

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

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HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E: YDANIS A. RODRIGUEZ
Chairperson

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James Vacca
Margaret S. Chin
Stephen T. Levin
Deborah L. Rose
James G. Van Bramer
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A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

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Executive Director
New York Taxi Workers Alliance

Alex Slackie
Triple A Northeast

2 [sound check, pause]

3 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Good morning
4 everyone and thank you for being here, especially the
5 members of the Churchill School. Thank you for being
6 here today. [applause] I would also like to thank
7 my daughter for being with me. She didn't want me to
8 mention her name, but I know her by Carmen de la Rosa
9 [sic] [laughter]. Keep doing--keep doing your common
10 work, okay. First of all, good morning to the City
11 Council Transportation Committee's hearing on the
12 Fiscal 2016 Preliminary Budget and the Fiscal 2015
13 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report. My name is
14 Ydanis Rodriguez and I am the Chair of the Committee.
15 Before we begin, I would like to acknowledge my
16 colleagues Council Members Crowley and Weprin.

17 Today, we begin the budget process for
18 Fiscal 2016. I don't think that there is a better
19 way to kick off our budget hearing with our agencies
20 without the great news that we got yesterday where
21 the Mayor and the DOT Commissioner she will get into
22 detail. But no doubt that there had been over \$250
23 million on the street redesigning and other aspects
24 related to transportation. It is the way how New
25 Yorkers know that this Administration is seriously

2 committed to continuing improving safety in our
3 streets. Today, we begin the budget process for
4 Fiscal Year 2016, a process we know will result in
5 the production of a budget that is truly progressive,
6 balance, fair and representative of the priority of
7 New Yorkers. We will start by hearing testimony from
8 the City Department of Transportation followed by the
9 Metro--by the MTA, and lastly the Taxi and Limousine
10 Commission. The DOT's Preliminary Expense Budget for
11 Fiscal 2016 is approximately \$840 million. In
12 addition, \$2.1 billion is budget in Fiscal 2016 for
13 the Department's Capital Program. We look forward
14 for the hearing, for the Commissioner updating this
15 committee to the department's efforts to maintaining
16 and improving the city's roadways infrastructure. In
17 particular bridges and highways including pothole
18 remediation. The department's efforts will improve
19 pedestrian safety and implementation of Vision Zero
20 Action Plan.

21 Many safe streets advocates have pointed
22 to the need for addition--additional resources
23 particularly when it comes to completing a wide range
24 of street redesign on arterial roads where most crash
25 related fatalities occur. I do support that call

2 from the advocate groups. According to data released
3 last month, over 60% of crashes occur on this
4 roadway, but only represent 50--15% of our total
5 streets managed. Just last week my district
6 experienced a tragedy when a man named Daniel Cabrera
7 was struck down by a hit and run driver on Broadway
8 and 225th Street. This is an example of a place that
9 needs street redesign as pedestrians have a long
10 crossing distance and often cross out of the
11 crosswalk and where cars had low visibility.

12 We of the committee are encouraged by the
13 progress we have made in the past year, but to truly
14 achieve Vision Zero, we must find ways to increase
15 the resources for these vital measure--measures. So
16 that more projects can be completed to limit
17 tragedies such as this on our streets. Increased
18 funding undoubtedly means an increase in the amount
19 of lives saved. And the Committee is dedicated to
20 ensuring that our city takes the strongest step
21 forward it can toward achieving Vision Zero in 2016.
22 Additionally, we hope that Department will discuss
23 its Four-Year Plan particularly the intents of its
24 goal and priorities for the next four years. The
25 scope and the progression of work on the East River

2 bridges, especially the Brooklyn Bridge, the planned
3 purchase of new ferry boats, the reconstruction of
4 pedestrian ramps, and roadways citywide. As well as
5 updated under the department's PlaNYC initiative.
6 Before we begin, I would like to especially thank the
7 Finance team who have worked so diligently on
8 preparing myself, my staff and the entire Council for
9 today's hearing. Thank you Fernando Recto [sp?],
10 Antonio McCain [sic], Deputy Director Regina Poreda,
11 Deputy Director Nathan Toth, Chief Counsel Tanisha
12 Edwards, and especially the Union Head Chima
13 Obichere. Those cheat sheets were especially helpful
14 for my staff from time to time. Also, thank to the
15 Transportation Committee Staff Counsel Kelly Taylor,
16 Policy Analyst Jonathan Masserano, Gafar Zaaloff and
17 Russell Murphy, as well as my Chief of staff Carmen
18 de la Rosa and my Communication and Legislative
19 Director Lucas Acosta for their work on this hearing.

20 I now ask our Committee Counsel to
21 administer the Affirmation to the representatives of
22 the DOT who are here, and then invite them to deliver
23 their testimony.

24 COUNSEL TAYLOR: Committee Counsel Kelly
25 Taylor. Will you please raise your right hands? Do

2 you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and
3 nothing but the truth in your testimony before this
4 committee today, and to respond honestly to council
5 member questions? Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Go ahead
7 Commissioner.

8 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Thank
9 you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning and thank you and
10 good morning to members of the Committee. My name is
11 Polly Trottenberg, and I'm the Commissioner of the
12 New York City Department of Transportation. Today, I
13 am joined by Joe Jarrin, Deputy Commissioner for
14 Finance, Contracting, and Program Management, and
15 Jeff Lynch, Assistant Commissioner of
16 Intergovernmental and Community Affairs. On behalf
17 of Mayor de Blasio, I'm glad to be here today to
18 discuss DOT's Fiscal Year 2016 Preliminary Budget,
19 and it's nice, Mr. Chairman, that your daughter is
20 here and that we have a group of students here to
21 hear the testimony. Before I start discussing the
22 budget, I want to thank Chairman Rodriguez and the
23 members of the committee for your continued
24 partnership. I feel last year we really accomplished
25 a lot together including having the lowest number of

2 pedestrian fatalities on record for this city. And I
3 hope we will continue our great partnership.

4 I'd like to turn now to our FY16
5 Preliminary Budget, which reflects the Mayor's core
6 values of being fiscally responsible, progressive,
7 and honest. This budget was built on DOT's many
8 accomplishments for the last year. Including our work
9 on Vision Zero; maintaining a state of good repair on
10 our roads and bridges and at our ferry terminals;
11 upgrading street lighting; modernizing street permit
12 applications; and building out the bike and Select
13 Bus Service network to provide better transportation
14 options and opportunities for all New Yorkers.

15 This committee knows well and has been a
16 partner on so man of our Vision Zero initiatives
17 including lowering the speed limit to 25 miles an
18 hour; expanding speed camera placement in school
19 zones throughout the city; and redesigning our
20 streets to make them safer. Just two weeks ago DOT
21 and NYPD released our Borough Pedestrian Safety
22 Action Plans. These plans thoroughly analyze the
23 unique conditions of each New York City borough and
24 pinpoint characteristics of pedestrian fatalities,
25 and severe injuries on borough streets. The plans

2 then lay out a comprehensive and data driven approach
3 for addressing the most challenging corners and
4 intersections that account for the most pedestrian
5 fatalities and severe injuries in east of the five
6 boroughs. These plans recommend a series of actions
7 including safety engineering improvements; targeted
8 enforcement; and expanded education efforts that will
9 guide our work in 2015 and beyond.

10 In 2014, DOT was at work on many of our
11 roads and bridges. In the Bronx, we completed the
12 first phase of the Fordham Plaza Roadway
13 reconstruction. In Queens we revamped key portions
14 of College Point Boulevard and 32n Avenue. DOT also
15 resurfaced a thousand land miles of road citywide,
16 and fill nearly 500,000 potholes. And I just want to
17 take a minute to thank the hard-working men and women
18 of our roadway crews who are out in all kinds of
19 weather all year round doing this work to serve New
20 Yorkers all over the city. I am so grateful for
21 their efforts.

22 In November, we initiated reconstruction
23 of the Harlem River Drive Viaduct over 127th Street.
24 This \$150 million project will add at least 75 years
25 of life to the structure through a full replacement.

2 And the new viaduct and roadway will be designed to
3 improve traffic safety and flow throughout the area.

4 Following Super Storm Sandy, DOT oversaw
5 repairs to the passenger elevator and escalators at
6 the Saint George Ferry Terminal. We completed
7 repairs to several ferry and maintenance facility
8 piers; replaced two NYPD trailers; and completed
9 significant electrical and mechanical system repairs.
10 In addition, we continued to build out and expand Wi-
11 Fi service in the ferry terminals and on board the
12 ferry to enhance the experience for our riders. DOT
13 is also retrofitting all of our street lights with
14 LED technology that will enhance safety, help reduce
15 our carbon footprint, decrease energy use, and save
16 taxpayers money. Last year DOT replaced all 1,800
17 lights in Central Park; 625 lights along the Eastern
18 Parkway Service Roads; and all the Cobra headlights
19 on the FDR Drive with this new energy efficient LED
20 lighting.

21 Last month, the American Council for
22 Technology and Industry awarded DOT its 2015 Igniting
23 Innovation Award for our New York City Streets Permit
24 Management System. This new application enables
25 utilities and contractors to apply for over 400,000

2 street excavation permits per year online. Something
3 they were not able to do in the past. This
4 innovative system is going to help speed up the
5 permit process, reduce burdens on small businesses,
6 all while improving our safety oversight on ongoing
7 excavation projects. DOT also had great success last
8 year on our continued expansion on our bike and SBS
9 networks, both of which are top priorities for Mayor
10 de Blasio. This past fiscal year we installed over
11 60 miles of bike lanes including five miles of
12 protected lanes. With Citi Bike, DOT and the new
13 company Motivate, are working to ultimately improve
14 and double the size of the largest bike share system
15 in North America to have more than 700 stations and
16 12,000 bikes by the end of 2017. The program will be
17 stretching further into Brooklyn and Manhattan, and
18 up to Harlem. And will bring bikes to Queens for the
19 first time this year. DOT also continued the
20 expansion of the SBS program by upgrading the M60
21 Route along the 125th Street in Manhattan to
22 LaGuardia Airport. And since last May, bus riders
23 have seen their travel times along this route improve
24 by up to 14%. We started planning for other SBS
25 routes last year, Woodhaven Boulevard, Flushing-

2 Jamaica, Utica Avenue and 86th Street. And we'll
3 have many more routes to come in the coming years.

4 Despite our many accomplishments, we do
5 have some challenges ahead of us in 2015. One
6 challenge is going to be continuing the great
7 momentum we had on Vision Zero. Number 2 is ramping
8 up and doing a good job in the large amount of
9 community engagement we need to do on Vision Zero,
10 Select Bus Service, Citi Bike and other safety
11 improvements. We want to continue to up our game on
12 improving project delivery, and we want to work with
13 you all to continue addressing the critical capital
14 needs for our infrastructure.

15 Last week in Albany, the Mayor testified
16 about the importance of the City and State working
17 together to meet our pressing infrastructure needs.
18 For New York City to continue to create jobs and
19 opportunities for all our residents and maintain its'
20 competitiveness with other leading global cities, we
21 need to invest in our critical infrastructure.
22 That's why over the last few months the key capital
23 agencies including DOT have been working together
24 with OMB and City Planning to craft a ten-year
25 capital plan that prudently invests in the City's

2 vital infrastructure over the long term. The Ten-
3 Year plan released last month, provides an early look
4 at our long-term capital budget needs. We look
5 forward to the Mayor's release of the April Plan,
6 which will present an even more complete picture of
7 our Ten-Year Capital Investment.

8 For DOT, our proposed capital budget for
9 FY16 includes \$10.6 billion for fiscal years 2015
10 through 2025, and will allow us to execute on all
11 five key priorities: Safety; State of Good Repair;
12 Innovative Project Delivery; Mobility and Livability.
13 Our FY16 Capital Budget includes \$5.6 billion for
14 bridge construction; \$3.2 billion for street
15 reconstruction and resurfacing; \$453 million for the
16 Staten Island Ferry; \$639 million for street lights
17 and signals; \$346 million for sidewalk
18 reconstruction; and \$258million for the facilities
19 and equipment needed to support DOT's operations.

20 One of the Mayor's key priorities in the
21 Capital Budget, which you referenced, Mr. Chairman,
22 is our Vision Zero Great Streets Initiative, which
23 will redesign and reconstruct Queens Boulevard,
24 Fourth Avenue, Brooklyn; Atlantic Avenue in East New
25 York; and the Grand Concourse in the Bronx. With

2 \$250 million in funding including \$100 million for
3 Queens Boulevard, DOT will comprehensively re-imagine
4 and redesign the corridors into safer, greener, and
5 more attractive roadways for residents and
6 businesses. New Yorkers will begin to see
7 construction of expanded pedestrian space, beautified
8 medians with trees, and physically separated bike
9 paths on major streets by 2017.

10 The Mayor's priorities also include an
11 additional \$84 million in capital funding for the
12 Select Bus Service Program. This funding will help
13 DOT and the MTA reach the Mayor's goal of expanding
14 the SBS program to 20 total routes by the end of
15 2017. These funds will initially be put toward the
16 implementation of the Woodhaven and Utica Avenue
17 routes. The Ten-Year Plan also adds \$59 million in
18 City funds required to match federal grants that DOT
19 won to replace two of our aging Staten Island Ferry
20 vestibules--vessels. As well as grants received for
21 other ferry boat terminal and pier projects. This
22 budget funding includes critical capital repair and
23 resiliency construction projects. Including those
24 hard hit by Sandy like Red Hook and Bell Harbor for a
25 cost of \$11 million. We will also start construction

2 in FY16 on South Beach Phase 2 in Staten Island, a
3 \$31 million project that will raise the roadway in
4 low lying areas and improve sidewalks.

5 I want to now turn to bridges, which is
6 the largest portion of our Ten-Year Capital Plan. In
7 FY16 we will start construction on the \$42 million
8 Westchester Avenue Bridge over the Hutchinson River
9 Parkway in the Bronx. And we will break down on this
10 summer on \$114 million reconstruction of the
11 Roosevelt Avenue Bridge over the Van Wyck Expressway
12 in Queens. In the future, DOT could bring the cost
13 of big--bridge projects down by tens of millions of
14 dollars and speed up the delivery of projects through
15 the use of design-build bidding. Design-Build, which
16 is used throughout the country has been used in New
17 York on projects like the Tappan Zee Bridge, could
18 eliminate the costly and time consuming process of
19 procuring bridge design and construction work
20 separately. And we look forward to working together
21 with the Council to get this authorization for the
22 City up in Albany.

23 Moving to DOT's Expense Budget, the Mayor
24 is proposing \$840 million for FY16 for DOT providing
25 for all of our operations, and containing some

2 critical new funding. Highlights include \$242
3 million for traffic operations including signal,
4 street lights and parking. \$179 million for roadway
5 maintenance. \$129 million for DOT operations
6 including sidewalk management. And an additional
7 \$1.1 million for 34 new inspectors to assist
8 overseeing all permanent related activities impacting
9 our streets, an area I know the Council has had an
10 interest in. \$101 million for ferry operations and
11 maintenance. And \$96 million for bridge maintenance
12 and inspection, including an additional \$1.7 million
13 for 18 new inspectors to help us better monitor the
14 condition and the strength of our big inventory of
15 bridges. And then \$93 million for transportation
16 planning and management, including the installation
17 of street signs, and roadway markings.

18 Additionally, DOT is playing an important
19 role implementing the Mayor's goal of creating and
20 preserving 200,000 units of affordable housing. DOT
21 is involved in the current neighborhood planning
22 efforts in East New York and in other neighborhoods
23 across the city. While this initiative looks to
24 increase the city's affordable housing capacity, it
25 is also taking a holistic approach to the

2 infrastructure, economic development, and social
3 service needs that support neighborhood growth and
4 prosperity. In short, DOT has an ambitious agenda
5 laid out in our FY16 Budget, and we are excited by
6 the work ahead. To continue DOT's work on Vision
7 Zero, SBS and our other projects, we know we're going
8 to need broad political and community participation
9 and support. And, therefore, we hope we can continue
10 to count on the Council's continued leadership and
11 partnership on our future initiatives.

12 In conclusion, DOT will continue to
13 execute Mayor de Blasio's vision for a safe,
14 equitable, and accessible transportation system for
15 all New Yorkers at better value for the taxpayer
16 dollar. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on
17 the budget, and we look forward to working with all
18 of you, and happy to take questions.

19 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you,
20 Commissioner. I have a few questions. I know that
21 my colleagues also have questions. My first question
22 is what has been the results of the Arterial Slow
23 Zone Program launched last spring since we have been
24 ten months. I think it will be helpful if you can

2 share with us any data that you have about how we are
3 doing before and after when it come to crash results.

4 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah, I
5 mean--You know, and again last year obviously we had--
6 --we had one of the best years ever in terms of--We
7 had the best year ever in terms of pedestrian
8 fatalities. And overall, the second lowest year in
9 terms of all fatalities around the--that are motor
10 related around the city. Typically, when we--when
11 we're implementing a new transportation program, we
12 like to look at least a year if not two or three
13 years of before and after data. But I think the
14 preliminary indications are. Particularly in areas
15 where we're doing good coordinated and education and
16 enforcement with NYPD, we're seeing slower speeds and
17 we're seeing some reduction in crash activity. But
18 again, I want to come back to the committee and
19 present when we have a full year of data, a full
20 analysis.

21 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. And
22 my second question is about the capacity of the
23 agency. Since I mean you're coming from being a
24 leader of a nationwide--nationwide when it comes to
25 transportation. And I know that we are all happy

2 that the Administration has improved the investment
3 in the DOT. But as we have shared, now that DOT is--
4 has to be working with all those main projects. So
5 is the agency working on capacity? Are you in need
6 to have more staff, may personnel now that you're
7 going to be responsible for increasing more ferry in
8 the main project that we have right now?

9 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG:

10 [interposing] Yeah, we--

11 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: How is the agency
12 doing? How much more is needed to be sure that you
13 have, or that we at the Council and the
14 Administration provide all the resources that you
15 need in order to be able to deliver all those
16 projects on time?

17 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah,
18 and I have to say I--I want to express my
19 appreciation to my Mayor and my City Hall. Because I
20 think they have been very good to us in terms of when
21 we have come to them with budget requests or what we
22 feel we need be it Vision Zero be it bridge
23 inspections, be it things that we think are crucial
24 for the safety and the efficiency of the
25 transportation system. One challenge that I alluded

2 to in my testimony is I think one thing we're
3 discovering as we, you know, continue now the siting
4 of Citi Bikes in three boroughs over the next couple
5 of years. As we roll out more SBS projects at a much
6 more aggressive pace than we have in the past. As we
7 continue to do over 50 Vision Zero projects a year,
8 50 miles of bike lanes. As we're doing all these
9 projects, we are finding--we estimate that in the
10 next year we will pretty much be up in front of every
11 community board in New York City. So interestingly
12 enough, one of the challenges we face is making sure
13 that we have enough folks to really be able to do
14 what I think is important, a really good job of
15 engaging with the community and with elected
16 officials. And I think that's potentially one of the
17 areas where we'd love some partnership with the
18 Council. Because we are--we are now in front of a
19 lot of community board pretty regularly. And I know
20 the community boards have a lot of other projects and
21 agencies and things that they're considering.

22 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Over the
23 last 20 years an average of 47 lane miles was
24 reconstructed. And when we look at the capital
25 budget, now they--they're connecting these 35 lane

2 miles each year for the next ten years. Do you think
3 that--is that enough to accomplish our goal? Or,
4 should we be exploring other sources of funding in
5 order to increase that number of the 30 miles, the 35
6 lane miles each year for the next ten years?

7 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Right.

8 A couple of answers on that. I think as I mentioned
9 in my testimony, the Capital Plan as laid out is
10 clearly going to have some further detail and
11 refinement between now and the April Plan. And I
12 think part of what will obviously come out of these
13 hearings is hearing from council members, the areas
14 where you have particular interest. I think what
15 any--any agency had and any DOT Commissioner roadway
16 reconstruction is something we care deeply about.
17 We'd love to see it funded in a robust way, but we
18 also recognize the city has to balance many, many
19 needs. And even within my own agency we have a lot
20 of capital needs: Roadway reconstruction, bridge
21 repair, and maintenance. So I think that's something
22 where we look forward to working with you all. It is
23 a very important area. There is no question.

24 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: In your--in your
25 nationwide profile have you seen any city that you--

2 we can look at that they have like a private-public
3 partnership where also the private contribute on
4 transportation?

5 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Well,
6 what I've seen, and typically with cities is private
7 sector participation comes in a couple of ways.
8 Which is a city is prepared to offer up some kind of
9 revenue stream. And then you a--you know, in a
10 typical public-private partnership could be in the
11 case of a place like Denver it could be sales tax.
12 It could be a toll. It could be something where the
13 private sector entity coming in has a stream of
14 revenues. They'll come in and put the money in to
15 build the project up and sometimes to manage it. And
16 then take the revenue stream as payment. So that's
17 one model. The other model you've seen, and this is
18 actually something that you could see if we were--if
19 we were able to engage in more innovative bidding and
20 procurement practices. Is you can also tap private
21 sector and innovation just to come up with ways to do
22 better project delivery. More innovative ways of
23 doing construction. Things that I think some--some
24 other cities and states have made more progress than
25 we have here in New York.

2 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. I--I just
3 hope that we can be like more creative on how to
4 attract the private sector as a partner when it comes
5 to investing in transportation. Because, you know,
6 investing in transportation is investing in our
7 safety.

8 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG:

9 [interposing] Yeah. No, and--

10 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: And with a goal
11 that all of us have, which is to reduce to zero the
12 number--

13 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG:

14 [interposing] I know in--

15 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: --of pedestrians
16 that have lost--

17 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG:

18 [interposing] And I think--I think around the country
19 I think states and municipalities have grown
20 sophisticated in public-private partnerships. But it
21 does--it does often require a revenue stream, or a
22 procurement methodology where you can bring them in.
23 And they can be part of realizing efficiency. So
24 it's an area I think New York City could do more to
25 explore.

