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Letter to the editor: Adding bus lanes isn't right for every neighborhood

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Buck Ennis

The MTA is not looking to expand a pilot program that made one bus route free in every borough.

I read with interest Caroline Spivack's story on Dec. 6 about the Adams administration's poor record on constructing bus lanes: "[New bus lanes have slowed to crawl under Adams admin.](#)"

Yes, some plans have been slowed or stopped, but to blame them vaguely on "community squabbles" demeans those who feel their livelihoods are threatened by ill-conceived transit plans.

Here in the Belmont section of the Bronx, Little Italy, we fought hard against a bus lane on nearby Fordham Road, which would have had a terrible impact on our customers. Two major Business Improvement Districts and six major institutions unified against this poorly thought-out and destructive one-size-fits-all proposal.

Turns out, we were right – the plan was unnecessary. Once the existing bus lane was repainted and enforcement was stepped up, bus speeds went from what the Department of Transportation and the Rider's Alliance claimed were 4 m.p.h. to what the Rider's Alliance said were over 9 m.p.h. – well above the borough-wide average.

The bus lane that the city Department of Transportation tried to impose on this transit desert was a solution in search of a problem. It was based on ideology not on a genuine need.

Yes, there are places in New York City where bus lanes not only work but are badly needed. But not everywhere. No two New York City neighborhoods are the same. Any community having a lane foisted on it by DOT should take a page from our playbook and fight it.

The writer is the chairman of the Belmont BID.