

## A question of priorities

A pedestrian plaza may be nice but placed in context, why spend \$1.5 million when transit needs exist and persist. Would not that sum of dollars be better spent including increasing the city's expense or capital subsidy to mass transit? We hope out of sight, out of mind is not in play here since many transit amenities only come into view when one descends below grades (or above grade in a few other "select" communities). Share your thoughts.

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# NEW YORK POST

## TIMES SQ. IS SITTING PRETTIER

By ANGELA MONTEFINISE

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Bryant Park is coming to Broadway.

The flimsy rubber folding chairs currently lining the new Times Square pedestrian plaza should be gone by the end of the month, replaced with sturdier metal-slat seats similar to the ones at the oasis between 40th and 42nd streets.

"They should be in by the end of July," said Tim Tompkins, executive director of the Times Square Alliance. "It will really add to the atmosphere."

About 420 of the \$40 chairs have been ordered.

The city Department of Transportation ordered the tables, chairs and umbrellas for the five-block mall between 42nd and 47th Streets, which debuted with temporary beach chairs over the Memorial Day weekend and is part of a larger **\$1.5 million** pedestrian-plaza plan.

The experiment to close portions of Broadway could be permanent.

The sturdier furniture, coupled with the painting of the street red and the installation of new concrete curbs, makes Mayor Bloomberg's vision seem like more than a passing fancy.

The \$15 beach chairs are getting mixed reactions from New Yorkers: Some love lounging at the Crossroads of the World in eccentric style; others call the seats tacky.

Tompkins estimated that about half the seats would remain on the street by the end of the month.

He said about 30 percent of the rubber chairs had already been retired because of damage. Fewer than 10 have been stolen. The chairs are locked up at 9 each night.

The alliance is in the process of deciding what to do with the cheap seats once the permanent furniture arrives. One possibility is an auction that would sell them off as the official chairs of Times Square.

Other possibilities include transforming the remaining chairs into a sculpture or "throwing them headlong into a trash compactor," Tompkins said.

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