2 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Great. And I'd
3 like to move now to Cemusa. As we know, Cemusa is
4 the contract to monitor city bus stops charity
5 program. And it is our understanding that part of
6 that contract calls for Cemusa to provide advertising
7 and space to the city. Not only New York City, but
8 worldwide where Cemusa advertise. To your knowledge,
9 has any of other required advertising space from
10 Cemusa being provided to Vision Zero? I have seen
11 advertising in the bus as well. Those are the types
12 of buses parked. Are they contributions from Cemusa?

13 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah, we
14 have gone and I think Deputy Commissioner Jarrin can
15 pull it up. They have--Cemusa has given us some of
16 the space. Maybe he can find the exact numbers.
17 We've gotten some of the Vision Zero advertising here
18 in the city. The bigger question of what they are
19 providing overseas for New York and Company is a good
20 one because Cemusa is actually slowly getting out of
21 the business. You know, it's not a secret they are
22 potentially looking to be bought by another company.
23 So I'm not sure they're providing us with the same
24 number of advertisements as they used to abroad.
25 Here we go.

2 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Where--

3 COMMISSIONER PETERS: We're doing Vision
4 Zero, just the number here. Vision Zero advertising
5 50 bus shelters and three newsstands.

6 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: When will the
7 contract expire with Cemusa?

8 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: I think
9 the contract expires--

10 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: [interposing]
11 Like 2030?

12 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah,
13 it's--it's four or five--I think it's--

14 [background comment]

15 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. I just
16 hope that we made some--I mean on all of our, you
17 know, working with the private sector I believe that
18 the private sector is in important, you know, in our
19 society. But I also saw that Cemusa also come to the
20 table not only with advertising more. But I know
21 that--as far as I know, even the city controls like
22 50%--

23 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG:
24 [interposing] Yes.

2 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: --of the space
3 for buses.

4 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah,
5 and I will say in general about Cemusa I think the
6 city has gotten good value out of that contract.
7 They have made their payments very regularly. They
8 have rebuilt and reinstalled a number of bus stops.
9 So the company now I think struggling a little bit
10 about where it goes. But we've actually had overall
11 a pretty good experience with them. And I think
12 people feel they've mostly honored their commitments,
13 and they've made all their payments. Even though I'm
14 not sure they've really made any profits here on this
15 contract.

16 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: When we had in
17 our hearing yesterday with the OMB I know that I
18 asked a question on how much is the total that the
19 City will be--is including in the 2016 budget to
20 invest on the educational part of Vision Zero.
21 Because I know that they NYPD they're doing their
22 work. TLC is doing their own thing. You are the one
23 leading in the advertising?

24 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah,
25 and--and--

2 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: [interposing] So
3 I know that yesterday they say that there's like we
4 don't see. It's not centralized. It's not like the
5 city has not put all the figures together. They just
6 told us yesterday that the total figure--figure is \$5
7 million that the City will be using in 2016 in the
8 educational part of Vision Zero. And I just hope
9 that we can double that amount. I believe that as we
10 will work on the--on the enforcement and redesigning
11 the street. But I know Vision Zero all of us agree
12 is changing the culture of how drivers, cyclists, and
13 pedestrians interact. And I believe that-- You
14 know, I would like to see Vision Zero campaign
15 similar to the anti-smoking campaign. I would like
16 to see this campaign everywhere. Where everyone
17 understand that we have to sell it not only as the
18 livery drivers, not only the taxi drivers, not only
19 as a council member. But yes as a father, as the one
20 who cares for the children and care for the senior
21 citizens. So I just would like to see more increase
22 in the investment that we made educating our whole
23 five boroughs when it comes to Vision Zero. And
24 yesterday the number was \$5 million. I would like to
25 see that number to be double or triple because I know

2 that \$5 million will not be enough to educate as we
3 should.

4 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Well,
5 Mr. Chairman, thank you for your support in that.
6 And I think we think the public education campaign
7 has been very successful. And one of the things when
8 I've talked about it, I was partially through the
9 campaign and then partially through just our own
10 unpaid efforts. When we went to go change the
11 default speed to 25 miles an hour, we polled ahead of
12 time. We asked New Yorkers what's the default speed
13 limit in New York. And only about 20 some odd
14 percent knew what it was. After the campaign, which,
15 you know, many here were part of, you included. That
16 number now knew--62% knew that the speed limit had
17 gone to 25. So you think we really can break through
18 on these campaigns, and thank you. We look forward
19 to working with you on that.

20 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: So continuing
21 with Cemusa now related to the--to the responsibility
22 on the bus shelter? Does--how do they contract, the
23 individual who cleans the bus shelter? Do you know?
24 Do they report tot he DOT on many men and woman power
25 they have to clean the bus shelter? How often do

2 they clean the bus shelter? Because it's a mess and
3 some bus stations is a mess. As you know, like it's
4 not enough to--for them to clean in the morning. And
5 then knowing that when the bus will be passing by,
6 the bus will be pushing the snow. And throughout all
7 my Council District I've been reporting. I've been
8 sending photos, but I think that we should be in this
9 situation. For the council members to be approaching
10 you, and you get in contact with Cemusa. Cemusa then
11 go back and clean from the East Side to the West Side
12 to Riverdale to Grand Concourse to my district to any
13 place where we have bus shelter. If we would tour
14 today afternoon and evening or tomorrow, we will see
15 how difficult it is especially for people with
16 disability and senior citizens to take the bus.
17 Because it looked like it's only cleaned or probably
18 twice a day. But they don't clean--they don't keep
19 the bus shelter clean enough to make it accessible
20 fro all New Yorkers.

21 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Well,
22 they--I mean they are supposed to meet performance
23 standards. So, look, again if you all feel that
24 there are places where they need to be doing a better

2 job, let us get that input from you and go talk to
3 them about it. Because obviously--

4 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: [interposing]
5 But do they report--do we know how many individuals
6 that they hired to clean the bus shelter or no?

7 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah, I
8 mean again if they--we have performance standards.
9 We hold them to that. I don't know that we know the
10 exact number that have to clean them, but we probably
11 can find out for you.

12 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay, that would
13 be good information.

14 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Sure.

15 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Because then we
16 can talk to them and be sure that they have enough
17 resources to really keep the bus shelter clean
18 because we will see this day today and tomorrow as we
19 have seen in the past. And, you know, like they--I
20 think that they--as they are important because we can
21 advertise with Cemusa not only in the city but in
22 Brazil, Europe and other places. But they should be
23 able to do better on cleaning our bus shelters. Let
24 me now call my colleague and then I will get back on
25 other questions. Council Member Crowley.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Good morning.
3 Good morning and thank you, Chairman and good morning
4 Commissioner. Let me compliment you on your first
5 year. I believe that I can speak for the entirety of
6 the Council when we look at your numbers. Certainly
7 in my area in Queens and throughout the city the
8 number of fatalities are going down. And that's
9 something--something to really compliment the
10 Administration on. I'd like to talk to you about
11 Queens Boulevard and then Woodhaven Boulevard.
12 First, Queens Boulevard you have a million dollars
13 slated to be spent, is that correct?

14 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTENBERG: \$100
15 million.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: \$100 million.
17 Sorry. Is that just for this fiscal year, 2016?

18 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTENBERG: No, no.
19 That's going to be--

20 [background comment]

21 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTENBERG: Yeah,
22 mostly actually Fiscal '18.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: So would that be
24 a Design Build project?

2 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: NO, no,
3 that would be--Just to step back a bit on Queens
4 Boulevard and what we're going to be doing, it's
5 actually the same approach we're going to be taking
6 on all these great streets, which is for some of them
7 we already have some work slated. And on Queens
8 Boulevard this year we're going to start doing some
9 safety improvements. Because of our safety
10 improvements we do very quickly. We basically do
11 them with our in-house forces. But meantime, and
12 particularly for Queens Boulevard we want to try and
13 envision something more grand. Something that makes
14 it a more livable street. That looks at greenery,
15 that looks a bus lanes, bike lanes, you name it. So
16 we're basically going to pursue both tracks at the
17 same time. The bigger grander things we're going to
18 do would be longer term, often longer term capital
19 projects. [applause]

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: But do you know
21 where you're--where you're planning to start on
22 Queens Boulevard? Is there any idea as to, you know,
23 which streets or avenues that intersect the boulevard
24 would be the first phase.

2 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah,
3 we're--we're going to start--we're going to start in
4 the most western portion. And let me--let me--I'll
5 make sure someone here can get me the exact list of
6 streets. Maybe someone is handing it to me. All
7 right. That's right, 73rd to--

8 [background comment]

9 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: --
10 Roosevelt Ave.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: 73rd?

12 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: 73rd to
13 Roosevelt.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: 73rd. Would
15 that be Karen Koslowitz's district? [laughter] No?

16 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Is that
17 right.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: I don't know. I
19 have 69th Street that goes into it, 73rd and what?
20 Sorry.

21 [background comments]

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Because I'm at
23 69th Street that goes into Queens Boulevard.

24 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: Council
25 Member the initial phase of this that is still being

2 worked out is to work our way east. So starting at
3 Rosewood Avenue towards 69th Street, as you
4 mentioned, but I think something--the--a few blocks
5 from there is where the first phase I think would
6 end, and then working our way after that. But I
7 think the \$100 million is slated for key locations
8 throughout the entire length of the Queens Boulevard.
9 So there is a lot of work happening now to identify
10 the best use of that funding. And identify other
11 locations that maybe wouldn't just go contiguously.
12 We would go--

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: [interposing]
14 But it would be years before we would see that change
15 on the boulevard?

16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: Well, this
17 funding is provided for the next four years. And it
18 would take a design process to get to construction.
19 and that normally would be a two-year process. I
20 mean we're doing everything we can to expedite this.
21 But the money--

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: [interposing]
23 I'm sure there are going to be more questions on
24 Queens Boulevard later. So I'm going to skip to
25 Woodhaven. I saw some changes happening on the

2 boulevard, but I know that you're not implementing
3 your great streets or the bus--the SBS service.

4 Where are you--

5 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG:

6 [interposing] Well, we're starting to--

7 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: --on that
8 timeline?

9 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: --make
10 some improvements to the bus service there. We're
11 testing some things out to see if we can improve the
12 bus service, speed it up a bit. But that--we've not
13 yet finalized the decisions on the design we're going
14 to use for the larger--what we're hoping will be more
15 of a full blown bus rapid transit.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: But it's one of
17 four projects in Queens like that. Are they all
18 moving on the same timeline? Is one going to happen
19 first before the other? Is that going to take a
20 number of years?

21 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Well,
22 again, I think for us we're sort of again trying to
23 move on both Woodhaven and Queens Boulevard somewhat
24 on two tracks, which on Queens Boulevard doing some
25 immediate safety improvements. And then doing the

2 design work to do a bigger capital project. The same
3 thing on Woodhaven, doing some short-term
4 improvements to the bus service while making the
5 planning to do a much bigger Bus Rapid Transit. But
6 it will require federal funds. So we're going to
7 have to work with the Federal Transit Administration
8 for that.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: But the SBS
10 services that is mentioned in your briefing, there's
11 no timeline on that?

12 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Timeline
13 for--? You mean Woodhaven?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: For Woodhaven
15 and the three others in Queens, too.

16 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Right
17 and think our goal for Woodhaven is--I think we're
18 hoping 2017. But again, part of that is we need to
19 work with the Federal Transit Administration. They
20 need to be a piece of the funding, and I think as has
21 been mentioned, we have sent them a request to get an
22 initial \$3 million to do the final design. They're
23 going to actually be coming to tour the site in the
24 springtime, and we should have an answer by--from
25 them by August.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: And then
3 finally, I was upset to see that two weeks ago there
4 was an accident with a bus making a left hand turn in
5 an area that didn't have a left hand turn signal.
6 Which is dangerous for bus drivers because they have
7 a blind spot. Unfortunately and horrifically, the
8 bust hit a pedestrian, and then the bus driver was
9 subsequently take away in handcuffs. And it bothered
10 me to see the bus driver taken away in handcuffs
11 because he had given 29 years of service to our City.
12 And, of course, he did not want to hit a pedestrian.
13 But how much of it--of that accident of that crash is
14 our fault as the city for putting this bus driver on
15 a street where he's making a left hand turn. And he
16 doesn't have that left hand turn signal and,
17 therefore, has a blind spot? And what are we doing
18 to make sure that something like that does not happen
19 again?

20 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah,
21 it's a--it's a very good question, and we have been
22 working with the MTA and the TWU over the years to
23 try and identify key areas of the city where we can
24 make improvements and make the route safe. And look,
25 in all the--obviously all the debate and discussion

2 and controversy that has arisen over 19190. We've
3 sat down again with the MTA and the TWU, and
4 particularly asked them to provide us with areas
5 where we think we can do street improvements. And
6 one of the things we've discussed, and we're going
7 to--we've put some in and we're going to continue to
8 put them in--is where we can to make a left hand turn
9 signal in a, you know, a dedicated lane.
10 Unfortunately, you can't do it in every spot, but
11 believe me where we can do it, and we think it's
12 going to help, we--we obviously want to try and do
13 it. Our goal is clearly to work with the MTA and the
14 bus drivers, and try and make these routs from the
15 street geometry point of view as safe as we can.

16 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Council Member
17 Weprin.

18 [pause]

19 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: Take it easy,
20 guys. They're running my clock already.

21 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: But don't forget
22 one after DOT we also--after DOT we have MTA and then
23 we have TLD.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: Okay.
25 Commissioner, thank you for being here, Deputy

2 Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner and Acting
3 Queens Borough Commissioner, Mr. Lynch. I want to
4 thank you also for the great work you've done this
5 year. You've been incredibly responsive to the
6 things that we as--me as a Councilman in the Queens
7 delegation, which I'm proud to chair--how responsive
8 you've been to us in the concerns that you have. So
9 thank all very much. I had to go in and out so I
10 apologize. I know that Chair Rodriguez talked about
11 this in his opening statement, and you alluded to it
12 in your remarks about the \$250 million that's been
13 allocated towards improving streets. To making
14 changes to make them safer. Did a question come up
15 about whether there is any talk about working to try
16 to increase that number? Because, you know,
17 Transportation Alternative you might know had a press
18 conference before here. Where they talked about at
19 this rate, you know, it could be a hundred years
20 before we could fix all the streets that we talk
21 about. Is there any discussion about trying to
22 increase that number working with us to increase that
23 number to get to more streets quicker?

24 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Well,
25 look, I would say I think it's from where we sit in

2 the capacities of our agency, we're very grateful to
3 the Mayor. We think this is a pretty big and bold
4 initiative. You know, look, ideally one could
5 imagine a much bigger agency with billions and
6 billions to spend on this.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: [interposing]
8 Right.

9 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTENBERG: But
10 that's not where we are. This for us will be--this
11 will be a big set of projects to work through.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: It's a lot of
13 money to put in place. [sic]

14 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTENBERG:
15 [interposing] You know, right. In the grand scheme
16 of things this is actually going to be a very, very
17 big initiative for us, and we will be all hands on
18 deck to get it done working with DDC. And, of
19 course, working so closely with the delegation with
20 community boards, with merchants. With all the folks
21 around the city who are going to be affected by the
22 work there. So I think this is--this is pretty big
23 for us.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: [interposing] Uh-
25 huh

2 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: But
3 obviously, you know, the Council you'll have your--
4 you'll have your negotiations with--with the
5 Administration, and give your thoughts on whether you
6 think the program can be expanded. I would just say
7 for us, we're pretty thrilled, and we think for us
8 this will be--this will be a big--a big set of
9 projects--

10 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: [interposing]
11 Right.

12 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: --to
13 accomplish in the next few years.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: I also wanted to
15 comment on what Ms. Crowley brought up about the
16 failure to yield, and the issue of bus drivers. And
17 there's a lot of talk about the changes that could be
18 made. I think the problem that some of us had was in
19 the manner that this bus driver was treated. He
20 shouldn't have been taken away in handcuffs. I
21 didn't think that part was necessary, but the goal of
22 the law was to try to make the street safer and to
23 try and make people on their best behavior to make
24 sure that they're not hitting people. I mean that's
25 the goal here, and obviously in that case if indeed

2 they can show that there was a blind spot, and that
3 the culpability is limited, the punishment will fit
4 the crime if there is one. I know there's a lot of
5 talk about this, and I just wanted to get on record
6 myself by just saying I don't think the law needs to
7 be changed. I think the way it's enforced needs to
8 be changed to treat these bus drivers with the
9 dignity that they deserve. But at the same time
10 currently when a bus driver--before this law in
11 place--if a bus driver was to hit a pedestrian what
12 happens to that bus driver before this law took
13 effect?

14 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTENBERG: Yeah,
15 let me--let me just say first of all, I'm going to
16 actually quote the Mayor here, because I--he was
17 asked about this up in Albany by Senator Golden. And
18 I think he made a point of say he supports the law.
19 But he also agrees that it needs to be--enforcement
20 needs to be handled sensitively. And I know many of
21 you have been in communication with NYPD about that.
22 That's not our department, but I think certainly the
23 Administration agrees with that contention. I mean,
24 you all may recall the law did pass the Council--the
25 Council unanimously. What the law--what the law was

2 trying to get at, and it was a very powerful hearing
3 and we were all here for it. Was what had happened
4 for example in Flushing, Queens where Allison
5 Lowell[sp?] --

6 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: [interposing]
7 Lowell.

8 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: --had
9 been hit, and we all saw that horrifying videotape.
10 And at least initially before Families for Safe
11 Streets really got in the game, it appeared that the
12 driver was going to get off with essentially no
13 penalties. And it was because there was--I wouldn't
14 say it was--there was I guess a gap in the
15 enforcement where unless you could--unless you
16 essentially could prove that the driver had been
17 drunk or speeding or the officer had actually
18 witnessed--

19 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: [interposing]
20 Right.

21 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: --the
22 crash, essentially there were no criminal penalties.
23 And so, again, the Council unanimously passed the
24 bill putting what are criminal penalties that were
25 not there before.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: [interposing] But
3 I want to know about the bus driver.

4 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: So that
5 was--that was also the case with bus drivers. That
6 again there either had to be a blatant example of
7 intoxication or the officer had to witness the--you
8 know, witness the incident and decide that it was
9 carelessness.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: What if a bus
11 driver hit somebody along their route.

12 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: The person is
14 taken away in an ambulance. That bus driver is not--
15 doesn't--didn't continue the route, did they? I mean
16 they had to --

17 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG:
18 [interposing] No, no, I mean--

19 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: --have some type
20 of administrative hearing.

21 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: We'll
22 have Lois Tandler [sp?] here, right. In the cases
23 that that happened, the MTA would come on the scene.
24 They would do their own investigation.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: Right.

2 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: And
3 typically, in the case of a very severe incident,
4 particularly one where there was a fatality it is
5 probably unlikely I think that the driver went back
6 to driver. But again, I don't want to--that's really
7 for the MTA to explain what their process is there.
8 [sic]

9 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: [interposing] I
10 just want to clarify something about the law because
11 I know there is also this misunderstanding about the
12 idea that other people are exempted. The truth is
13 that in the law they don't exempt any people from--
14 who drive vehicles if they hit somebody. It does
15 exempt--exempt certain vehicles in the continuance of
16 their job. Meaning like if a garbage truck was in
17 the crosswalk, and the garbage truck hit somebody not
18 the driver. But like if someone hit the truck, and
19 it hit somebody that might be exempted. But the
20 people themselves they're driving a garbage truck or
21 any other city vehicle, would be held just as liable
22 as everybody else. We just want to see how we change
23 the way they are treated like you described. I think
24 that's the big--the biggest issue of all, and I know

2 Daneek Miller has been working on this, and we need
3 to have these meetings on this--

4 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG:

5 [interposing] I think a lot of--I think a lot of
6 groups have been working on that. [sic]

7 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: --and I wanted to
8 just clarify that.

9 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: Okay, thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Council Member
12 Rose.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you, Chair
14 and thank you Commissioner. I'm sure being the
15 Councilperson from an island it won't surprise you
16 that my questions are about the ferry. And so, in
17 the preliminary plan, it included \$226.7 million for
18 the replacement of ferry boats. Do you have a
19 timeline as to when this contract will be let, and
20 when the new boats will begin passenger service?

21 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: You know
22 what, I'm going to actually have Joe pull up the
23 exact timeline. I hope he has it here. I do know we
24 have our design contractor, who is terrific, already

2 on board, and we're starting to refine the different
3 pieces of the design. Oh, you found it?

4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: Yeah, I
5 think I know where it is. We're--we're planning to
6 go--I put the contract for advertisement this time
7 next year. And then to have the registration by the
8 end of that year, 2016. So by that--that will start
9 construction after that for the two boroughs.

10 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: And I--I
11 will say that I recognize--I recognize that this is
12 for our agency--for our agency this is a very large
13 and important procurement. And one because we don't
14 do it all that often. One where I felt like we
15 really need it internally to make sure that we were
16 going to do a great job. And in particular, I wanted
17 to make sure that we have a lot of bidders because
18 one of the challenges in ferry boat construction is
19 you typically go to kind of midsize shipyards around
20 the country as your potential bidders. A lot of them
21 are not necessarily familiar in dealing with all of
22 the rules and requirements of a New York City type
23 procurement. And because there are federal funds
24 involved, there is also going to be extensive federal
25 requirements. So I--I can tell you this, we have

2 formed sort of an interagency group in our--within
3 DOT that is procurement and legal in ferries. And we
4 want to make sure that we--we get this procurement
5 right. We keep it on schedule because the ultimate
6 goal is to have the ferries delivered in 2019. And
7 that when we get them they will be the safest most
8 state-of-the art greenest ferries of, you know, of
9 this time.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: And so in order to
11 accomplish that goal, you need almost a year before
12 you can put the contract out? Yeah?

