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## **Is Regular Commuting Into Manhattan Dead? The Governor Thinks So: Cameron on Transportation**

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Post-coronavirus, Gov. Ned Lamont predicts the end of daily commuting as we know it. Lamont told [Bloomberg](#) that his New York business buddies tell him they're saving so much money by having people work from their homes they may cut office space in the city by 30 percent.

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“The old idea of the commuter going into New York City five days a week may be an idea that’s behind us,” [Lamont said](#). “Maybe you have a great job that seems to be geographically located in New York City, but you’re spending hours of the time from your home in Stamford.”

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Or maybe you don’t need to ever go into the city. [Twitter](#) has told its tech workers they can work from home forever, assuming they can stand it.

That means more time with the family and a lot less time and money spent on the train. If you add up monthly train tickets and station parking, you’re looking at least \$500 to \$600 a month in savings.

Not only does that leave Metro-North looking at a huge deficit, but also the towns and cities that rely on parking revenue. And as we are discovering now during budget-writing time, belts are getting pulled tighter and tighter.

To save money, Stamford residents may have to [bag their own leaves](#) for collection this fall (oh, the humanity of it all). And Darien is looking to use empty parking lots as designated outdoor activity areas. Rollerblading anyone?

But wait until the evacuating New Yorkers hit Fairfield County. Our media-centric governor [told CNBC](#) that “the phones are ringing off the hook at real estate offices in southern Connecticut.” [More families](#) means more kids in our local schools, further straining already-cut budgets.

But what if your New York jobs tells you to come back, even a few days a week? How are you going to commute?

Probably not by train and subway. A recent survey showed that 48 percent of respondents said they would [totally avoid mass transit](#) after New Yorkers are allowed to leave their homes.

The New York Stock Exchange says it hopes to reopen its trading floor, but only to traders and employees who did not arrive on Wall Street by mass transit. Good luck with that traffic nightmare.

Transitioning to biking or walking to work may be viable if you live in Manhattan, but not if you’re coming from Connecticut. The best (or only other) option will be your car.

So it’s not surprising that a local car wash chain (reopening May 20) is offering a proprietary 15-minute [“No-Vid Fogger Disinfection”](#) treatment for only \$54.99, “EPA certified to kill 99.99% of the emerging pathogens in your car.” Yes, you too can stay in the safety bubble of your own car on your drive to work, however long it may take.

You think rush hour on the Merritt or Interstate 95 was bad in the pre-COVID days? Wait until we see the newly “disinfected” commute-by-car crowd hit the roads. Those highways are already getting crowded and we still haven’t officially reopened yet.

If your New York City boss tells you to come back to the office, ask if he’ll also cover your tolls and

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Manhattan parking costs (about \$50 a day).

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*Jim Cameron has been a Darien resident for more than 25 years. He is the founder of the [Commuter Action Group](#), sits on the [Merritt Parkway Conservancy](#) board and also serves on the Darien RTM and as program director for Darien TV79. The opinions expressed in this column, republished with permission of Hearst CT Media, are only his own. You can reach him at [CommuterActionGroup@gmail.com](mailto:CommuterActionGroup@gmail.com).*