods.

"I truly think that they're not studying 'what do we do' when pedestrian plazas are constructed and traffic is diverted to other streets," City Councilman James Vacca (D-Bronx), Transportation Committee chairman, said during a hearing.

"What traffic-mitigation plans do we have? How do we make sure that we're not just shifting and diverting traffic and that the problem that we had in one spot moves to another?" he said.

"My worry is that when we have instituted pedestrian plazas, we have only moved traffic to other surrounding streets."

While most council members praised the plazas, Vacca pressed Department of Transportation officials to more thoroughly study traffic, air quality and business impacts on areas around the pedestrian plazas.

[Bloomberg](#) closed portions of Times Square and Herald Square to vehicular traffic in 2009. He has pointed to studies that show the plazas are a big hit among New Yorkers -- improving air quality and increasing business.

The city is also implementing smaller pedestrian plazas throughout the five boroughs.

So far, the agency is working on constructing 14 plazas -- all, they say, requested by community boards.

sgoldenberg@nypost.com