13 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah. I
14 mean the--obviously, the design of ferry vessels of
15 this size is something that takes a while. And
16 again, because we want to make them modern and state-
17 of-the art in terms their environmental qualities,
18 their safety features. And we're looking. You know,
19 there's been this, you know, on your island a debate
20 about what the new design might be. Will there be
21 outdoor seating? We're going to obviously want to
22 make sure we get all those things well--done well as
23 well.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: And the--an intro
25 that was very near and dear to mine and my

2 colleagues' heart was 1049, which was the Ferry
3 Service Bill. Which increased the--the number of
4 hours--the time that the ferry ran, and so it
5 increased to a half hour lead time. And so, it
6 became Local Law 88. Could you tell me what the
7 overall status in compliance with this law is to
8 increase the hours or half hour for 24/7--

9 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG:
10 [interposing] Right.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: --24 hours a day, 7
12 days a week.

13 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yes, and
14 the first part law had us adding half-hour service
15 further into the weekend periods--

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: [interposing]
17 Right.

18 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: --and
19 we've--I think we've done that successfully and, you
20 know, it's proved very popular.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: And we thank you
22 for that.

23 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah,
24 it's--it's been a great success. The second part of
25

2 the law as you are well aware of, Council Member
3 Rose, is to go to half hour service basically 24/7.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Right.

5 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: And the
6 question there in the--the Council Law was the city
7 will do it if they determine that--you know, unless
8 they determine that it's economically infeasible.
9 And as I have discussed with you, and some of the
10 other members, we are right now conducting that
11 analysis. I cannot tell you today what the answer to
12 the analysis will be. That's something that the city
13 is going to be presenting in its April Plan. But we
14 are keenly aware of, you know, the interest that you
15 and others have on Staten Island about that services.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: So you will have
17 the results of that study by April 1st?

18 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yes.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: And are you aware
20 of the fact that the ridership did increase? I know
21 we spoke. It was a question of increased ridership,
22 and the ridership increased by 7.9% during the first
23 six months of the increase. And DOT projected--I
24 want you to look at your projections because you
25 projected an increase of maybe 68,000 riders. And in

2 essence, we actually have 605,000 riders in--in that
3 period between July and October. So, I know [bell]
4 ridership is important, an important metric. But I
5 want you to also take into consideration that we have
6 seen an increase during the hours that we have now.
7 And also, you know, with the incoming development,
8 the outlets and the Wheel that--

9 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG:

10 [interposing] Yes.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: --maybe the
12 projections would be a little more reasonable.

13 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Okay.

14 We'll certainly take a look at those numbers.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: [off mic]

17 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Thank you
18 very much, Mr. Chair and Commissioner. Thank you for
19 your great work over the past 14 months. I wanted to
20 specifically ask you about the improvements to Queens
21 Boulevard to follow up on some of my colleague's
22 questions. As you know, and your team knows, we
23 recently had a town hall style meeting where there's
24 been a long-time coalition of folks who live along
25 Queens Boulevard who have been pushing for a safer

2 Queens Boulevard. TA, Families for Safe Streets, and
3 lots of folks, and it's been a whole expanse of
4 Queens Boulevard. Obviously, we care about all of
5 those locations. There are a lot of proposals that
6 came out of that meeting, a lot of really interesting
7 ideas from people who live on Queens Boulevard,
8 across Queens Boulevard. I wanted to know as you
9 undertake this process and spend this \$100 million,
10 if you are looking into those proposals, following
11 those proposals? And to what extent are those
12 proposals going to be included in what you ultimately
13 do there?

14 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTENBERG: And
15 look, I want to say we were thrilled by the great
16 turnout and enthusiasm and vision we got from
17 residents and community groups. And we even I think
18 had some global thinkers who have some ideas for us
19 on Queens Boulevard. So, of course, you know, I
20 think one of the things that we've really tried to
21 increasing make the hallmark of how we do projects
22 like this in this agency is we want to take in all
23 the input. And in Queens Boulevard our own Mayor,
24 Mayor de Blasio really has challenged us to be bold
25 and creative and, you know, get outside our comfort

2 zone. And hear from the international visionaries,
3 and, of course, first and foremost from the folks in
4 the neighborhood. And we're going to be doing that.
5 And again, we're doing some immediate safety
6 improvements, but we do want to spend the coming
7 months really trying to have a broader visioning
8 session where we bring in different voices. We bring
9 in some of our sister agencies potentially to hear
10 what they're thinking about what's going to happen in
11 terms of housing and economic development. And
12 really try and do something exciting.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Well, I like
14 to think of my constituents as international
15 visionaries--

16 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTENBERG:
17 [interposing] Yes, Well, I'm sure--I think you have
18 some international visionaries.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: --in and of
20 themselves. Queens is the world's borough, and we
21 are the world's thinkers. So I want to ask what kind
22 of limitations are you placing on improvements? Are
23 you including a bike lane, for example? Are you--you
24 know, how--how big are you thinking when it comes to
25 Queens Boulevard?

2 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: I mean,
3 look, we're--we're prepared to think as big as money
4 and community support and the--the practicality of
5 implementation will take us. Certainly looking at
6 bike lanes. How we can improve bus lanes. Greening
7 and all the things that I think that I know some of
8 the--the coalition on this are interested in. You
9 know, certainly at some point if you look at, I
10 think, some of the renderings that have been done
11 about some of these. I think at some point you're
12 starting to even look at do we want to have different
13 types of uses on the street? And even bigger
14 questions, which again I think for us means pulling
15 in our sister agencies. But in terms of streetscape,
16 we'd really like to think big. And again, we're
17 grateful to the Mayor because he certainly put up the
18 funds for--to enable us to do that.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: And how
20 quickly will you move? That question was sort of
21 addressed a little bit earlier, but when would you
22 ideally see some of these improvements happen and
23 begin?

24 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Our goal
25 is to start to see improvements each--each of the

2 coming fiscal years. You know, again we're going to-
3 -we're going to ratchet it up there some shorter
4 terms, safety and other aesthetic improvements we're
5 going to start to make on each of these streets.
6 Some that were in the works, and new ones that we're
7 going to add. And look, another thing the Mayor has
8 challenged us on is to really continue to work to
9 speed up our planning process. To speed up our
10 procurement process--

11 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: [interposing]
12 So could we start?

13 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: --so we
14 can deliver these projects quicker.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Might we
16 start to see some of these improvements this year?

17 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yes,
18 you'll see some this year, but I think the major ones
19 are going to come in the next couple of fiscal year.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: So what would
21 you envision happening in the short-term versus the
22 long-term? What might we see this year?

23 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Short-
24 term again more safety improvements, particularly,
25 figuring in key places where we can improve

2 pedestrian safety. Tackling, you know, particularly
3 a question that is all on our minds about how we can
4 improve things for left hand turning vehicles be they
5 buses, be they passenger vehicles. You know, that's
6 been the type of--that's been the type of work as
7 many of you know we can do very quickly. In a
8 construction season we do it with in-house forces at
9 pretty low cost. The larger work capital work does
10 take more time.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: So I just
12 want to say because I only have a couple seconds
13 left, having been at that recent meeting with Jeff
14 and some of the others, I was really inspired by what
15 happened there that night. Obviously, it's been a
16 long movement that sort of culminated with that town
17 hall. And I really urge you to take into account
18 [bell] all of those amazing ideas. And I mean this.
19 Our folks know what they need to be safe, and they
20 told you, and now we just need to make that happen.

21 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Thank
22 you, no, and I will say the coalition told us and
23 they have the Mayor's ear, too, because he clearly
24 has made Queens Boulevard one of his--one of his
25 signature initiatives.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Thank you.

3 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

4 Public Advocate Tish James.

5 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you, Mr.
6 Chair and first let me congratulate the Chair for
7 bringing Garisa [sp?], who is his daughter, to the
8 City Council hearing. Hello, Garisa. Thank you.
9 Girls in power just like the Commissioner. So
10 Commissioner, I have a number of issues I want to get
11 to. I know I only have five minutes. So first,
12 thank you for recognizing that a number of fatalities
13 have occurred on the city's arterial roads. Which
14 are multi-lane speedways like Atlantic Avenue, Grand
15 Concourse and Queens Boulevard, which are poorly
16 designed and basically encourage speeding. My
17 question will it--is it going to be redesigned in its
18 entirety, and why is Atlantic Avenue only in East New
19 York? Is it because the Mayor is focusing on
20 rezoning East New York for affordable housing, and
21 for the development?

22 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTENBERG: Well,
23 for--for East--for Atlantic Avenue, we've actually
24 done--well, you--you know this well. We've done work
25 in different sections of it, and we're focusing right

2 now in the area that's Washington Street and
3 Underhill. So we've made improvements along Atlantic
4 Avenue. We are--admittedly, one of our biggest areas
5 of focus now is East New York. It's one of the--it's
6 going to be one of the key affordable housing
7 neighborhoods. But our goal over time, as I think
8 Deputy Commissioner Jarrin said, there are going to
9 be key sections where we're going to do big work.
10 But that is not going to prevent us from doing work
11 all along these corridors as we seen necessary. To
12 completely redo them in full blown redesign capital
13 project that--that will take a lot of resources and a
14 lot of time. But, we're going to try and do some of
15 both on each of those corridors.

16 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: So as you know,
17 as the former City Council Member who advocated for
18 the Washington Avenue and the Atlantic Avenue
19 redesign, I don't--I don't believe that we should do
20 this in patchwork. I think we should look at it, the
21 entire stretch of the corridor. So that we can
22 address the speeding that occurs on--not only on
23 Atlantic Avenue, but on Grand Concourse. And I know
24 that my colleagues from Queens have talked about
25 Queens Boulevard. It continues to be the boulevard

2 of death. Moving forward, I would just hope that you
3 would consider that. And my other--my other question
4 is to what extent are crashes caused by left turns?
5 Is it primarily left turns and is that part of your
6 study? My office is also looking at left turns on
7 bi-directional streets, and whether or not that is a
8 direct correlation to crashes?

9 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah,
10 and maybe someone here can dig up the number. Left--
11 left turns are a big source of crashes, but there's
12 another way to look at it that often say that
13 speeding and failure to yield, which are also sort of
14 pieces of the puzzle, are also sources. There's no
15 question in cases where we can minimize left turns,
16 or give vehicles their own left turning phase we want
17 to try to do that. We've done a lot in the city, and
18 I think there's big consensus we want to increasingly
19 do more of that. We won't be able to do it
20 everywhere in the city. You can't create a special
21 turning lane, and a special signal in every
22 intersection for left turns. But we're going to
23 continue to look at the areas where we see that as a
24 real factor and make improvements where we can.

2 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you. I see
3 that you have bike lane expansion. Yay. My question
4 is I support protected bike lanes, which will go a
5 long way in reducing crashes. So to what extent are
6 we looking at protected bike lanes? Is it an issue
7 of cost? As we go forward in expanding 60 miles
8 including five miles or protected lanes, why can't
9 all of those miles be protected?

10 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Well, it
11 is--as I had sort of said at the--I think one of the
12 two--one of the Chairman's questions. One of the
13 things we're working with five--five miles just to,
14 you know, put it in perspective in--in Manhattan.
15 Five miles of protected bike lanes is 100 blocks.
16 And that is a lot of intensive work with community
17 board, with merchants with getting very granular on
18 how you handle deliveries and operations and parking
19 questions. So, there is a--there is a funding
20 component, but there is also really just making sure
21 as we're doing all this work now. We're doing Select
22 Bus Service, Citi Bike, our 50 Plus Vision Zero
23 Projects, building out bike lanes. It is a lot of
24 hands-on work with communities, with elected
25 officials and community boards. And we're trying to-

2 -we're trying to have an agenda that we can manage
3 and do a good job. Because we want to make sure we
4 do these projects. We've had the community input and
5 the projects are safe, well designed, and well
6 supported. And help neighborhoods and, you know,
7 take care of all the needs that they have.

8 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: I thank the
9 Administration obviously for--for providing ferry
10 service to Southern Brooklyn as well as to the
11 Rockaways. It's unfortunate that it won't take place
12 until 2017. Why can we not advance it to 2016?

13 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Well, I
14 am--I am going to happily say that that is more EDC's
15 department than mine. I think they've done a careful
16 analysis. Part of it is in some cases we need to
17 build out some of the docking infrastructure. The
18 city is going to be letting our a contract and
19 finding a private sector operator. And I think it's
20 going to take some time to set it up, but I think EDC
21 are the ones who are now the keeper of that
22 timetable. And I think they're probably hearing from
23 a lot of folks who would like to see them speed it up
24 if they can.

2 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: And the last two
3 questions, Commissioner. \$85--\$84 million for Select
4 Bus Service. Is that from last year's budget? [bell]
5 Is it--are we going to increase Select Bus Service?
6 And lastly, do you--I'm always hopeful. Do you think
7 that we're going to get some infrastructure money
8 from Washington, or is that just a lost cause?

9 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: I never
10 like to declare anything a lost cause, and I think
11 when--one positive note I'm hearing from some of my
12 former colleagues down there, there is a lot of
13 discussion in Washington. The current Federal
14 Transportation Bill, as many of you know, expires at
15 the end of May. And if they don't do something to
16 reauthorize it, federal funding for roads, bridges,
17 and transit we won't have it. And that is--that is
18 the life blood here in the city and in the state. We
19 still do rely on the federal government for a good
20 chunk of our funding. I know that there are actually
21 a lot of ideas being floated about how potentially
22 they could pay for a new and expanded bill, different
23 tax schemes being talked about. Nothing I think has
24 jelled yet, and obviously right now Congress is
25 fighting about the Department of Homeland Security,

2 and immigration and healthcare and some other things.
3 But I do sense that there is bi-partisan group that
4 is trying to search for some solutions. Obviously,
5 the Mayor has put this on his agenda of things he's
6 talking to his fellow mayors about. They want to be
7 useful in anyway they can in advocating for cities in
8 the process down there. And hopefully making sure if
9 Congress comes up with a funding package that would
10 be good for New York and the big cities around the
11 country.

12 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [off mic]

13 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yes, the
14 \$84 million is what we will need to complete-- In
15 addition to the MTA contribution and the MTA is
16 coming next and you can talk to them about their
17 piece. To complete--to get us to the 20 routes that
18 the Mayor has pledged, with the exception of
19 Woodhaven Boulevard. Whereas I mentioned earlier
20 we're going to need also to get some major federal
21 funding.

22 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Council Member
23 Chin followed by Council Member Miller.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you, Chair.
25 Thank you Commissioner. The first question is the

2 Brooklyn Bridge reconstruction. I understand there
3 is a significant delay due to a structural issue that
4 was discovered recently. Can you talk about that?
5 Is the cost overrun it's in this year's Capital
6 Budget? And also, what is--what are we going to
7 expect in terms of issues for the community; noise,
8 traffic?

9 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah,
10 and look, I would give a little background on the
11 Brooklyn Bridge, which I know you know well. The
12 Brooklyn Bridge was--started service in 1883, and the
13 last time that the City did a major rehabilitation
14 and overhaul of that structure was over 50 years ago.
15 So when we started this contract, which is vitally
16 needed. I mean those of us who spent a lot of time
17 around the Brooklyn Bridge know that it's a beautiful
18 but again structure with a lot of issues. When we
19 got into do the work, unfortunately, as they started
20 to get in and look at the metal work, there was a lot
21 more deterioration than had originally been
22 understand. And in part that's because it is a very
23 old structure, and it had not had major work done on
24 it for a number of years. So as they started to do
25 the work, they discovered there were a lot more

2 structural issues with the steel. And that has
3 certainly contributed to the time, and the cost of
4 the project. And we know it has caused the
5 communities around the bridge hardship, and we've
6 tried to do what we can to minimize it. And engage in
7 mitigation. And one of the things that slowed us
8 down is we also try to particularly minimize the
9 closures when we do work on the bridge. So it is a
10 balancing act, and we are going to move aggressively.
11 We hope to get all the work done as soon as we can
12 next year. But there is no question that when you're
13 working with a very old structure like that
14 unfortunately as the work goes underway, you often
15 discover there was more structural damage than you
16 had initially estimated.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: So that increased
18 cost is put into this year's Capital Budget?

19 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yes.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Okay. The other
21 thing is that the Council passed legislation
22 regarding speed humps near the schools. So what's
23 been the progress on that? I mean how many are put
24 in? I guess you could give us the list of schools.

2 And then going forward next year how many more are we
3 going to do?

4 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Well,
5 hang on. We can dig up for you the actual speed hump
6 number. But I would say this, the number of speed
7 humps, as a lot of you know, has been going up
8 tremendously around the city. It's one area that is--
9 --a program that has proved hugely successful. We get
10 a lot of requests, and we get a lot of--You know, a
11 lot of enthusiasm for it in school areas. Hang on.
12 I think my colleague will find the number for you.
13 Here we go. You found it?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Okay, while you're
15 looking for the number, my next question is the
16 budget-- Okay.

17 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: Council
18 Member, we did 400 speed humps in calendar year '14.
19 We're working--we'll get you an update number to
20 today's date so that you have that.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: So last year you
22 did 400?

23 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER JARRIN: [off mic]
24 400.

25 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: 400.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Okay. So going
3 forward let us know. The other question is on
4 resurfacing. You know, with all this cold weather
5 there is a lot of, lot of potholes and there's
6 backlogs. My question relating to that is in my
7 district, for example, I have a lot of small narrow
8 streets. So instead of filling up, you know, so many
9 holes, it would be great to just resurface the street
10 itself. And I guess the policy--the Administration's
11 policy is that you don't resurface a street wherever
12 you have five years or more. So in terms of some of
13 the streets, a smaller street that might be cost-
14 effective just to do the whole thing. How does the
15 Department look at that?

16 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Well,
17 let me say a few things about that. And first of
18 all, yes, unfortunately, happily this winter has not
19 been as snowy as last winter. But it has been cold,
20 and it has taken its toll on the roadways. And we
21 have already started what we like to call our pothole
22 blitzers. We were out this--this past weekend with--
23 with 50 crews. We did--we did almost 5,000 potholes,
24 and we will be out as much as we can pretty much
25 every weekend until springtime trying to stay on top

2 of that. In addition to that, we do as the weather
3 turns warm, and we do what's called wear and tears
4 where we'll actually basically pave over a larger--
5 If we see a part of a roadway that's very damaged and
6 has a lot of holes, it can sometimes be more
7 effective. And more efficient to do a wear and tear,
8 and we--we always love to work with council members
9 and communities if there are areas that make sense.
10 On top of that, the City budgets and schedules in
11 programs for a certain number of miles of resurfacing
12 every year. And that is done in conjunction with
13 looking at the analysis of roadway conditions.
14 Working with community board. We have in the budget
15 for the coming year a 1,000 miles, which is what we
16 did last year. And look, you know, in a--we can
17 always debate whether that number should be higher or
18 lower. Again, it's something we balance against all
19 the needs of the City. But one thing we really do
20 try and do with council members is if there are
21 particular areas where you have concerns where we can
22 do something, and you need us to come in, please let
23 us know. And we try and get all around the city.
24 One thing that's difficult at this time of year, I
25 get complaints, Well, you filled the pothole and then

2 it came apart. Part of it is when conditions are
3 cold and icy and wet. [bell]

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: And then the last--
5 the last point is in terms of Vision Zero, it was a
6 great first year for the city, but unfortunately in
7 my district I think I had so many fatalities it's
8 just--it was just shocking. And I think that part of
9 it is on this left turn signal. You know, cars not
10 yielding, and making left turns. I think it's--it's
11 important to really take a look at the whole stretch
12 of Canal Street and some of the truck routes.
13 Because that's where a lot of the fatalities happen.
14 And I think we could all work together to look at
15 also how to educate drivers and pedestrians. You
16 know, drivers that they have to yield, and
17 pedestrians they've got to look at the signals and
18 not cross in the middle of the street. So going
19 forward I think we need to do a lot more in also
20 education efforts.

21 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yes, we--
22 --we--we agree with you. We--we--and we always say and
23 we agree that the Vision Zero and the education
24 process is for everybody. It's not just motorists.
25 It's also for cyclists and pedestrians. We all have

2 a role to play in being alert and engaging in safe
3 behavior on the roadways.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you. Thank
5 you, Chair.

6 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Great. And I
7 would like to see how we continue working closely
8 with Council Member Chin. I hope that we pay
9 specific attention to Canal Street. You know what
10 makes this administration different from before is
11 that this great relationship in how the
12 administration is listening to the local voices of
13 the community. And I think that listening to Council
14 Member Chin over and over not only in the Vision Zero
15 hearing, but also in the hearing that we had on
16 trucks. I think it's important that moving forward
17 that we continue looking at what are the major
18 dramatic changes that we should be able to make,
19 drastic changes that we should be able to make on
20 Canal Street.

21 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yes.

22 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Council Member
23 Miller followed by Council Member Reynoso?

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Thank you, Mr.
25 Chair. Good morning, Commissioner. Thank you to you

2 and your staff to come out, and again thank you for
3 the great work that you've done over the past year.
4 But I do want to digress and talk about a few things.
5 But now that there's been a lot of talk about left
6 turn signals. And let me say from my experience on
7 large vehicles such as trucks and buses, that the
8 majority of the accidents tend to occur on the right
9 side of the bus or trucks. But in terms of left
10 turns, I know that I had been intimately involved
11 with operations and planning at New York City
12 Transit. Along with the DOT for many years, and we
13 have-- In fact, I posed this question to you last
14 year when you first came in about specific left turns
15 that we were trying to--signals that we were trying
16 to get. And the fact that we had been trying for a
17 number of years. We were unable to do it, and that
18 current process was that if you applied for a left
19 turn signal and were denied, it would take--you
20 couldn't re-apply for 18 months. And your response
21 was that we would try to speed that up, and go out
22 and address those issues. So I'm hoping that as of
23 now we still have those left turn signals in place,
24 but I'm hoping that it happens. So I do have a short

2 period of time, and I have a number of questions. I
3 just wanted to put that out there.

4 At a recent Transportation hearing, there
5 was a discussion on Bus Rapid Transit in particular a
6 line that was looking--looked at from Jamaica to
7 Flushing. There were members such as myself, Cohen
8 and Lancman who would be impacted by that who had
9 questions as to whether or not it was the best use of
10 resources in doing that. Considering that we had--
11 there were a number of--in fact, seven routes that
12 had already traveled that path. And that Southeast
13 Queens in particular had a number of needs, and the
14 longest commute into the city anywhere in the city.
15 And, in fact, this Jamaica to Flushing would not
16 impact that at all, and that the \$10 million if, in
17 fact, that was the price tag, could be used somewhere
18 else. What is an--my question is what is the status
19 of that route, and have you engaged the community?
20 And they are to do to support the need for the BRT
21 from Jamaica to Flushing?

22 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTENBERG: Yeah,
23 when we--when we pick potential SBS routes, we did a
24 study, and I think the Council has seen copy--copies
25 of it where we looked at a bunch of factors. We

2 looked at bus ridership. Particularly, we looked at
3 corridors where you have very, very high ridership as
4 you know you do in that area. We looked at the
5 geometry of the streets and the potential for whether
6 putting in a Select Bus Service--something like
7 Select Bus Service would really benefit a lot of
8 people, could speed up travel times. That said, we
9 have--you know, the Mayor wants us to get through 20
10 routes this year. We're still thinking about what
11 the next set of routes is going to be, and we--I know
12 I think they're coming to talk to us next week. We
13 would love--if there are other routes you think we
14 should be looking at, and seriously trying to do some
15 planning on , we'd love to--we'd love talk to you
16 about what those are.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Yeah, I hope
18 because there's a mandate of 20, but we're not trying
19 to put a square peg in a round hold. And we're not
20 providing the needs of the community, as the
21 community sees fit. And the other part was that I
22 know that there was community engagement. What was
23 the result of that?

24 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Well,
25 we--as you know, we've had a bunch of community

2 engagement along the route, and I'd have to say this
3 is one that has aroused a lot of passion on all
4 sides. And, you know, I think there is a big desire
5 to see improved bus service in Flushing and Jamaica.
6 The area in between, I think we need to work through
7 what it would work like. And there are a lot of
8 issues about the bus lane and parking. Again, part
9 of what we really want to do when we plan these
10 routes is work closely with all segments of the
11 community, and design a service that's going to bring
12 a lot of benefits. But also work for all the
13 communities that are impacted. That's the goal of
14 the outreach, and it's underway, but it is by no
15 means complete.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Okay, thank you.
17 So on Vision Zero, I want to touch on--I know we had
18 some conversations with you and TLC about the
19 commuter vans that we had sent a letter requesting
20 that there be a moratorium until certain safety
21 mechanisms could be put in place. And we have not
22 gotten response. As well as we had--we continuously
23 sent objections to any applications to further any
24 commuter vans that would be in place in Southeast
25 Queens and throughout the city, quite frankly. We

2 did not differentiate. Considering that these are
3 probably--these unlicensed, unregulated vehicles are
4 probably the greatest impediment to business, you
5 know, in the neighborhoods that they operate in, what
6 do you plan to do, if anything, [bell] moving further
7 about it. Because quite frankly to do nothing is
8 kind of an oxymoron to the position that you've
9 taken.

10 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: I'll say
11 a couple of things about it. And one, and I know
12 that the TLC will be here later. Just to be clear,
13 they--they are actually the agency that really
14 oversees the commuter vans. We have actually sort of
15 a limited role. That said, I think as a system, both
16 agencies agree. And I've talked to Chair Joshi about
17 this, but it's-- Overall, it's a system that needs
18 some improvement.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: But the DOT
20 licenses them.

21 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: We do
22 but the TLC is the ones that really oversees the
23 regulatory structure of those vans. Yeah. We review
24 the applications. I think they get a--

25 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: But--

2 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTENBERG:

3 [interposing] They get a TLC license.

4 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay, we have to
5 keep moving.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Mr. Chair, one.

7 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Also on the--we
9 have a waste transfer station in the district as
10 well, which brings a lot of truck traffic as well.
11 And I know because I have spoken to the staff about
12 that. Is there anything that you want to share with--
13 -I know that there is a hearing on signage that we
14 can do to address this truck safety in the
15 communities as well?

16 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTENBERG: Well, I
17 know you just had a--the community just had a whole
18 hearing on it. And one of the things that I know we
19 said is in Vision Zero last year we saw a real
20 reduction in passenger car crashes. And now one of
21 our focuses for this year is going to be large
22 vehicles, trucks and buses, and seeing what else can
23 be done. Part of that is really an enforcement
24 piece, and we know we're going to need to work
25 closely with NYPD on that.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: [off mic] Thank
3 you

4 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. And
5 first of all I would like to--I would like to thank
6 the MTA for their patience. I know we are running
7 late. We have Council Member Reynoso, Menchaca,
8 Koslowitz, Johnson and Williams. Council Member
9 Reynoso.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Thank you,
11 Chair. Hello. I just want to say that out of all
12 the agencies in the city of New York, this is the one
13 that I've seen the most improvement on when it comes
14 to like community work and relationship especially in
15 my district. So I just want to start off by saying
16 thank you for the work that you're doing.

17 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Thank
18 you.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: How many bike
20 lanes--bike lane miles is the DOT responsible for
21 building or creating every year?

22 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Our
23 pledge at the moment is to build this and it was--I
24 think it was codified in PlaNYC, 50 miles a year
25 including five miles that are protected. In the last

2 calendar year, we were able to exceed that, but that
3 is--that is so far the commitment we have. And like
4 I say, I think I mentioned that takes a lot of good
5 work--

6 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: [interposing]
7 yeah.

8 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: --with
9 communities and lot of planning. That's--that's--I
10 don't want people to think that's just a number.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: I know.
12 Community Boards are tough. The protected you said
13 five--five miles a year?

14 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: All right. I
16 think that we should really look at putting more
17 money in the budget for the protected bike lanes. I
18 really did think that that's extremely important
19 given the level of safety that they provide. And it
20 just shows that we are putting a priority on--on
21 expanding our bike access, and the bike network if we
22 did the protected bike lanes. Just sometimes just
23 putting green on the street, which I appreciate, by
24 the way, isn't enough. And I think the protected
25 bike lanes show where the priorities are.

2 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: And I
3 would just say, Council Member, part of also deciding
4 where we do protected bike lanes a big piece of that
5 is hearing from communities. Hearing from community
6 boards. Hearing from elected officials. You know,
7 protected bike lanes is--that's a much bigger
8 project, and more involved. And so, getting good
9 support and a good interest from neighborhoods and
10 community boards around the city certainly helps in
11 that process.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: All right. I
13 wanted to--is there any progress on move--on the Move
14 NYC conversation? I don't know if I saw anything in
15 the budget that reflects that there is a--that we're
16 going to begin that conversation soon.

17 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: I think
18 this is one that I will quote my Mayor when he was up
19 in Albany and he was asked about what he thought
20 about it. And I think he put it in the bigger
21 context, which is clearly when you look at the--the
22 big hole in the MTA's Capital Plan, \$50 and \$2
23 billion that they need over the next five years. And
24 that's--that's just to do I think the projects that
25 we all--that are already on their books. It doesn't

2 get at I think some of the new projects that I know
3 many of us here would like to see. And I think what
4 the Mayor said is something we have to look at the.
5 The City and the State have to come up with some
6 solutions to the big capital needs.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Okay.

8 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: So,
9 that's as far as the discussion has gone.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Okay. I just
11 want to make sure you note that I am a supporter.
12 When you have those discussions, you could put one
13 person on the side of moving forward with Move NY.
14 North Brooklyn has been a problem for--regarding
15 crashes in the district. And I think it has to do
16 with the fact that we've had so many people come in.
17 An increase in population with the exact same
18 infrastructure when it comes to transportation. And
19 I'm just wondering if we've moved forward with
20 funding a comprehensive plan or study by DOT in areas
21 where we've seen substantial growth, huge growth?

22 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah,
23 and I'm actually going to pull out--I will--I will
24 hold up here because we are part of the--I mentioned
25 in my testimony the Pedestrian Safety Action Plan.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Which is
3 amazing, by the way. I read the whole thing.

4 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Well,
5 thank you, which we did for each borough. We could
6 really dive in on particular neighborhoods,
7 particular corridors, and even particular
8 intersections. And it--it combines both looking at
9 the crash data, but also something that so many of
10 you are part of, which was the town halls, the
11 workshops, asking people to come online. To really
12 make this an interactive plan where we heard from
13 people in their neighborhoods about what they needed.
14 And it's really going to help guide our work. And,
15 you know, again we're trying to focus particularly
16 on where those corridors, those intersections where
17 we're seeing the highest crash rates. And, you know,
18 you can all--I know you've all probably looked at and
19 seen where your--where your districts fall in that--
20 in those priorities.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Absolutely, and
22 in my district the buses are the problem. As you
23 know, we keep getting the-- The crash that happened
24 on Grand Street and Union happened in my district. I
25 just want to be very clear for folks to know the

2 pedestrian was hit in the front. It wasn't on the
3 sides. It wasn't in the back. There were hit in--it
4 was the front wheel that took--took their leg off,
5 or--or when the crash happened. And I just want to
6 be very mindful that this wasn't a blind spot issue.
7 This is a left turn done illegally. The right--the
8 right-of-way wasn't given to the pedestrian who had
9 the light, by the way, and was proceeded as was asked
10 of her by law and was hit by a bus. So I just want
11 to be very mindful that the pedestrian was at no
12 fault in any of--in what happened here at all. And
13 that especially when it comes to drivers that we
14 consider professionals, that get the training to be--
15 to be held to a standard so that we are safe. The
16 buses are one of the largest vehicles that we have in
17 our streets, and we should be holding folks that
18 drive those dangerous vehicles to a higher standard
19 and not to a lesser standard. So I'm glad, and I see
20 that the Mayor is really holding on, and holding up
21 the piece of legislation that we're moving forward
22 with. I think that the right-of-way law is fine the
23 way it is, and I hope that we continue to see the
24 Administration support that. And I don't want to

2 take up any more time, but thank you for your support
3 on that and thank you, Chairman.

4 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Thank
5 you.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: And I'll be
7 talking to the MTA about this stuff later.

8 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Council Member
9 Menchaca.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Thank you. I'll
11 just build off on Council Member Reynoso's praise,
12 but I'll go right into the questions. So looking and
13 thinking about ferries in general, the Mayor's
14 promise and vision for ferries in a citywide--pay
15 with a swipe of a Metro Card. How does this budget
16 advance that concept, and if you could focus on
17 Sunset Park and Red Hook, that would be great.

18 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yes,
19 Council Menchaca and I can't even tell you in
20 discussions with the Mayor, Red Hook was one of the
21 neighborhoods where he actually thought very much
22 about how we wanted to make it the same as a Metro
23 Card. I'm sure it was a fare that folks could afford.
24 And how transformative it could be for that
25 neighborhood if they could connect easily to, you

2 know, the jobs and the opportunities of Lower
3 Manhattan. So, we have--I think we'll dig up the
4 numbers. Huh, how much is it? Oh, well, hang on.
5 We'll check on the number. As you know, it's
6 actually going to be in EDC's budget, and they have
7 their own separate budget category. I'll get you the
8 funds. But the good news is I think we've budgeted
9 for it. And then EDC is also going to be looking for
10 how we can use the value that's captured from the
11 development that we obviously think will be spurred
12 by this ferry wide system. And use that to help
13 defray the cost of the system.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Great, well,
15 and I guess that--I'm going to skip to one of the
16 final questions about coordination. How are you
17 coordinating in relationship to this new funding
18 stream that you're asking for in this budget process
19 with other agencies on things like ferries? Things
20 like solving the truck issue post this truck plan?
21 Green NY initiatives, Vision Zero, upland connectors,
22 all the new residential. So I want to hear a little
23 bit about how this new budget proposal that you're
24 coordinating with other--all the other agencies?

2 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: I think
3 one thing, and I know this is something the Mayor has
4 tasked all his commissioners and deputy mayors with.
5 And one thing I think we're also proud of is we
6 really try and be a collaborative city government in
7 that.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: How--How are
9 you doing that? Is that--

10 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG:
11 [interposing] Well, I think--

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: --with a task
13 force?

14 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Right.
15 I think on each of these areas generally we have an
16 interagency task force. I'll start with housing
17 because that is such a big bold initiative, and
18 honestly the ferries and some of the work we're going
19 to be doing is going to be tied into that. And, that
20 is a--basically a multi-agency effort led, you know,
21 largely by Deputy Mayor Alisha Glen with Carl Kimble
22 from EDC; Vicki Bean from HPD; Carl Weisbrod from
23 Planning; DOT and also Victoria Springer from Small
24 Businesses to make sure as we roll out the housing
25 plan, that we're also providing economic

2 opportunities for those. So we're meeting on a
3 regular basis with the principals, but also the staff
4 are meeting. We're working through what budget
5 scenarios would look like. So I think it's going to
6 be a very robust collaboration, and we're trying to
7 do that in so many areas. Vision Zero we have a
8 terrific interagency collaboration. DOT, NYPD, TLC.
9 Sometimes the Department of Health and other
10 agencies. DCAS to look at truck safety.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Right. So I'll
12 step in and say that it's great to hear that there's
13 coordination, and at the local level it would be
14 great to expand a little bit about what I keep on
15 hearing from everyone. And you say it often, hearing
16 from the community is great. And so, how does this
17 budget fund that part. Hearing from the community
18 doesn't just happen. As we know, we went through a
19 summer of Vision Zero town halls that took immense
20 resources from the City Council. Immense resources
21 from district offices. And so how does this budget
22 reflect the commitment to hearing from the community,
23 and can you talk to us a little bit about that?

24 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah, no
25 I mean I think one of the things that I realized

2 coming in, and I've talked to some of the delegations
3 about this. One of the key parts of DOT is our
4 borough commissioner offices. They are really the
5 folks that are on the ground for a lot of the work
6 with local communities. And one of the things we're
7 trying to do is work to strengthen each of those
8 offices. Put additional personnel there. So that is
9 something we're working through in this budget. We
10 agree one of the things that I've been talking about
11 at this hearing is the vast number of things that
12 we're now trying to do have us basically in front of
13 all of the community boards of the city pretty
14 regularly. And not to mention community, you know,
15 local civic group meetings. Meeting with elected
16 officials. It's labor intensive and we are mindful
17 that we need to have the staff and resources to be up
18 to that challenge.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Wonderful and
20 as a final note, on all these very difficult
21 conversations about safe streets and Vision Zero
22 planning, and the upland connectors to things like
23 the residential part of Sunset Park, to the
24 industrial part of Sunset Park. The boom in
25 development that's coming from the Mayor's Office on

2 housing, on jobs. DOT's component is an incredibly
3 important one, and funding that ability for us to
4 communicate to you all. And I'm thinking about the
5 bus driver conversation that Reynoso and Miller and
6 all of the council members have been bringing up.
7 When community can engage in a meaningful way, we
8 have our own solutions that might be specific to
9 communities. So thank you so much for saying that
10 [bell] and I'm going to follow up. Thank you.

11 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Thank
12 you.

13 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Council Member
14 Koslowitz followed by Council Johnson and Williams.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: I just want so
16 say to you thank you, thank you, thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Thank
18 you.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: My dream in
20 life is not to call Queens Boulevard the Boulevard of
21 Death. I think everybody [applause]--

22 SERGEANT-A-ARMS: Quiet down, please.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: Everybody in
24 the City of New York knows when they talk about the
25 Boulevard of Death they're talking about Queens

2 Boulevard. And I am so happy that the Mayor has
3 taken a look at Queens Boulevard and he is beginning
4 to do things on Queens Boulevard. I have to say that
5 your response to whatever questions we have, you have
6 been really wonderful. It's a pleasure. It's a
7 breath of fresh air that we have someone that we
8 could talk to. And thank you, thank you, thank you
9 for giving us Jeff Lynch. He is so responsive, it's
10 also a pleasure.

11 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTENBERG: I would
12 just warn you, you don't get to keep him. [laughs]

13 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: He's a breath
14 of fresh air, and it's really wonderful because I
15 have millions of dollars on Queens Boulevard when
16 they first put up the gates. The distance between
17 Rego Park from the Long Island Expressway all the way
18 to the Van Wyck Expressway is my district. Between
19 1993 and 2001, there were 100 deaths on Queens
20 Boulevard. Most of them in the Rego Park/Forest
21 Hills area. I went to California to see they had
22 gates that were being up, and they had the time
23 clocks. And I'm happy to say that it took seven
24 years to put the gates up. But since the gates have
25 been up, deaths has really gone down. I still see

2 people using Queens Boulevard in my direction like a
3 highway. I travel it every single day. I walk it
4 every single day, and they're still using it as a
5 highway. And as nice that it is that Jimmy Van
6 Bramer's area is going to look beautiful, I would
7 like to see more trees on Queens Boulevard.

8 And maybe that in itself and a lot of
9 other things on Queens Boulevard that will make it
10 look more like a beautiful place to drive. And you
11 don't want to speed. You want to take in the beauty
12 of it. I want to thank you also for the improvements
13 that have been made on Queens Boulevard with the
14 extended walks when you're crossing the lanes. But I
15 still want to, and we've talked about it. To see
16 Queens Boulevard from the Queens Borough Bridge all
17 the way down to Hillside Avenue, I want to see that
18 beauty. And I hope we do this in the--in a quick
19 manner. I also have Woodhaven Boulevard, and that
20 has to really be looked at. There have been deaths
21 on Woodhaven Boulevard, and it really has to also--
22 Maybe if it looked like a parkway instead of a
23 highway, we can, you know, make it better. I have
24 half of Woodhaven Boulevard, and I share it. Well,
25 there are four--four council members representing

2 Woodhaven Boulevard and Queens Boulevard. What are
3 the--are there any plans to move up, and put trees
4 and things? I have committed this year \$1 million to
5 Queens Boulevard in my district to help shape it up.

6 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Well,
7 thanks. First of all, thank you for your kind words,
8 and your leadership. We know you've been a champion
9 for better safety on Queens Boulevard. And yes. I
10 mean, again the goal is to keep moving--keep moving
11 east on Queens Boulevard. And it sounds like one
12 thing we need to do I think is have another
13 conversation and really dive in deeper. I think we
14 want to give you all a refined time table of what we
15 have on the books for the next few years and get your
16 input. If you all are putting some money in see how
17 we can tie that in.

18 And, you know, you're right about
19 Woodhaven. You know, I was mentioning our borough
20 pedestrian safety plans, and Woodhaven comes up as--
21 as one of the very high crash streets. And the good
22 news is one of the things when we do our Select Bus
23 Service we also do a lot of things that make the
24 roadways safer. We often our [bell] bus bulbs [sic]
25 and make that a pedestrian crossing. So, hopefully,

2 the ultimate project will have both great mobility
3 benefits for the buses, but tremendous safety
4 benefits, too, for the pedestrians.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: Okay, thank
6 you and thank you for everything you do.

7 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Council Member
8 Johnson.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you, Chair
10 Rodriguez. Good to see you, Commissioner, and good
11 to see you, Jeff. I have a bunch of-- Sorry to be so
12 hyper local, but a bunch of local concerns. On 8th
13 Avenue and 9th Avenue near the Lincoln Tunnel, it is
14 incredibly dangerous. As you all know, there's a
15 huge amount of bus traffic given the Port Authority
16 Bus Terminal as well as truck traffic coming through
17 the Lincoln Tunnel, and delivering in the Times
18 Square area. There is a need for additional left
19 hand turn lanes to make it safer for pedestrians.
20 And I know that this committee has drilled down on
21 wanting to see those safety enhancements done. I'm
22 wondering if there is any short-term immediate
23 funding that you see in the budget to look at some of
24 the most dangerous places in the city. And do some

2 quick improvements in safety improvements on safety
3 that are deemed really dangerous?

4 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: I mean,
5 you know, we'll be happy--that is a challenging area,
6 as you know, for so many reasons. You have
7 incredible traffic pouring in. Now you have
8 increasingly a residential area. And so, you know,
9 keeping the traffic moving, the commerce flowing and
10 making sure the streets are safe is definitely--it's
11 definitely one of our challenging parts of the city.
12 We would--you know if there are particular areas
13 where you think there is something acute, we will
14 come and see what we can do. Typically, when we're
15 doing things like putting in a new left hand turn
16 signal, there's a certain amount of traffic study you
17 want to do to see how it's going to impact other
18 parts of the network. But again, happy if there's
19 something--if there are some spots you want to talk
20 to us about definitely let's--let's sit down and do
21 it.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Great. I'll get
23 you guys a list and I look forward to having that
24 conversation. I--my office asked last summer to
25 expand a slow zone area in the heart of the West

2 Village between 7th Avenue and Hudson from Grove
3 Street up to 14th Street that included PS 3. We
4 wanted to expand it all the way over to 6th Avenue to
5 include PS 41, an elementary school. I believe that
6 we were told by your office that we would have to put
7 forward a new application because you all didn't have
8 the resources or funds at the time to do a
9 feasibility study on what an expansion would look
10 like for that slow zone. And it's really, really
11 important. We've seen more accidents in that area,
12 and I'm wondering and you-- And I want to thank
13 Margaret and Colleen. Because even though you are--
14 you weren't able to expand right away, you're putting
15 in speed humps outside of the slow zone in areas to
16 try to help slow down traffic near the local schools.
17 I'm wondering what funds are available, and what does
18 the budget look like on the expansion of slow zones?

19 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Well,
20 I'm happy to say we are--I think we're going to--
21 Joe, correct me if I'm wrong. We're going to be
22 taking new applications this year actually. So we'll
23 have a chance to take a look at that expansion, and
24 look at some other ones around the city.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Okay. Great.

3 And I wanted to ask about, you know, the Select Bus
4 Service. You know, 34th Street crosstown is still a
5 big problem, and I'm wondering if you had any updates
6 on improvements in travel time going across the
7 Island?

8 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTENBERG: Well, it
9 is--that is sort of the fundamental traffic challenge
10 of New York City which is--which is crosstown
11 traffic. And, you know, there's been frustration
12 that some of the construction there has really slowed
13 things down. And actually, you mentioned Margaret.
14 She has been working hard to see what we can do to
15 continue to make that corridor better. And working
16 with some of the local community groups and
17 merchants, et cetera. So, you know, we'd actually be
18 happy to sit down and do a bigger update on where
19 things stand on that. We know it's--it's one I hear
20 a lot of frustration about.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Okay. Thank you
22 very much, Mr. Chair.

23 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Council Member
24 Williams.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you, Mr.
3 Chair. Thank you, Commission, et al. for testimony.
4 I just want to say that the Brooklyn staff has been
5 very responsive to my office, and so I appreciate
6 that. I have two things. One very quickly. My
7 colleague, Council Member Miller mentioned commuter
8 vans, also know as dollar vans. I'm a big supporter
9 of those van drivers that are licensed by TLC and
10 have insurance. We see things a little differently,
11 Councilman Miller and I, but actually we're much
12 more--we're much closer to the same thing than a lot
13 of folks think. I definitely would support a
14 moratorium as long as we have made some adjustments
15 to make it fully legal for some of the people to
16 operate the way they're operating. As long as
17 they're licensed, and as long as they have insurance.
18 The folks that are doing the craziness too often have
19 neither of those. So we definitely appreciate any
20 increased enforcement to get them off of the road.
21 But more of my comments today are around Select Bus
22 Service. I have a lot of issues with them. They
23 were at a hearing that I missed. Unfortunately, I
24 missed that. But how much is in the budget for SBS
25 this budget cycle?

2 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: \$84
3 million.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: How much of
5 that, if any, is toward evaluating whether a bus line
6 is successful or not?

7 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Well, we
8 do an analysis of each of the bus lines. We actually
9 do it immediately and then do a long-term line. And
10 I think as I mentioned in my testimony, we put in
11 last May the new Select Bus Service line on 125th
12 Street to La Guardia, and we're already seeing
13 improved travel times of about 14%.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: So I think for
15 one of my own Rogers Avenue you told me it was maybe
16 about 12% increase. I think that was the number I
17 heard, but it would have probably translated to maybe
18 about 10 minutes or so. And I'm trying to gauge what
19 is success, and I'm very concerned because not every
20 street is the same, and not every avenue is the same.
21 So some of the places they put in my district doesn't
22 make sense. And I've been kind of quiet waiting to
23 see what would happen. Rogers Avenue was really the
24 only way to get down from end of Brooklyn to Downtown
25 Brooklyn. Flatbush is always crazy. Ocean Avenue

2 well it doesn't go all the way. And so now that's
3 gone, and there's really only one lane that you can
4 go during rush hour. And so what happens is you have
5 a--if you run the light, you get a \$50 ticket. If
6 you get in the bus lane it's \$115 ticket, which never
7 really made sense to me. But then the lane that is
8 supposed to be open so you can move freely on the
9 left hand side, there is no enforcement of parking.
10 So anybody that's parked there blocks that. So you
11 really only have that one lane. And I don't know if
12 there's an analysis between the cars that have to
13 back up, and are hurting the environment versus now
14 the bus that is going. And it has increased maybe 10
15 minutes of time for someone to get from the end of
16 Brooklyn to Downtown Brooklyn. How do you gauge
17 whether it's successful? Is all that money spent on
18 that worth 10 minutes extra, particularly if cars are
19 now aligned all the way back to Southern Brooklyn?

20 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah, I-
21 -I would say in general we've seen with the Select
22 Bus Service lines usually somewhere between 10 to 20%
23 improvement in travel times. Which when you talk
24 about some of these bus lines, which have 50 or
25 60,000 people a day riding them. In sort of the

2 transportation cost benefit analysis world, if these
3 projects cost \$8 to \$10 million, that's actually
4 money very well spent. That is in the aggregate
5 saving people a time. That said, if there are
6 particular issues we need to--you think we need to be
7 taking a look at in your district in terms of parking
8 enforcement, et cetera on the bus route, we'd be
9 happy to do that. One thing we say about these bus
10 routes, we know we always need to come back and
11 revisit them. And check out how they're working
12 operationally, and see if we need to step up
13 enforcement. Or, take a look at the parking
14 regulations, the loading and unloading regulations.
15 So we'd be happy to do that if you--if you have
16 concerns.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Is there an
18 exit plan for any of these bus routes if it is deemed
19 that it is not working successful and what does that
20 look like?

21 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: I mean I
22 have to say so far they've--they've been successful,
23 and I haven't really had any-- I don't think we've
24 had a lot of calls to rid of them. I--I--I guess if
25 one were a real disaster, we could. But so far I

2 think overall they've proved pretty successful with
3 bus riders.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: I get a lot of
5 calls. I just--I haven't done much about it because
6 I'm actually trying to wait to see whether it's
7 successful or not. So I really would like to talk a
8 lot further off line about Rogers--the Rogers Avenue
9 experience.

10 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: We'd be
11 happy to do that.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: I do also want
13 to ask why is--and I'm not sure who set the fine, but
14 the fine is \$115 for that bus lane, which doesn't
15 make sense.

16 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG:
17 [interposing] No.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Particularly if
19 running light is much less than that.

20 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Well,
21 the fine was set I believe by the State Legislation
22 that authorized the camera enforcement. So all our
23 fines-- You know, actually our--the other fines the
24 city enforces like on our speed cameras, that's also
25 set by the State. We don't--we don't get to decide.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Okay. So I'm
3 looking forward to really having this conversation
4 continue off line. But thank you very much.

5 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Thank
6 you.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you, Mr.
8 Chair.

9 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: With that I have
10 a few more questions, and then we'll get into the
11 MTA. One is on how is the DOT doing when it comes to
12 the MWBE. As you know, there is like \$198--\$198.3
13 million for 583 contracts for the department. Of
14 that amount, \$109 million or 5--55.--55% is for
15 maintenance and operations of infrastructure. And I
16 know that this is very important for this
17 Administration. So what was the department's MWBE
18 percentage for all contracts in fiscal 2013-14, and
19 what is the projected MWBE percentage for '15 and
20 '16?

21 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah,
22 let me say, Mr. Chairman, you are--you are absolutely
23 correct for Mayor de Blasio and this Administration
24 this is a big area of focus and priority. We really
25 want to make sure that, you know, we spread the

2 benefits of City contracting and of City purchases to
3 a broad range of diverse businesses. It's a big
4 priority for the Mayor. I'm happy to say I think at
5 DOT we've--I'm proud of our goals. We've--I guess
6 it's broken down into different categories. My group
7 purchases, our goal last year for fiscal year '14 was
8 22% and we greatly exceeded that goal. We had 54%.
9 For fiscal year '15 year to date we're up to 33%, but
10 I don't know yet where we're going to wind up. Our
11 target goal for the entire fiscal year for micro
12 purchases is 35%. Yeah, 35% which I'm quite
13 confident, and Joe will tell me if I'm wrong. He
14 oversees our contracting process. We're going to
15 exceed. On P Cards our goal was 20%, which we met in
16 FY14, and so far for FY15 we're up to 16%. Small
17 purchases our goal was 39%. For last year we were at
18 48%, and this year so far year to date we're at 48%.

19 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: I know. I just
20 want to be sure that we don't experience the same
21 negative experience that I had with the Port
22 Authority. So that when it came to the--to the MWBE
23 in district, they came and they said that they
24 complied with the percentage that the Governor
25 established or whatever. Some of those MWBEs were

2 also created by the same corporation and they don't
3 really go down and provide this opportunity to the
4 local MWBE. I just want to be sure that, you know,
5 that there an effort to be sure that those contracts-
6 -

7 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG:

8 [interposing] I know that--Yeah.

9 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: --the local five
10 boroughs.

11 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: I know
12 the City has a very, very rigorous application and
13 oversight process to make sure that the--those are
14 genuinely MWBE firms. And that a real--a real
15 diverse set of business owners are getting the
16 benefits. And they're not basically as you're sort
17 of describing, you know, the brother-in-law created
18 the company. I know the City tries very hard to
19 ensure that there is compliance there.

20 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: In the two-year
21 strategy it includes \$77 million in private--As you
22 describe as a private fund in addition to public
23 funds for the highway reconstruction and
24 rehabilitation. Can you like share with us what are
25 those sources of those private funds--

2 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG:

3 [interposing] Yeah.

4 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: And what are the
5 benefits also that those private individual
6 institutions are getting in exchange for their
7 contributions?

8 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: I'll
9 give you a quick answer. And I mean ask Joe to jump
10 in, too. I think a big majority of that and Joe will
11 correct me is actually reimbursement from property
12 owners for sidewalk work. Am I correct about that?
13 That's my understanding, and Joe if you want to add a
14 bit more.

15 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: That's the
16 main--that's the biggest portion of it. There's some
17 additional funding there for the Hudson Yard
18 Development Corporation. And we have a few projects
19 with some private institutions that money--they're
20 providing private funding for capital construction.
21 And the last piece is utility companies. At Con Ed
22 we're paying for the utility work as part of our
23 project. It's a combination of those four things.

24 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: So those are not
25 a donation, right? This is like--

2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: No, no,
3 they're paying for construction, actual construction.
4 Yes.

5 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. What are
6 the difficulties, and this is my last question
7 Cemusa, going back to Cemusa. You had said that--
8 mentioned that Cemusa is going through some
9 difficulties. And when they--when we did a deal with
10 the bicycle program, we know that we were able to
11 also and DOT was able to negotiate like the new
12 contracts. So that we keep like our Citi Bike
13 program growing more efficient than what it was
14 before. So, what are the difficulties that--if you
15 can share with us--what Cemusa is going through right
16 now since they are the ones who run our bus shelters.
17 You know, they're advertising that there have been
18 the bus shelters development.

19 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: And I
20 706870687068would say, Mr. Chairman, I have to make a
21 distinction between Cemusa and Alta because I think
22 mostly again I think the City is happy with Cemusa's
23 performance. They have made the payments that they
24 were-- I mean I hear you on the snow removal, and
25 it's something that-- But I mean in general the City

2 is getting very large payments from them, which are
3 helping our bottom line. They reconstructed and
4 replaced a number of bus shelters and done a
5 beautiful job. I think it's a little different with
6 Alta where we had a lot of performance--you know, a
7 lot of performance problems throughout. But now, you
8 know, again Cemusa has run into some financial
9 difficulty. They are potentially looking to find
10 another firm to take them over. Different firms are
11 being discussed. The City is monitoring that. And,
12 I think that's something if you want we can probably
13 come in and give you a more detailed discussion of
14 what are some potential, you know, future options
15 there. It hasn't been resolved, but, you know,
16 Cemusa is a company that I think is a little bit
17 looking perhaps to get out of the business of, you
18 know, street furniture and bus shelters.

19 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Right. And again
20 like I think that we agree that 99.9% of everything
21 that we have discussed that I would say that .5% that
22 we have a different interpretation. It's about is
23 Cemusa efficient on keeping the bus shelter clean.
24 That's not happening. If, you know, I get email I
25 get email from many of my council members. And you--

2 your cleaning is very efficient, right. Any time
3 that we're sending a photo of a situation in
4 particular those shelters to be cleaned you get it
5 going.

6 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: It gets
7 going.

8 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: But we should not
9 be able--we should not be put in a position where I
10 am pretty sure, and we can monitor this particular--
11 It's not what we're getting right now, that's not
12 accumulating. And even though they can come and say
13 in the report that they go and clean, but they don't
14 come back. And they don't keep those shelters clean.
15 And this is like a top priority especially because of
16 the senior citizens who use the bus shelters. And we
17 should not be in a situation where we have to be, you
18 know, contact the staff to be that Cemusa clean.
19 Cemusa should come back and put a more efficient plan
20 on how they keep the bus shelters clean.

21 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTEBERG: I hear
22 you on that. We'll certainly go back to them.

23 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: So thank you,
24 Commissioner for the great leadership in this
25 Administration, and with that this hearing--I mean

2 this part of the hearing is adjourned. Then we move
3 to the MTA.

4 COMMISSIONER POLLY TROTTENBERG: Thank
5 you, Mr. Chairman.

6 [background comments, pause]

7 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you for
8 your patience and being here waiting, and I'm sorry
9 for the delay that we have in the--from the other
10 panel that we have in the DOT. We now welcome our
11 next panel a representative from the MTA, the MTA's
12 Calendar Year 2015 the Operation Budget is balanced
13 and includes more than \$900 million in city tax
14 levies for funding. However, I and many of my
15 colleagues remain especially concerned by the
16 alarming gap in the MTA's Capital Budget released
17 last year. The Authority's Proposed 2015-2019 \$32
18 billion Capital Program was built by the State
19 Capital Program Review Board from not sufficiently
20 detailing the sources of funding leaving an over \$15
21 billion shortfall. I expect to hear from the MTA a
22 real solution to this issue, pointing out a way to
23 fully fund the Capital Plan especially given that the
24 Governor's State Executive Budget includes just \$1
25 billion to support the MTA Capital Plan. Our city

2 needs these improvements to continue to operate as
3 the world class city we are. The MTA is the organ
4 that keeps New York City's economy alive and
5 sustained. Last September, we achieved record
6 ridership with almost 150 million riders using our
7 transportation network. In order to continue to
8 incentivize New Yorkers to use this environmentally
9 friendly mode of transportation, we must ensure that
10 they are safe, clean and sufficiently maintained.
11 The committee and the communities we represent stand
12 united in our opposition to further cut project
13 delays or service failures. Further, by waiting, our
14 city only delays the inevitable and potentially
15 further increase the cost to bring our system to a
16 standard of good repair. I also look forward to
17 hearing from the Authority on the other matters of
18 importance including updates on ongoing project such
19 as the Second Avenue Subway East Side access and the
20 extension of the No. 7 Line. I now ask our Committee
21 Counsel to administer the Affirmation to the
22 representatives of the MTA who are here, and then
23 invite them to deliver their testimony.

24 COUNSEL TAYLOR: Would you please raise
25 your right hands? Do you affirm to tell the truth,

2 the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in your
3 testimony before this committee today, and to respond
4 honestly to council member questions? Thank you.

5 DOUG JOHNSON: We all set? Okay. Good
6 morning Chairman Rodriguez and council members. I'm
7 Doug Johnson, the MTA's Budget Director. Joining me
8 today are Craig Stewart, Senior Director of MTA's
9 Capital Budget; David Henley, New York City Transit
10 Chief of Capital Planning and Budget; Aaron Stern,
11 Director of New York City Transit's Office of
12 Management and Budget; and on my far right Lois
13 Tendler, New York City Transit's Vice President for
14 Government and Community Relations. We are here
15 today to discuss the Mayor's Fiscal Year 2015
16 Preliminary Budget, particularly as it relates to the
17 City's contribution to the Operating and Capital
18 Budgets of the MTA. The MTA recently released its
19 2015 Budget and Financial Plan, and as with all our
20 plans, it presents a fully transparent view of our
21 current and four-year financial outlook. It strongly
22 reaffirms our organization wide commitment to cost
23 cutting and containment. And it reveals that we have
24 already reduced our Operating Budget by more than \$1
25 billion per year, and we're not finished.

2 I want to take a few moments to share
3 with you some of the specifics as to how the MTA
4 became more efficient and better managed than ever in
5 2014. First of all, we incorporate modern strategies
6 for office space. We were able to move our entire
7 headquarters to 2 Broadway in Lower Manhattan,
8 enabling us to monetize our former Midtown
9 headquarters at 341, 345 and 347 Madison Avenue, and
10 thereby position us to generate hundreds of millions
11 of dollars for our Capital Program. In addition, we
12 issued \$479 million of refunding bonds, and completed
13 associated restructurings of existing escrows for
14 total savings of approximately \$110 million. And we
15 successfully concluded labor settlements with most of
16 our represented workforce. We are now pursuing a
17 range of new savings initiatives relative to prompt
18 payment discounts, Workers Compensation, energy
19 management, consolidations, purchasing, inventory and
20 employee benefits. We expect these initiatives will
21 bring the total reduction in our annual operating
22 budget to \$1.6 billion by 2018. This cost cutting
23 effort is the most aggressive in the MTA's history,
24 and the savings we have realized today has benefitted

2 our operations and our customers in three very
3 significant ways.

4 First, without these savings, we could
5 not have reduced fare and toll increases from what
6 was 7.5% every other year down to 4% every other
7 year, which translates roughly to 2% annual increase.
8 Second, these savings have allowed us to \$157 million
9 back into service and service quality enhancements
10 since 2012, not to mention many investments we have
11 made in safety and other operations. Third, it has
12 helped us put \$300 million a year into pay-as-you-go
13 account financing beginning that we expect to
14 generate up to \$5.4 million for the 2015 to 2019
15 Capital Program.

16 With regard to our own Operating Budget,
17 we project \$14.5 billion for 2015. The city's
18 contribution is an important source of funding
19 representing 7% of that overall budget. City source
20 funding is used to support the operation of New York
21 City Transit, MTA Bus and the Staten Island Railway,
22 as well as the commuter rail stations located within
23 New York City. I'm going to give you a breakout of
24 that operating funding from the City. First of all,
25 there's \$45 million for free and reduced school

2 fares; \$14 million for reduced fares for senior
3 citizens and persons with disabilities. \$183 million
4 for paratransit service; \$161 million to pay the
5 local match for State Aid payments; \$93 million for
6 station maintenance at 36 commuter rail stations in
7 New York City; \$486 million for the cost of MTA Bus.
8 That's the agency created by the MTA to operate
9 formerly private bus lines at the City's request.
10 And finally, \$35 million to reimburse the MTA for the
11 cost of the Staten Island Railway Operating
12 Authority.

13 The City's investment in the MTA yields
14 tremendous dividends. The MTA's subway, bus, and
15 commuter rail operations provide the foundation for
16 the economic wellbeing of the city and the region.
17 Countless jobs, educational opportunities and social
18 mobility are available to the 8.7 million riders that
19 use our services each day. Today's ridership is at
20 all time high levels. Before October 2013, we had
21 never recorded 6 million daily subway riders. We
22 exceeded that number on 21 days in the last three
23 months of last year. And recording in October, the
24 highest total monthly subway ridership in the history
25 of the system.

2 Transit Network supports four times the
3 employment and population density--destination--
4 density of the next largest U.S. city and is engine
5 that drives the most value estate market in the
6 nation. The \$1.4 trillion regional economy rides on
7 the steel rails and the rubber tires of the MTA's
8 transportation network. While these reimbursements
9 from the City are of utmost importance to the MTA, we
10 note that the City's funding represents a shrinking
11 portion when measured against the MTA'S budget. The
12 \$45 million reimbursement for free or reduced school
13 fares and the \$14 million reimbursement for reduced
14 fares for senior citizens and people with
15 disabilities have not changed in decades. Having
16 failed in taking into consideration the expanding
17 customer base, escalating costs of the ravages of
18 inflation, the City's funding now represents only 18%
19 and 13% of the deficit from operating those
20 respective programs. The reimbursement for
21 Paratransit service of \$183 million also falls short
22 representing less than one-third of those costs. And
23 what happens is the MTA picks up the balance in all
24 those instances. The additional City support that is
25 proposed for 2015 represents only the reimbursement

2 of the actual cost of operating the former private
3 buses under the agreement made between the City and
4 the MTA. Reimbursement of the deficit for the
5 operating--operating the Staten Island Railway
6 Operating Authority and the City's portion of the
7 costs of maintaining the 36 commuter railroad
8 stations located within the city.

9 With respect to our Capital Budget, as
10 you know, we have developed a series of five-year
11 investments beginning in 1982 that have allowed us to
12 renew, enhance and expand our 5,000 square mile
13 network. Over the past 30 years, we've invested
14 nearly \$150 billion in the vital infrastructure that
15 keeps the city moving. Revitalizing not only the
16 transit system, but our entire region. These
17 improvements to the system have brought customers
18 back to our system in droves, as I mentioned earlier.
19 Thus, with the future in mind, we convened a panel of
20 experts perform the development of our current
21 Capital Program and asked them to focus on two
22 important areas: Climate change and changing
23 demographics. This transportation reinvention
24 commission highlighted some very simple truths in the
25 report. First of all, more than two million

2 additional people are expected to live in the MTA
3 region by 2040 putting increasing pressure on our
4 system that is already largely at capacity.
5 Demographic shifts are driving new and evolving
6 customer expectations, service needs, and
7 accessibility requirements. And finally, the current
8 system is simply not fully equipped to meet these
9 evolving needs.

10 With these changes in mind, this fall the
11 MTA Board approved the Proposed 2015 to 2019 Capital
12 Program that supports MTA's strategic goals to
13 rebuild, renew and expand. The proposed program
14 allows to build capacity, meet growing needs and
15 expectations, and most importantly renew our system
16 to keep it safe and reliable. Capacity is not our
17 only challenge. Maintaining a system as large, old
18 and complex as ours is unavoidably expensive. If we
19 want the system to continue to operate safely and
20 reliably, we must continue to invest heavily in what
21 we call state of good repair. Safety and reliability
22 projects encompass track replacement, structural
23 repairs, signal system upgrades, and fleet
24 replacement comprise a full two-thirds of our 2015 to
25 2019 Capital Program Budget. These expenditures are

2 absolutely essential, as providing safe and reliable
3 service is our most critical priority everyday.

4 Just two examples of the types of
5 maintenance and good repair spending including our
6 2015 to 2019 Capital Program that we cannot afford to
7 postpone are the replacement of 86 miles of subway
8 track with safer, smoother track, and the
9 installation of a modern new signal system on the E,
10 F, M and R Lines in Queens and the B, B, F and M
11 Lines in Manhattan. This type of system, which is
12 already fully in place on the L Line and under
13 construction on the 7 Line not only allows us to
14 provide for safer service, but serves as an
15 enhancement of our system, allowing us to run more
16 trains with far more people and ease crowding. To
17 ensure that the system meets the changing
18 demographics and the demands of the riding public,
19 the MTA must make investments that enhance the
20 current infrastructure to provide better service to
21 our customers. Ridership is at an all-time high
22 throughout the MTA Network and in particular in the
23 New York City Transit System. So it is important to
24 invest in enhancements that meet customer
25 expectations. Enhancements in the 2015 to 2019 Plan

2 include customer focused initiatives such as customer
3 information, and next train arrival signs, new
4 stations, new fare payment systems and accessibility
5 projects.

6 The 2015 to 2019 program will also allow
7 us to expand our system to better accommodate current
8 ridership levels and to prepare for even more growth
9 in the future. As an important side benefit in the
10 region with new experience and understanding of
11 natural hazards, system expansion will protect us by
12 making the Transit System Network more redundant.
13 Projects such as the completion of Phase 1 of the
14 Second Avenue Subway, and the launch of the second
15 phase as well as East Side Access and Penn Access,
16 which is a project that will add four new Metro North
17 Stations in the Bronx. And open a new Metro North
18 link directly into Penn Station support the critical
19 goal of system expansion.

20 Dramatically improving our transit system
21 is not the only benefit of a fully funded 2015 to
22 2019 program. The MTA's Capital Program and the jobs
23 it creates are an integral part of our region's
24 economy and economic growth. Last month the Urban
25 Land Institute of New York and the Permanent Citizen

2 Advisory Committee and the MTA published a report
3 examining the intrinsic connection between a health
4 transit system and healthy vibrant economy.
5 According to this report, since 1982, the MTA Capital
6 Program has transformed the region's public
7 transportation system into a crucial economic asset,
8 which is helping New York achieve a global economic
9 preeminence a few could have imagined in the economic
10 crisis of the 1970s. Moreover, the report concluded
11 that investments in the MTA have generated economic
12 benefits for communities across New York State with
13 major vendors opening plants to fill our
14 transportation needs locally and all across North
15 America. In the tradition of the MTA's previous
16 Capital Program, a fully funded 2015 to 2019 Program
17 is expected to generate more than 400,000 jobs
18 throughout New York State and yield nearly \$52
19 billion in economic output.

20 In October, we submitted the 2015 to 2019
21 MTA Capital Program to the Capital Program Review
22 Board in order to begin a dialogue. One concern
23 shared by all who have been involved in its funding
24 thus far is identified sources for only half the
25 money needed to fund the full program. A \$15 billion

2 shortfall remains. We're asking all stakeholders,
3 those who benefit directly or indirectly from the
4 MTA's Capital Program, all levels of government, as
5 well as the private sector including employers,
6 suppliers, contractors, and vendors the entire
7 business community to embrace the necessity of
8 capital investment in MTA's transit infrastructure.
9 And to step up in new and unprecedented ways to lend
10 the financial support that is needed to fully fund
11 the 2015 to 2019 Capital Program. In recent years,
12 the City has contributed approximately \$100 million
13 annually towards the MTA Capital Program. However,
14 we have a significant funding gap. Our proposed 2015
15 to 2019 Capital Plan assumes a greater contribution,
16 and we certainly hope to receive one.

17 It is worth noting that every major world
18 city including London, Paris and Hong Kong, among
19 others, is investing significantly in mass transit to
20 improve the quality of life for their residents to
21 maintain their status as a global, financial and
22 business center. And to make it even more
23 competitive in the world economy. New York City
24 should do no less. We continue to invest. Thank you

2 for your time today, and we are now happy to answer
3 any questions you may have.

4 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you, and
5 thank you for all the investment that the MTA has
6 made in my own district. We are renovating our
7 Diamond 215 and other stations there in the one
8 transfer. I know but it has been like a major
9 improvement for the residents of Northern Manhattan.

10 DOUG JOHNSON: We appreciate your words.

11 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: My first question
12 is about security. How much--how are we doing on
13 keeping our trains system safe since we know that all
14 the information says that New York City can be a
15 target of terrorism. And as we know like being in
16 Times Square during the rush hour in the morning or
17 in the afternoon everyone knows that the public--that
18 those platforms are in danger by all the studies.
19 But those platforms are so overcrowded. How much is
20 the MTA investing right now to keep our train
21 stations safe?

22 LOIS TENDLER: Councilman, you're
23 referring to security. I think what we're talking
24 about is safety. We use those terms differently in
25 our world. So we have a whole program where employ

2 platform conductors down to our particularly crowded
3 stations because we have capacity issues on a regular
4 basis. So at Grand Central Station, for instance,
5 with our platform it can get very, very crowded. We
6 have a platform conductor employed there during rush
7 hours to move people off and on. We are working very
8 hard to reduce dwell time, which contributes to
9 crowded platforms. You can get in trains in and out.
10 Some of that's a courtesy campaign, Step Aside, Speed
11 Your Ride. Some of it is better dispatching. We
12 have a whole series of efforts which are directed
13 towards getting trains to move quicker. To alleviate
14 crowding situations, which could exist at certain
15 stations.

16 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: But I refer to
17 the other type of security like I understand the
18 part. I'm talking about how--what is the message
19 that we can send--that we can send to New Yorkers
20 that if they are at Times Square, they are safe?

21 DOUG JOHNSON: [interposing] We've--we've
22 been coming--

23 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Like how much
24 money--how much money--

25 DOUG JOHNSON: Yeah, we've hired a--

2 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: How money and
3 what is the investment.

4 DOUG JOHNSON: [interposing] Yeah, hired
5 a--

6 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: And what is the
7 investment that we're making now.

8 DOUG JOHNSON: Well, security is a little
9 complex with the MTA. On the subways you have it--
10 it's handled by NYPD. MTA wide we have a Director of
11 Security and we have police forces that are more--
12 more actually inclined--they're more programmed to be
13 working with the commuter rails in the large
14 terminals like Penn Station and Grand Central
15 Terminal, but they also--and the bridges and tunnels.
16 They react to all, you know, on a daily basis to
17 threat levels. We throw as many resources as
18 necessary to, you know, in the areas that we're in
19 direct control. But we're also in communication with
20 NYPD who's in charge of the actual--the security
21 within the subway system. Clearly, that's become a
22 significantly increasing cost. At the MTA, it's
23 something we take very seriously.

24 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: [off mic] But
25 with the -- [on mic] Because like say with NYCHA and

2 the NYCHA and the NYPD in the past, NYCHA paid to the
3 NYPD to patrol the public housing. Who covered the
4 cost and how much money is the MTA investing keeping
5 our trains safe, especially watching for any
6 potential act of terrorism?

7 CRAIG STEWART: I can answer that
8 specifically. Safety and security is a
9 responsibility of both MTA PD as well as NYPD. But
10 we do--we make lots of investments. We've made over
11 a billion dollars of investments protecting the
12 people and our--and our assets over the last ten
13 years. Funding comes from Homeland Security, but it
14 also comes form Capital Program. And we continue
15 that effort in the--in the Proposed Capital Program.

16 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Well, what is--
17 what is the projected? And that's exactly what I
18 would like to hear. How much are we investing? And
19 we know that other agencies they have to collaborate
20 from the FBI, NYPD but you are the one also that has
21 your own division that oversees. My thing is what is
22 the projection for the future? How much money are
23 you looking to allocate for the security of our
24 trains?

2 CRAIG STEWART: We don't--we basically
3 are looking towards Homeland Security for additional
4 funding, so we didn't really have a defined budget.
5 We have a set of projects that we want to accomplish
6 depending upon funding availability. We allocate
7 some money, but we also expect Homeland Security, and
8 we don't know what their budget is right now.

9 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: But how much
10 money are you expecting to allocate in this plan?

11 DOUG JOHNSON: See, it's such a different
12 variety of funding, some of what is MTA, some of
13 which is not. Some of which is capital, and some
14 which is operating. We could give you--I can't do it
15 right now--but we could give to you sort of the
16 synopsis of all those funding sources, and expenses--
17 you know capital and operating expenditure. The
18 bottom line is that we react to all threats and use
19 as much overtime or whatever is necessary to react to
20 this. But it's not all us. A lot of it is NYPD.

21 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay, but we can
22 say.

23 DOUG JOHNSON: [interposing] We'd have
24 to--we'd have to give you a more comprehensive
25 answer.

2 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: That's fine, and-
3 -and I don't have to get into the details. I just
4 wanted to know like, you know, from your own division
5 --

6 DOUG JOHNSON: [interposing] Yeah.

7 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: --what is the
8 projection of investment that you expect to make.
9 You know, to send the message to all New Yorkers not
10 only here, but also who take the Long Island Railroad
11 or who live in Upstate in the suburbs that our train
12 is safe.

13 DOUG JOHNSON: Yeah, I mean, not only--
14 It's an ever-expanding expense, you know, and a
15 necessary one. We react to, you know, when we have
16 Barclay's Center and we have--we have much more
17 sporting events. So whatever it is that we're
18 covering, we're covering at the same level. So the
19 extent that that service is expanded, or we're
20 providing--we're reacting to new venues, it's an
21 ever-- We'll be opening new terminals. We'll be
22 reacting to all of that with appropriate coverage.
23 So we'll get you more. It's not an easy answer, but
24 it's something that we can obviously. We'll put it
25 together for you.

2 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, and it's--
3 again, it's not my interest to get into the details,
4 but it is my interest to let everyone there know that
5 we are doing the necessary investment. And I took
6 the train this morning with my daughter. Any New
7 Yorker who takes the train, whether they're waiting
8 for the train in Times Square or any particular place
9 that they know that the MTA is doing the necessary
10 investment working with all the agencies together to
11 keep our trains safe.

12 DOUG JOHNSON: Yeah, and we've recently
13 hired a Director of Security who reports directly to
14 the Chairman. So it's of the utmost--utmost priority
15 to our Chairman.

16 CRAIG STEWART: You may have seen some of
17 the cameras that we put out in stations and help
18 points. We have a very aggressive initiative to put
19 our help points which are going to go directly to the
20 Rail Control Center where we have a police officer
21 there to respond to our customers and emergencies
22 very quickly. We have a comprehensive layered
23 approach of dealing with the security initiatives.

24 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Great. Thank
25 you. I also want to bring to our attention and I

2 also did it last year that when we talk about the
3 City contribution to the MTA we also should look at
4 how New York City contributes to the MRT, the
5 Mortgage Recording Tax.

6 DOUG JOHNSON: Yes.

7 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Because we don't
8 initially highlight that that contribution is now the
9 number that was--

10 DOUG JOHNSON: [interposing] That's
11 right.

12 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: --that was in the
13 budget.

14 DOUG JOHNSON: [interposing] That's
15 right.

16 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: --but also that
17 New York City is--

18 DOUG JOHNSON: [interposing] The--the
19 Urban--the Urban Tax and MRT--

20 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: [interposing]
21 Yes.

22 DOUG JOHNSON: --are taxes that are
23 generated in New York City. But those are State
24 Legislative Taxes. They're also--the Urban Tax is

2 only within New York City, but the MRT is throughout
3 the 12-county region.

4 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Yes. And in
5 2015, you contributed \$354 million to the MRT?

6 DOUG JOHNSON: I'd have to look that up.
7 I don't know what--

8 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: [interposing]
9 Right.

10 DOUG JOHNSON: --Because when we
11 typically cite MRT, we typically cite MRT in total,
12 but it comes from all 12 counties. So we have that
13 information. I just don't happen to have it right
14 here.

15 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay, I just--you
16 know for me, my interest is in what I'm going in to
17 see how--

18 DOUG JOHNSON: [interposing] Yes.

19 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: --and when, and
20 when go and identifying the way we can get at \$15
21 billion that the MTA needs. But the suburbs also
22 they have to contribute. They have to be part of the
23 basic question of getting those funds. And so, I
24 would like to see like as New York--As residents of
25 New York City contribute based on our number \$354

2 million to the MRT, I'd like to see how much the Long
3 Island residents alone are contributing. How much do
4 the residents of--

5 DOUG JOHNSON: [interposing] Yeah, we
6 have that.

7 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Connecticut and
8 Long Island--

9 DOUG JOHNSON: [interposing] Connecticut
10 is not-- Yeah, Connecticut is not part of that.
11 Connecticut is not part of the MTA region.

12 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: So with the '25--
13 2019 Capital Plan, can you tell the Committee when
14 you plan to raise the plan to the Capital Review
15 Board?

16 CRAIG STEWART: We are usually told when
17 to submit it, and we're waiting to hear. We expect
18 to probably resubmit somewhere in the next two
19 months.

20 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: In the next two
21 months.

22 CRAIG STEWART: Right.

23 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Is the State
24 contributing to the Capital Plan, as outlining the

2 Governor's Proposed Budget sufficient? Or, are you
3 in the process of having conversation with Albany?

4 CRAIG STEWART: We are in conversation
5 with Albany, and with all of our funding partners,
6 the federal, State and City and private for that
7 matter. So, the dialogue is ongoing. We are also
8 very focused on the size of the program. We want to
9 make sure that we have a consensus in agreement on
10 the size of the program before we start talking about
11 the financing of the program.

12 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. If you
13 fail to close the--Capital Plan funding gap, do you
14 expect to have the Capital Plan funding broken up
15 into less than five-year segments?

16 CRAIG STEWART: We plan in five years--in
17 five-year chunks. I mean the last Capital Program
18 was approved for the first two years of funding. But
19 we retained the five-year plan. So our five-year was
20 to stay intact regardless of the funding approved so
21 that's our approach to it.

22 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: So that you're
23 geared to keeping the five, but you will be offering
24 the worst case scenario to reduce it to a broken
25 [sic] two as you did in the last couple of plans.

2 CRAIG STEWART: We're hoping that doesn't
3 happen again, but yes.

4 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Will you rely on
5 more borrowing. Will you scale back the plan, and if
6 so, what project will be eliminated?

7 [background conversation]

8 DOUG JOHNSON: I'm sorry. I didn't
9 understand that question.

10 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Well, if the plan
11 if we are not able, if the MTA is not able to get a
12 \$15 billion to close that deficit, \$15 billion, are
13 you planning to borrowing--borrow money in order to
14 get the \$15 billion? Will you scale back the plan?
15 And if so, if you have as an option on the table to
16 scale back the plan, what project will be eliminated
17 first?

18 CRAIG STEWART: We--we are--outlined our
19 funding and our borrowing in our plan when we
20 released it. It's included in the \$17 billion that
21 we can manage to fund. So that's all the borrowing
22 that we plan to do right now. If we are asked to
23 reduce the plan, we'll look at our priorities. We
24 will renew, enhance and expand, and we will look to
25 protect the renew category because that is where our

2 safety and reliability projects are. These projects
3 are--dictate our safety and reliability. And then we
4 will look to the enhance and renew what we have,
5 projects that make it better for our customers. But
6 if we cannot afford those, then those will be the
7 projects that will not be funded. And we will also
8 look at the expansion category, and those are
9 projects that will not be funded.

10 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Right, and you
11 said it was possible to get the money for--to
12 renovate La Guardia and come into La Guardia with a
13 mass transit--with our train system, right? Like two
14 years ago when we asked the question about like can
15 we connect our airport to our public train system, we
16 have a doubt because, you know, we cannot plan unless
17 you see the money. Right now we have to depend on
18 the Governor for his great commitment to invest the
19 \$4 billion to renovate La Guardia, and connect with
20 the train system. So, since that commitment is
21 already there, has--and I know that as we--as you
22 also shared with us, there was study done in the past
23 on how to connect La Guardia with the train--with a
24 public train system. Has a new study been done to

2 determine the ridership estimated for La Guardia the
3 8-train from Willets Point?

4 CRAIG STEWART: I believe the Port
5 Authority is looking at doing another study on that.
6 We will work with them. The collaboration is going
7 to be sponsored by the Port Authority. We will work
8 at our facility, which is Willets Point to support
9 that initiative.

10 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: And do you think
11 that the 7-Train accommodating increased association
12 with the 8-Train, or what are the challenges?

13 [background conversation]

14 LOIS TENDLER: As this committee knows,
15 we're in the process of putting CBTC, Communication
16 Based Train Control in the 7-Line, which leads to
17 increased capacity. It will let us run more trains,
18 which will lead to increased capacity. We will be
19 working with the Port Authority on ridership models,
20 but we don't foresee that as a problem.

21 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: On the MWBE
22 percentage of the MTA contract for calendar year 2014
23 and the projection for calendar year 2015, how are we
24 doing?

2 LOIS TENDLER: We, Councilman, as you
3 might know, work on a State fiscal year. So the
4 numbers aren't quite on calendar years. For State
5 Fiscal Year 2013, the Governor's goal for us was 20%
6 and we hit 23%, and issued \$286 million in payments
7 to MWBEs. We are for the first three quarters of
8 this fiscal year, we're on track, and we are at 22%
9 as well. And the Governor has as of October--April
10 1st, 2015, the Governor's target has risen to 30% and
11 we expect to meet that if not exceed it.

12 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: In the MTA 2015
13 Adopted Budget that services on bonds already issued
14 to support and approve MTA Capital Programs will be
15 \$2.6 billion next year reaching \$3 billion annually
16 by 2018. What percentage of the MTA operation
17 revenue was used for debt service payment in 2014,
18 and what are the projections for 2015 and 2016?

19 DOUG JOHNSON: In terms of the
20 percentage?

21 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

22 DOUG JOHNSON: Just give me a second. I
23 have those numbers.

24 [pause]

25

2 DOUG JOHNSON: If you want to--I have the
3 numbers. I just have to find them. Do you want to
4 ask another question while I'm looking for those?

5 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thanks fine. So
6 let me follow up with a question that really is the
7 most important, which is, if the current gap in 2015-
8 2019 Capital Plan is funded with additional borrowing
9 by the MTA, what impact will be--will the additional
10 bid have on the agency's operation budget?

11 DOUG JOHNSON: Well, obviously, the plan
12 assumes, you know, that there's a base case with the
13 plan. So the extent that there was additional
14 borrowing, that would obviously be detrimental to our
15 finances. On the other hand, we have certain pay-as-
16 you-go assumptions that have the ability to be
17 converted to debt service as well. So it's really
18 hard to answer that question specifically. It would
19 depend on what level, and how that impacted our
20 decisions on pay-as-you-go versus converting that
21 money into debt service. Obviously, any increase
22 into debt service is a direct impact to our bottom
23 line.

24 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: What about the
25 major projects that the MTA such as the East Side

2 Access and the Second Avenue subway being laid back
3 or delayed? Is that really happening? Because the
4 private sector has not been able to do the contract
5 on time--

6 DOUG JOHNSON: [interposing] I don't--

7 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: --or is it
8 because of a lack of money?

9 DOUG JOHNSON: Well, Second Avenue's East
10 Side access is delayed. We've been very upfront with
11 that. It's a number of--you know, it's a very
12 complex project. As they go through and they uncover
13 things, certain things have just been more complex
14 and more difficult to achieve. I don't have the
15 specifics of that, but we've been upfront through
16 that, and communicated with the public the reasons
17 for delays as we've been going along. Obviously,
18 there have been a number of delays since the early
19 projects were laid out. Many, you know, way back
20 when.

21 CRAIG STEWART: Since we re--since we
22 rescheduled, there have been no delays on East Side
23 Access. It's still forecast for December 2022, and
24 Second Avenue is on schedule. It's scheduled to open
25 in--the first phase in December '16.

2 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Do you feel that
3 those corporations or individuals doing contracts
4 with the MTA to do a different part of the
5 construction, have they been able to finish the
6 project on time?

7 CRAIG STEWART: There have been many
8 reasons for the delays. One of the reasons--one of
9 the major reasons from the last time was the bids
10 came in very high. And we decided to break a
11 contract and rebid them hoping to get better numbers.
12 And, it took us a good while and we lost time.

13 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. And I
14 noticed one of my colleagues who has questions,
15 Council Member Crowley followed by Council Member
16 Chin.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: On the Second
18 Avenue Line, at what point in 2016 are you expecting
19 the first phase to open?

20 CRAIG STEWART: December 2016.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: And back to East
22 Side access scheduled to be complete in 2022, how
23 much will that cost the MTA in total when it's
24 complete?

25 CRAIG STEWART: \$10.2 billion.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: \$10.2 billion?

3 CRAIG STEWART: Yes.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: And when did it
5 start?

6 CRAIG STEWART: [off mic] Well, let me
7 take a look here. I don't know when it started. I'm
8 sorry. I don't have the start date.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Do you have an
10 idea of how--what percentage we are into the project?
11 Like are we 20% in or 50% in timeline?

12 CRAIG STEWART: I don't have that with
13 me, but we do--I can get that.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: All right. And
15 now, the East Side access is a huge investment. So,
16 how many billions of dollars will that cost?

17 CRAIG STEWART: Pardon me?

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: How many
19 billions of dollars will the East Side Access cost?

20 CRAIG STEWART: \$10.2 billion.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: \$10.2 billion
22 and are you expecting an increase in ridership from
23 Long Island?

24 CRAIG STEWART: Yes, we are.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: And how about
3 from Queens?

4 CRAIG STEWART: I believe we're expecting
5 an increase in ridership on Long Island Railroad. I
6 don't know when they or where they originate from,
7 but along the Long Island Railroad there will be
8 increased ridership.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Is the MTA
10 looking to justify the cost of such an investment by
11 working with ways of making the Long Island Railroad
12 more affordable to people in Queens and Brooklyn?

13 CRAIG STEWART: I don't--I'm sorry. I do
14 your--your date. It started March of 1999 for East
15 Side Access. What was your--what was your next
16 question? I'm sorry.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: I'm sorry. So
18 then you should be like more than 50% of the way
19 through the project.

20 CRAIG STEWART: I can't say where we are
21 in terms of percentage. I don't have that with me.
22 [off mic] That's not fair.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Well, I'm hoping
24 that there's some benefit for the residents of Queens
25 and Brooklyn. To take the Long Island Railroad right

2 now it's very cost prohibitive, and also there needs
3 to be more stops opened up in Queens. I want to know
4 like if you're looking at that in terms of justifying
5 this large investment for the East Side Access.

6 CRAIG STEWART: There is capacity
7 projects going on right now to increase capacity at
8 several stations. Jamaica is one. So there is an
9 effort to do that.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: I know that
11 there's an effort to open--reopen a station that was
12 closed in Elmhurst that is in your budget--

13 CRAIG STEWART: [interposing] Yes.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: -for \$40
15 million. There's Long Island Railroad freight the
16 Lower Manhattan Lower Montauk Line that comes through
17 my district. And it has not been available to
18 commuters for some time now. And I would like for
19 the MTA to put it in their budget for feasibility to
20 open up that train again for commutes. I think as a
21 city we have to start justifying the cost of the East
22 Side Access, and do what we can to make the MTA Long
23 Island Railroad more affordable to the people of
24 Queens to take. Because the subway system is
25 completely overburdened. This morning I took the

2 subway in, and there was hardly any room in the
3 platform. And the trains are delayed, and they're
4 running back to back. And so, you know, there aren't
5 many options in Queens from going east to west when
6 it comes to the subway whether it's the 7 Train or
7 the EMTA Line, they're completely overburdened. And
8 we really need to access our railway more especially
9 as Queens is the fastest growing borough in the city
10 and the second fastest growing borough in the state.

11 CRAIG STEWART: We are aware of the
12 capacity issues, and we are trying to address some of
13 those. Second Avenue is one that will help the
14 Lexington Avenue Line. But also Communications Based
15 Signaling, which we have several projects budgeted
16 for in the next program will also allow us to run
17 more trains on the lines that they go on.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: How could I best
19 go about getting a feasibility study or some type of
20 plan put together to look at whether it would make
21 sense for the Long Island Railroad to reopen my
22 commuter line that comes through Glendale, Ridgewood,
23 in to Maspeth from Jamaica through Long Island City?

24 LOIS TENDLER: We will look at that. We
25 will get back to you on it.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: I've been trying
3 to get back to you on that.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: I've been trying
5 to get a meeting for some time with Long Island
6 Railroad.

7 LOIS TENDLER: I will reach out to--

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: [interposing] So
9 I just wanted to direct--

10 LOIS TENDLER: --I will reach out to my
11 colleagues at the Railroad and we will get together
12 with you.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: My last question
14 has to do with the Mortgage Transfer Tax. How much
15 is generated from that from the 12 counties or
16 however many counties participate in the Mortgage
17 Transfer Tax.

18 DOUG JOHNSON: That's in the 20--in the
19 2014 final estimate. We estimated about 200--about
20 \$350 million in MRT.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: And that is just
22 in New York Counties?

23 DOUG JOHNSON: That's the 12--the 12 New
24 York Counties that make up what's the MTA region.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: We're seeing
3 record sales of apartments in Manhattan. Some
4 apartments are going for \$50 million or more. A lot
5 of times those are bought [bell] outright with cash.

6 DOUG JOHNSON: That's right.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: But we don't get
8 any money for the MTA through that because there's no
9 Mortgage Transfer?

10 DOUG JOHNSON: Well, there's--there's two
11 components to a transition. If there's a mortgage
12 then there's a Mortgage Recording Tax. If it's cash,
13 there's still a--there's still a fee of roughly 1%
14 on, you know, on the transaction itself.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Is it almost the
16 same percentage?

17 DOUG JOHNSON: Yeah, that's right. It's
18 called the Real Property Transfer Tax. So we get
19 the--

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: [interposing]
21 So what is--what is the tax on a mortgage transfer?

22 DOUG JOHNSON: On the mortgage it's
23 point--it's .3 on the MRT1 and then there's an MRT2.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: If it's--if it's
25 like a multi-million dollar--

2 DOUG JOHNSON: [interposing] Yeah, if
3 it's a mortgage.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: --property.

5 DOUG JOHNSON: So right, so typically--

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: So then it goes
7 to 1%?

8 DOUG JOHNSON: No, it's .3 of 1% and on
9 the MRT1.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: So, it's roughly
11 equal?

12 DOUG JOHNSON: Roughly. Well, then
13 there's the--then there's the transaction tax on the
14 actual purchase whether or not there's a mortgage.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: I just want to
16 make sure that our state is looking at whether it's
17 fair, and if it's equal for people--working people
18 who have to take out mortgages, and what they pay in
19 tax compared to the transfer of property where
20 there's no mortgage. And of that's in the multi-
21 million range. So I just want to make sure.

22 DOUG JOHNSON: [interposing] yeah.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: If you're
24 telling me it's equal, are you sure of that?

25

2 DOUG JOHNSON: Well, what I'm saying is
3 the rate are equal. So obviously the larger the
4 mortgage would be the larger would be the amount of
5 the tax.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: But if there is
7 no mortgage.

8 DOUG JOHNSON: If there is no mortgage,
9 then there is no mortgage recording tax. However,
10 there--

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: [interposing]
12 The property transfer tax?

13 DOUG JOHNSON: --within New York City
14 there's a real property transfer tax.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: But do you get
16 that tax for both a mortgage and both paying in cash?

17 DOUG JOHNSON: No, if we've got the
18 mortgage, the mortgage tax would be based upon--

19 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: [interposing]
20 The mortgage?

21 DOUG JOHNSON: --what's actually
22 mortgaged. The Real Property Transfer Tax would be
23 based upon the actual cost of the--of the sale
24 itself.

25 [background conversation]

2 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: So there's no--
3 there's no advantage to taking out a mortgage when it
4 comes to taxes?

5 DOUG JOHNSON: Well, there are lots of
6 reasons to take a mortgage or not. Just if you don't
7 take--

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: [interposing]
9 In terms of the MTA.

10 DOUG JOHNSON: --if you don't take a
11 mortgage, then you're not going to pay an MRT, a
12 Mortgage Recording Tax.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: But you pay a
14 different tax?

15 DOUG JOHNSON: [off mic] You're going to
16 pay--you're going to pay-- [sic]

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Is our--is our
18 state losing out on money when people are purchasing
19 property without taking out a mortgage?

20 DOUG JOHNSON: Well, we're not getting a
21 Mortgage Recording Tax. That's correct.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Right.

23 DOUG JOHNSON: Right.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: And is there any
25 estimate on how much we lose each year?

2 DOUG JOHNSON: We only know what we
3 collect. No, no. That would have to be legislated.
4 I mean what's legislated now is the MRT, and the Real
5 Property Transfer Tax. So--

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: [interposing]
7 We're looking at opportunities to bridge the gap in
8 your budget?

9 DOUG JOHNSON: Yeah.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: A way to do that
11 would be make it equal that somebody purchases a
12 piece of property and does have to have a mortgage no
13 that property that they're paying a similar type of
14 tax to the MTA.

15 DOUG JOHNSON: They would have--they
16 would have to increase the other tax then, yeah.
17 That would have--

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: [interposing]
19 But I would be--it would be advantageous for us to at
20 least know how much money that we're losing each
21 year.

22 AARON STERN: Let me just add one thing.
23 So the--the tax that is on the transaction value, not
24 the mortgage. It's called the Urban Tax, and in--

2 GREG JOHNSON: [off mic] [interposing]
3 That would be the Property Transfer Tax.

4 AARON STERN: --but it's in--

5 GREG JOHNSON: [interposing] It's part of
6 the Urban Tax, and in 2014, that was \$800 million.
7 So it far exceeds the amount collected on the MRT.
8 The other thing to recognize is that percentage of
9 real estate transactions that are all cash, is a
10 small percentage. So, we could investigate and get
11 back to you an estimate of the--of MRT, the value
12 from all-cash transaction, but it wouldn't be a huge
13 number.

14 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: [off chin]
15 Council Member Chin.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you. The
17 question I have is what is the status of the South
18 Ferry Station repair? And also, the--connected to
19 that line is the Cortlandt Street. Is that ever
20 going to be repaired? I mean opened up?

21 LOIS TENDLER: Yes and yes. Good news on
22 both fronts. We have--we have a contractor working
23 on South Ferry. I'll have to get back to you on the
24 exact timeframe. I think the contract was for about
25 36 months, and I would say we're four or five months

2 in it, but that work is going well. And Cortlandt
3 Street, our board just approved last month, us
4 assuming the contracts. So we are building away the
5 Cortlandt One Station finally.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Okay, so, so--

7 LOIS TENDLER: [interposing] And I can
8 get you the timeframe on that, too. I just--

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: [interposing] Okay.
10 So let's hope for that. We can open up--we open up
11 that station, and get Lower Manhattan connected. Do
12 you have any statistic in terms of how many seniors--
13 Since I chair the Aging Committee, I wanted to ask
14 this question. How many seniors do you utilize the
15 reduced fare?

16 LOIS TENDLER: I don't have them with me,
17 Councilwoman. I can certainly get them for you, and
18 we have a database of people who are senior citizens
19 reduced fare Metro Cards, and we can tell you what
20 that number is.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Let me know because
22 I have seniors who are asking me is it possible to
23 lower the age? Because seniors who are 62 can
24 qualify for senior housing. Seniors who are 60 can

2 go to a senior center, but they have to wait until 65
3 to get the reduced far card.

4 LOIS TENDLER: As we talked about in our
5 testimony were city obligations, which have sort of
6 morphed into MTA obligations because the fixed amount
7 hasn't changed. If you lowered the age for senior
8 citizen Reduced Fare Metro Cards, that would have to
9 be tariff change by our board. You would increase
10 the amount of subsidy required and somebody would
11 have to pay for it.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Well, let's take a
13 look at the number and see how the city can help that
14 especially for low-income seniors, and the price--you
15 know the fare has gone up. And so, it would mean a
16 lot to low-income seniors who could save \$400 a
17 month.

18 LOIS TENDLER: And I would just note, as
19 you know, that our Reduced Fare Senior Metro Card is
20 not income dependent. It's proof of age, not proof
21 of income.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Yeah, but usually
23 it's the--it's the low-income seniors who take
24 advantage of it more often. My last question is that
25 in a long time we have all these real estate

2 development happening. And often time when it's
3 commercial development, or a big enough project that
4 MTA can also access repairs in stations, you know
5 from the developer, and that's a great thing. But
6 how do we capture maybe a smaller development who
7 also add to congestions with more residents or more
8 people working to get them to also help contribute to
9 improving the subway stations or the subway?

10 LOIS TENDLER: We are focusing a lot of
11 attention to capture that throughout the city in all
12 developments. Bigger developments like One
13 Vanderbilt, you know, they're going to make \$210
14 million worth of an investment Grand Central Station.
15 So if it's a zoning bonus that's required, if it's
16 special permits, if it's a special district it
17 happens through the zoning process. If it's
18 something smaller than that, we--developers often
19 come to us because (a) if they're working to our
20 property, they need our permission to do it. And,
21 (b) sometimes they want to do things which affect our
22 property. So then we have a conversation, and it's
23 much more persuasive. It's much more figuring out
24 how both sides can win. Sometimes it's combining
25 investments in both the public sector, and the

2 private sector. But we are very, very aggressively
3 throughout the City trying to identify opportunities
4 and to get into them before it's too late. So you're
5 going to see more and more of this from us.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: I think it would
7 also be good to really share that information, you
8 know, with council members. And also work with us in
9 terms of the development that's happening in our
10 district. How to kind of realize those opportunities
11 to make improvements.

12 LOIS TENDLER: That would be really
13 helpful. You guys know before we do sometimes. I
14 know that Public Advocate James has called us
15 recently about a development in her old neighborhood,
16 but we're happy to work with you on that, and talk to
17 our recent listing. [sic]

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you. Next, I
19 would like to call on Council Member Miller.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Thank you Madam
21 Substitute Chair. [laughter] And thank you so much
22 for coming out with your crew and for really coming
23 out and providing critical information at this time.
24 Could you explain to the--to the Council your funding
25 resources for capital as well as operating expenses?

2 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: For--what do you mean,
3 where did we get the money from?

4 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Uh-huh.

5 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: Well, okay, roughly if
6 you look at the MTA finances, roughly half of it
7 comes from fare and tolls, right. The other half
8 comes from a whole variety of different subsidy
9 sources. Some of the ones I described from the City,
10 various State taxes. We have, of course, the PMT,
11 Payroll Mobility Tax; MTAA from the cab fares and the
12 registrations and the car rentals; State and MN Toll
13 Tax, which comes from sales taxes and corporate
14 franchise taxes. We have Petroleum Business Taxes,
15 we have the MRT Tax. We have state matches. You
16 know it's a variety of--

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: [interposing]
18 Okay.

19 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: --cats and dogs in our
20 FT1.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Does that include
22 the dedicated MTA lock box?

23 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: Well, what you're--what
24 you're talking about is the MN Toll, which is not a

2 lock box. It still has to be appropriated by the
3 State. The State appropriates MM Toll.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Have--you
5 received any of those funds, or has the MTA requested
6 any of those funds?

7 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: Well, we got--the
8 appropriate an amount based upon the balances that
9 they see. They like to keep a balance--

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: [interposing] On
11 MTA dedicated funds?

12 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: On MTA dedicated funds.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: But you have to--
14 they--who has to appropriate them?

15 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: The State Legislature
16 appropriates that.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Do these use
18 those for anything other than MTA activities?

19 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: Well, they--in the past
20 they have more often than not, we--it's for MTA
21 purposes, but there have been--

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: So they
23 acknowledged using them for anything other than MTA.

24 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: On--on several, a
25 couple of occasions there have been times where--

2 where they had to--they had to go back to the
3 legislature and get permission to reduce that. But
4 in those cases they were doing sort of standard--

5 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: [interposing]
6 They do now have to go back to the Legislature?

7 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: Yeah, because once it's
8 appropriated--

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Prior to--prior
10 to once they didn't. They weren't using it. [sic]

11 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: Once it's appropriated,
12 they can't touch it unless they go back to the
13 Legislature.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Currently
15 legislature? Currently?

16 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: Yes, that's correct.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: But prior to that
18 it was kind of just a question.

19 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: Well, no, if they did
20 that, they had to, in fact, go back to the
21 Legislature.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Okay, so, we've
23 identified some of the sources. How much revenue do
24 you anticipate from the sale of the Madison Avenue
25 properties?

2 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: Well, I can--we're
3 assuming a the Capital--in the two Capital Programs
4 2010 to '14 and '15 to '19, a net of \$360 million.
5 That would be after expenses. I don't know what
6 we're--

7 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: [interposing] And
8 how soon do you anticipate to move those properties?

9 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: I'm sorry?

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: How soon do you
11 anticipate moving those properties?

12 LOIS TENDLER: We're in the middle of an
13 RFP process now, which also involves ultimately a URL
14 [sic] process. So we haven't designated a developer
15 yet.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Okay, great. Let
17 me go a little local now. Jamaica Depot, the
18 potential Jamaica Depot that's in the Capital Plan,
19 where are we with that?

20 LOIS TENDLER: We have bought properties
21 on Merrick Boulevard. We have funded in the '15 to
22 '19 Plan. At the moment, we're still aiming towards
23 construction start in 2017, and we are looking very
24 diligently to find sites as close to that location as
25 we can to use temporarily.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: I would hope that
3 you would use this office as resources. We are
4 obviously very much familiar with the community and
5 what locations might be available is sorely needed.
6 On the--what is the cost of the--to the MTA on the
7 BRT, the proposed BRT?

8 CRAIG STEWART: Cost?

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Yeah.

10 AARON STERN: Well, we have an allocation
11 of funding for it, but I don't know what the cost is
12 for it.

13 LOIS TENDLER: [interposing] How much is
14 the allocation?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: [interposing]
16 How much money have you allocated?

17 LOIS TENDLER: How much is in the budget
18 for BRT?

19 CRAIG STEWART: In the Capital Budget we
20 have \$25 million for BRT in the '15 to '19 Program

21 AARON STERN: So, we're in the budget.
22 We currently have seven routes operating and two
23 budgeted for addition in 2015, and two are budgeted
24 for addition in 2016. So through 2015, the annual
25

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2 operating cost of these routes is \$13.4 million. It
3 will go up each year as we add routes.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: And how about
5 construction? [bell]

6 LOIS TENDLER: The \$25 million that Craig
7 spoke of, we--we actually believe that we'll have
8 enough money to implement as many SBS routes as
9 possible. They very work intensive, as you know.
10 There's a lot of outreach.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Does that include
12 Jamaica to Flushing?

13 LOIS TENDLER: The money that's there
14 includes Jamaica to Flushing.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Have we had
16 community outreach and/or have we--have sought out
17 other uses for this funding? I understand that it's
18 dedicated to that, but considering I think that our
19 Council Member Crowley mentioned a subsidy on the
20 Long Island Railroad, and Express Bus Service. That
21 would better service Southeast Queens, which would be
22 impacted because we're spending dollars that would--
23 could be better served. But they wouldn't really
24 benefit from.

25

2 LOIS TENDLER: The only thing that I
3 would note is that the SBS routes we're talking about
4 are sort of an overlay on existing routes. So it's
5 not all new money. It's money that we're spending
6 anyway, because whether it's SBS or not--we're
7 running a few 44, [sic] for instance. We are looking
8 at all our communities, including Southeast Jamaica
9 to see what we can do.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: [interposing]
11 Yeah, right. It seems like--

12 LOIS TENDLER: --to improve service
13 there.

14 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: --you're putting a
15 square peg in a round hole and you kind of--

16 LOIS TENDLER: [interposing] Well, not
17 everything is SBS.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: We had so many
19 needs--

20 LOIS TENDLER: [interposing] There are
21 other ones.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: --and we want to
23 prioritize on these. But we thank you so much for
24 your input. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

2 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.
3 Council Member Weprin.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: Thank you, Mr.
5 Chair. So I was going to ask last year-- Well, let
6 me ask. According to reports there's a \$15 billion
7 budget gap in the Five-Year Capital Plan. Is that an
8 accurate number that people talk about--

9 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: [interposing] Yes it
10 is.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: --in the revenue
12 at times?

13 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: Yes. All right.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: Last year I asked
15 this question. I brought the topic up and I didn't
16 really pursue it, but I mentioned the Sam Schwartz
17 Move New York Fair Tolling Plan. And you guys,
18 whoever was here at the time, I remember sort of
19 saying, yeah, we're familiar with it. We're looking
20 at it, but I didn't pursue and I didn't ask the other
21 position on it. But this year, things are starting to
22 be talked about this way, and I'd like to get a more
23 direct answer. The tolling plan claims that we'll
24 fill the gap, the \$15 billion budget gap now and in
25 the future. Is this a plan that you could support?

2 CRAIG STEWART: Well, once again, I think
3 we said last time that we were aware of it. We are
4 now evaluating it.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: We are now
6 evaluating?

7 CRAIG STEWART: Yes.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: Okay, how long
9 does that evaluation take?

10 CRAIG STEWART: I don't have a time frame,
11 but we'll have to work with DOT to look at the
12 condition of bridges that--that are under their
13 jurisdiction, and look at our own revenue loss. So
14 there's a lot of things to look at because some of
15 the bridges that we now get revenue from--

16 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: [interposing]
17 Right.

18 CRAIG STEWART: --the revenue would be
19 reduced in that plan. So we--we are evaluating it.
20 We are open to other funding sources also considering
21 the size of the gap, and we think that there's a
22 number of funding strategies that need to be
23 extended. [sic]

24 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: I would assume
25 that the funding aspect you guys are welcome. You

2 know, if it indeed raises revenue, you guys are
3 always looking for new revenue. Let's face it, we're
4 going to have to come up with some way to fill this
5 gap. It's our hope we can raise taxes. We charge
6 new, you know, increased Mortgage Recording Tax, and
7 all these other things we can do. But we have to
8 fill this, and I have become a big proponent of this
9 plan even though I initially had opposed it when it
10 was first--a similar version was proposed years ago.
11 But it didn't offer benefits to outer boroughs. So
12 I'm going to ask you something now because the people
13 who are proposing this, nice people and smart people
14 and all that, they have no ability to do any of the
15 stuff they're talking about themselves. We need MTA
16 on board to support the plan. But I also need MTA to
17 say what the Move New York people have been saying to
18 me. And one of the reasons I'm supportive is that
19 not only will we fill this budget gap. But we will be
20 able to have enough money to provide capital funding
21 and other funding for outer borough projects.
22 Whether it's SBS service, whether it's improved
23 subway stations. There's a whole bunch of other
24 bells and whistles that are included in this plan.
25 But they have sold me this bill of goods. Now, they

2 can't deliver on that bill of goods, and I want to
3 know whether the MTA believes if they decided to
4 endorse such a plan, whether you could deliver on
5 that bill of goods?

6 LOIS TENDLER: Well, I think Councilman,
7 as Craig just said, I think the first step for us is
8 going to be dissecting the assumptions in the plan.
9 The revenue projections and judging them against how
10 effective will we do business currently and our
11 tolls. And first off, identify how the debt part
12 would be for us.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: Right.

14 LOIS TENDLER: And then, in light of
15 whatever that number is for giving out what advices.
16 [sic]

17 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: There are a lot
18 of issues that need to be worked out no doubt. I
19 mean there are bondholders I know that money that
20 allocated from bridges are going to lower the cost on
21 other bridges. There are a lot of issues that come
22 up. The one part of it, though, is this idea that
23 they're saying to us that they're going to be able to
24 lower--potentially lower the fares on the Long Island
25 Railroad to having improvements on the--you know,

2 give a benefit that includes City Ride or other
3 benefits. I just want don't--I want to know that MTA
4 is at least open to these ideas because a lot of them
5 are things that you have in the past eliminated for
6 cost reasons or bus routes that have been eliminated.
7 They're selling a lot of stuff out there, if true,
8 would make me really happy and supportive of the plan
9 as I have been. But if the MTA was to pour cold
10 water all over this and say, Mark, that's ridiculous
11 that part of it--

12 LOIS TENDLER: [interposing] I agree.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: --then I would
14 have a problem.

15 LOIS TENDLER: Well, I think the first
16 part of that analysis Councilman, is figuring out
17 what the monies actually are.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: So if the money
19 is there, though, it's an idea you would be open in
20 your knowledge, though.

21 LOIS TENDLER: We would be open to
22 anything that will help us address-

23 CRAIG STEWART: [interposing] Fill the
24 gap.

2 LOIS TENDLER: --this \$15.2 million gap
3 in our Capital Plan.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: Right but there's
5 going to be and some. You know, we're going to fill
6 that gap and some. That 'and some' has a lot to do
7 with me being able to--to survive our next election
8 basically because I'm getting a lot of--You know, you
9 get a lot of negative people who say what's in it for
10 us? And the reason I apposed it last time was I felt
11 like my people were paying, and we're funding the
12 Second Avenue Subway, which is nice. But that's what
13 it was about as opposed to funding projects out in
14 Queens. Lowering tolls is a big part, and other
15 aspects as well.

16 LOIS TENDLER: I suspect we're going to
17 [bell] be spending a fair amount of time looking at
18 the plan.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: Right. Okay,
20 good. I look forward to continuing this
21 conversation. It's an issue we're trying to rev up a
22 little bit, and have more conversations about. So,
23 hopefully the dissecting and the discussing will now
24 get a little more heated as we move forward. Because
25 I think some time in the near future we need to go

2 this way to help have this recurring funding stream.
3 Thank you.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you, Chair
5 Rodriguez. Thank you all for being here today. I
6 have a bunch of questions. So I'm going to try to
7 rifle through them quickly. The 7-Train over at
8 Hudson Yards. When is it finally going to open?
9 It's like the never ending story of--

10 CRAIG STEWART: We're continuing to work
11 towards the second quarter of this year.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: What's the hold
13 up?

14 CRAIG STEWART: We're testing and
15 commissioning, as we speak, and we are working
16 towards opening the second quarter of this year.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Right. There is
18 nothing more specific than that? This has been going
19 on for far too long.

20 LOIS TENDLER: Well, we're--

21 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: [interposing]
22 Mayor Bloomberg wrote his last day in office saying
23 he was going to open up six months later. We're now,
24 you know, 14 months after that.

2 LOIS TENDLER: We are very close. There
3 have been issues with the project. Right now, we're
4 in the process of testing all the communication
5 systems, which are pretty sophisticated. It's fire
6 safety. It's all the commissioning of the new
7 station. And that's what we're rolling out now.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: So the second
9 quarter is June?

10 LOIS TENDLER: Yeah.

11 CRAIG STEWART: Yes, we will--

12 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: [interposing]
13 How confident do you feel about that.

14 CRAIG STEWART: I'm not running the
15 construction. The President of MTA Capital will be
16 giving a report on it at the--this months CPOC [sic]
17 meeting. I think you can get a confidence level at
18 that point.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Can someone
20 share with me that report?

21 LOIS TENDLER: Yes.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Lois, you'll get
23 that to me?

24 LOIS TENDLER: I will.

25

2 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Okay. There has
3 been an A&C Train working group asking for Full Line
4 Reviews. A&C Train services has been getting worse.
5 When are we getting new A&C cars for those lines?

6 LOIS TENDLER: Oh, I was going to tell
7 you when we were going to get the Full Line Review
8 done.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: You can answer
10 that, too. When are we going get the Full Line
11 Review done?

12 LOIS TENDLER: The Full Line Review will
13 be done this year, and we're trying to get it done as
14 quickly as we can. The new cars I don't know the
15 answer to that. Do you know?

16 CRAIG STEWART: [off mic] Somewhere in
17 '21 or '22.

18 LOIS TENDLER: '21 and '22.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: '21 and '22?

20 LOIS TENDLER: Right, the--the next--the
21 plan includes purchases, correct?

22 CRAIG STEWART: [on mic] Yes, yes.

23 LOIS TENDLER: It takes a long time to
24 get a subway done.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Okay, there have
3 also been issues with public address systems in the
4 existing trains in some of the stations on the A&C
5 lines. Is that part of the Full Line Review?

6 LOIS TENDLER: It is, it is. We're
7 looking at all of them, and where they need a lot of
8 work, we're trying to come up with interim fixes to
9 at least get PA systems up and running in all those
10 stations.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: So you think
12 that the Full Line Review will be done before the end
13 of 2015?

14 LOIS TENDLER: It will be done by then.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: It will be done.
16 In what quarter?

17 LOIS TENDLER: I'm not going to tell you
18 that. [laughter]

19 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Well, there are
20 lots of riders who are counting on some fixes
21 throughout many boroughs. And so, the sooner you can
22 get that, the better. Great. There are still a
23 tremendous number of stations-- It's an embarrassment
24 the number of stations that are not ADA accessible.
25 If you are someone who is in a wheelchair or is

2 disabled, it is nearly impossible to navigate and
3 traverse our subway system. I would love to hear
4 what the plans are in upgrading certain subway
5 stations. Where are we?

6 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: Yeah, go ahead.

7 LOIS TENDLER: There are--there are
8 currently 80-- New York City Transit has been working
9 off a 100 key station plan. Our commitment was to
10 make 100 stations ADA accessible by 2020. We will
11 meet that commitment. We have 85 stations today,
12 which are ADA key stations that are accessible.
13 There are another two stations that are in
14 construction.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Which ones?

16 LOIS TENDLER: The two in construction
17 are 23rd Street on the 6-Line and Lefferts Boulevard
18 on the A-Line. There are another six stations that
19 are currently in design with construction to follow.
20 That's Time Square Shuttle Station, 68th Street on
21 the 6-Train; 57th Street on the M-Q-R; Chambers
22 Street on the J-M-Z; Gunhill Road on the 5; and
23 Bedford Park Boulevard on the B&D. There are seven
24 stations that are in the next plan, the 2015 to 2019
25 Plan that round our 100 stations will be ADA key

2 stations. That being said, we realize once in 2020
3 we have these 100 stations we just can't stop. So we
4 are--we are doing some elevators in stations that are
5 key stations.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: It's good to
7 hear this, but ultimately our public transport system
8 is--it's embarrassing that there are--it's a huge
9 subset of New Yorkers that actually can't use certain
10 stations. And I would implore you to work with the
11 Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities to look
12 at some of the stations that have been the most
13 problematic. And to work with Commissioner Victor
14 Calise doing that.

15 LOIS TENDLER: We work closely with the
16 Commissioner. What I was saying was our next step is
17 to work out with the FTA, which administers the ADA
18 law where the program goes. But we are--we know we
19 want to do more. We believe we should do more, and
20 we are going to do more.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Great. I'm out
22 of time so just very quickly, 14th Street and 7th
23 Avenue the station is a disaster. West 4th Street a
24 disaster. They are embarrassing stations. They need
25 upgrades. The total between 14th and 7th and 14th an

2 8th, which has been closed for years, I would love to
3 hear if whether or not it could ever be reopened.
4 And then lastly, I would love to get a schedule on
5 additional countdown clocks? When are we going to
6 get an expansion of countdown clocks in subway
7 stations? I think they're very popular. They're
8 great. Expansion of Wi-Fi in the stations that Wi-Fi
9 is going to come on next. Then, lastly, last year I
10 asked you all about when there--you guys were going
11 to disable emergency--the exit doors. Yay.

12 LOIS TENDLER: Done.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: You did it.
14 [laughter] You didn't say you were going to do it
15 last year, though. Lois, it was like a big mystery--

16 LOIS TENDLER: [interposing] One of us
17 should have told him. [sic]

18 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: --and then now
19 it's done.

20 LOIS TENDLER: It's one.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: And there were
22 no problems, right? No?

23 LOIS TENDLER: It's fine.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Good. Well, I
25 think it's a big upgrade. Noise pollution is

2 something we need less of in New York City, and
3 getting rid of those annoying useless alarms is good
4 progress. So, if you could please get me the 7-Train
5 Presentation, Full Review on the A&C Lines, and the
6 next list of countdown clocks, and the Wi-Fi that
7 would be great.

8 LOIS TENDLER: I'll send it as soon as
9 I'm at the office.

10 CRAIG STEWART: Countdown clocks are a
11 proposal, and I believe we have three to five-year
12 plan rolling them out in the '15 to '19 Plan.

13 LOIS TENDLER: That's on the B Division.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Yes, but I would
15 have to know the schedule of the stations and the
16 rollout.

17 LOIS TENDLER: I'm not--we'll give it to
18 you with as much--as much granularity as possible.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you very
20 much. Thank you all for being here.

21 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. I
22 just have three questions. Three of those are local
23 related to my district. One is Nx12, which is the
24 express bus that go--starts coming down through
25 Riverdale and it stops at 207th and Broadway, but

2 they don't take the highway. I would like to see
3 that bus making an additional one stop at Diamond and
4 Nagle before it takes the FDR.

5 LOIS TENDLER: I think you're going to be
6 getting a letter that will make you very happy.

7 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Thanks.
8 Thank you. 168th, 181st the One Train. First of
9 all, thank you. I know that you are working with the
10 hospital making major renovations on 168th. But I
11 just hope that in this plan we also can include--and
12 we will be there advocating for all the resources
13 that is needed. I believe that, you know, that you
14 run an important agency for everyone. And we need to
15 work together to raise the revenue--the money that
16 you need to balance the deficit. But 168th and 181st
17 the One Train does not allow people with disabilities
18 in a wheelchair to go down to the platform. It can
19 be challenges, but I believe that having the hospital
20 there, having like a big amount of people who are
21 using like a wheelchair, I would like to see how you
22 can look at it.

23 As I already mentioned in the last
24 hearing a couple of months ago that I would like to
25 see some action. If by any chance, you see that the

2 obstacles are too much that doesn't allow to say this
3 is impossible, I would like to see that decision
4 based after we do the study. But not having--not
5 allow people in wheelchairs to have the opportunity
6 to take the One Train on 168th where we have one of
7 the major hospitals there-- And also, on 181st where
8 we have like seven buses that cross from Manhattan to
9 the Bronx. I would like to see some movement, some
10 study so that we could look at the possibility to
11 include those two particular projects in this 2015 to
12 2019 Capital Project.

13 CRAIG STEWART: We'll take a look at it
14 the feasibility study.

15 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: The 13 is the
16 rail yard 207.

17 CRAIG STEWART: I know.

18 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: As you know,
19 we're looking to see how we develop not only that 38
20 acres, but also probably close to 100 acres in
21 Sherman Creek to use for economic development and
22 affordable housing. So I know the good intention
23 from the MTA can be a win-win situation. But I just
24 hope that as the EDC will move to the study--

2 LOIS TENDLER: [interposing] We have a
3 meeting next week. We have a meeting in a couple of
4 weeks up at the yard with EDC and City Planning so
5 they're moving on the study, and we will participate
6 with them.

7 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: That's great.
8 Plan Move New York do you support it, yes or no?

9 CRAIG STEWART: [laughs] We're
10 evaluating it.

11 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Does it sound
12 like it's good, yes or--? I mean do you think that
13 that plan will allow to raise \$1 billion for the MTA?
14 Is that a plan that--

15 CRAIG STEWART: [interposing] That--

16 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: --you would
17 really consider as something is an additional source
18 of bringing resources to the MTA?

19 CRAIG STEWART: We support any additional
20 resources that we can get. We will be looking at
21 whether we think, whether we agree with some of the
22 assumptions, and whether we agree with the revenue
23 generation from the plan.

24 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: I just hope that
25 as conversation moves on in that plan, and again, I'm

2 not putting you on the spot saying whether you
3 support it. I got what you said that you are open to
4 any source of getting the revenue, but removing that
5 plan. And we put a toll on the downtown bridges. I
6 just hope that it's going to be like a real great
7 investment of some of those resources in the local
8 communities. I know that the plan as it is we had a
9 projection that \$1 million would be used for the MTA,
10 additional resources to repair the bridges and
11 tunnels. But I know this is something for this
12 community, and I know that this is something for all
13 of my colleagues. We would like to see a formula
14 included where there is going to be real reinvestment
15 in the local communities on transportation as we move
16 on if we don't agree with that plan. The last one is
17 about how much--how is the MTA doing raising revenue
18 using space for concessions and advertising?

19 CRAIG STEWART: [off mic] I mean this is
20 something-- [sic]

21 LOIS TENDLER: [interposing] I thought
22 you were going to ask a different question.

23 [laughter]

24 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: Very well. There has
25 been consistent growth in that.

2 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Can you give me a
3 number?

4 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: We do. We have--I can
5 get you that number. We have a fully--within our
6 budget we have a full layout of all the different
7 advertising revenues and it's a--it's a source of
8 significant growth. It's something that we've
9 focused on, and it's something we're trying maximize.
10 So what I'll do is I'll just get you a full--a full
11 copy of that--of the sources on the projected
12 revenues for those revenues.

13 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Is that like one
14 of the--can you say that that's one of the areas
15 where the MTA can expand the revenue that we can
16 raise by--

17 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: [interposing] Yeah,
18 definitely. It's definitely an area. You know, it's
19 outside of the traditional transportation component
20 of what we do. However, we're--it's an area where
21 we've completely refocused and we have professional
22 managers trying to absolutely maximize, you know, our
23 assets so that we can maximize those revenues.

24 CRAIG STEWART: I think it's very
25 different from what it used to be because we're now

2 looking to go much more digital, and I think there's
3 a new request for proposal that will be going out
4 soon, if it hasn't gone out already.

5 AARON STERN: However, the--the annual
6 amount of advertising revenue is approximately \$100
7 million. That's the ballpark number. We'll get you
8 an exact breakdown later. So even with a significant
9 increase, which we could work on, we just have to
10 moderate the expectation about what could be gotten
11 in additional revenue in this category.

12 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Thank you,
13 and again, we are here to support you. We just want
14 to be creative so that we don't have to only rely on
15 the public dollars to get that \$15 billion that we
16 needs. But, sorry, I go so in-- I got two questions
17 through the social media, people who ask me to ask
18 the questions to you. One question is Seattle and
19 San Francisco are subsidizing fare for low-income
20 riders. Are you exploring anything similar?

21 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: Oh, I--hate to--

22 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: [interposing] Are
23 you exploring? Is the MTA open to--

24

25

2 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: Not that I'm aware of.
3 It's--it's something that as Budget Director I
4 haven't been privy to any conversations like that.

5 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. I just
6 would like to see if you could at least open a
7 discussion or open this up to explore the possibility
8 on how we can subsidize fare for community college
9 students in New York City.

10 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: Yes. Well, the only
11 thing I can say and we're consistent on anything that
12 is going to-- Unfortunately, as you know, we have a
13 massive underfunding of our Capital Program. Any
14 loss of revenue just would worsen the situation that
15 much.

16 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: How much exactly
17 would like the--will the MTA like the City to
18 contribute?

19 [laughter]

20 AARON STERN: Whatever you can give.

21 [laughter]

22 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: The maximum.

23 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: How much is Long
24 Island contributing?

25

2 CRAIG STEWART: This plan assumes that if
3 the City will contribute \$125 million a year, we
4 would love it if they could contribute more, but
5 that's what we assume they will.

6 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: How much is Long
7 Island, Connecticut, Yonkers, Westchester
8 contributing?

9 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: Well, Connecticut funds
10 a portion of Metro North operating deficit, and they
11 fund capital programs that are completed within the
12 State of Connecticut. They fund a portion of capital
13 programs that benefit the entire Metro North. So
14 they are not technically a part of the 12-county
15 region. The other, if you talk about other regions,
16 really there will be subsets of New York State. So
17 there would be-- You know, their portion really
18 they're a part of New York State funding.

19 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: What about Long
20 Island?

21 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: Long Island, again
22 that's part of a portion of New York State as well.

23 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. How much
24 does the New York City Transit--what percentage of

2 the New York City Transit budget is covered by
3 passenger revenue?

4 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: [off mic] I think Long
5 Island Transit. [sic]

6 AARON STERN: So 59% of the operating
7 budget and it's about 51% if you also include the
8 debt service expenditure.

9 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: 59? And what
10 percent of this budget is covered by the State and
11 the City subsidized?

12 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: [off mic] The rest.

13 AARON STERN: The remainder.

14 [background comments]

15 AARON STERN: So it's 49% if you count
16 the debt service, and 41% if you don't.

17 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

18 DOUGLAS JOHNSON: Are we good. Okay.

19 [background comments/noise, pause]

20 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you,
21 Commissioner. Sorry that we are running late. We
22 will now hear from the Taxi and Limousine
23 Commissioner Meera Joshi. The Commission will
24 discuss the budget, which is projected to be \$68
25 million for Fiscal 2016. The Commission will update

2 the Committee for efforts to implement the sale of
3 additional taxicab medallions, initial inter-borough
4 streets hail licenses approved by the State. Recent
5 reports have indicated different--some information on
6 that, and we will hear from the Commissioner. The
7 Committee is--give me one second.

8 [pause]

9 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: We also look
10 forward to hearing about the various new departments
11 and staff resources that will be dedicated to better
12 regulating and enforcing rules and regulations
13 concerning the major up-based [sic] models in our
14 city. This Committee has dedicated more time to
15 exploring how our city can better regulate this
16 emerging industry. And, I am encouraged that TLC is
17 dedicating then necessary resources to ensure
18 compliance. I want to be clear I fully support
19 innovation taking place in the industry--in the taxi
20 industry. As the riding public now has more options,
21 and easier way of getting a cab. But, we must ensure
22 all players in the industry are following the same
23 rules. The Committee is also keenly interested in
24 hearing about increased enforcement of illegal street
25 hail and service--and service refusals. I now ask

2 our committee counsel to administer the affirmation
3 to the representatives of TLC who are here, and then
4 invite them to deliver their testimony.

5 COUNSEL TAYLOR: Would you please raise
6 your right hands? Do you affirm to tell the truth,
7 the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in your
8 testimony before the committee today, and to respond
9 honestly to council member questions?

10 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: Yes, I do.
11 All right. Good morning Chair Rodriguez, and I want
12 to introduce my colleague Midori Valdivia who is
13 Assistant Commissioner of Operations and Finance who
14 will be helping with our budget testimony today.
15 I'm Meera Joshi, Commissioner and Chair of the New
16 York City Taxi and Limousine Commission. Thank you
17 for the opportunity today to speak regarding TLC's
18 Fiscal 2016 Preliminary Budget, our accomplishments
19 in the past year and the work ahead. Today, the
20 number of vehicles and drivers the TLC regulates are
21 historically high. We currently license over 76,000
22 vehicles compared to 69,000 vehicles in 2012, and
23 approximately 135,000 drivers compared to 108,000 in
24 2012. This increase is especially evident in the
25 black car sector, which grew from approximately 7,700

2 vehicle in 2012 to our current volume, 23,700
3 vehicles, an increase of over 200%. As our licensed
4 fleet grows, so does our responsibility to ensure
5 taxi and for-hire vehicle industries remain safe,
6 accountable, and accessible. And during the past
7 year, we've accomplished much to these ends. My
8 first Commission meeting as Chair in April 2014 was
9 also a major milestone for the City's disability
10 community. At that meeting, the Commission approved
11 a landmark rules package that will make New York
12 City's yellow taxi fleet the most accessible in the
13 nation, and save London, the most accessible taxi
14 fleet in the world.

15 Starting January 2016, the yellow taxi
16 fleet will begin converting to wheelchair-accessible
17 vehicles, and by 2020, 50% will be wheelchair-
18 accessible. By June 2014, we committed to
19 transforming the green taxi fleet as well, and we'll
20 ensure that by 2024, at least 33% and up to 50% of
21 the Green Taxi fleet will be wheelchair-accessible.
22 The cost of conversion for vehicle owners and drivers
23 will be defrayed in part by a 30 center per ride Taxi
24 Improvement Surcharge on all yellow and green taxi
25 efforts. These efforts will be complemented by

2 expanding our accessible dispatch program citywide,
3 and migrating Access-A-Ride trips to accessible green
4 and yellow taxis. Our challenge going forward will
5 be arriving at the best possible solution for
6 providing accessible service in the livery and black
7 car sectors where today almost 90% of bases are not
8 providing such service. Safety continues to be
9 paramount on the Commission's agenda. Last year with
10 more--with the support of Council, we implemented
11 rules that give the TLC tools necessary to more
12 effectively and most importantly and more quickly
13 suspend and revoke the licenses of unsafe drivers.
14 Additionally, drivers who run red lights are now
15 subject to TLC penalties, and TLC Safety Squad issued
16 268 summonses to TLC license drivers who were caught
17 speeding. Remember, the overwhelming majority of our
18 licensees are safe drivers. Eighty-three percent of
19 them get three or fewer traffic related points in a
20 year. So not surprisingly, last September, TLC was
21 able to recognize 295 drivers for having impeccable
22 driving records for five years in a row.

23 Additionally, during the past year we
24 finally attained parity in reporting requirements
25 between taxi and for-hire vehicle sectors. And I

2 actually have to say we didn't attain parity. We've
3 improved parity there. And now require FHV bases to
4 submit electronic trip records. By collecting FHV
5 trip records, the TLC will be able to more
6 efficiently perform core functions that have been
7 possible in yellow and green taxis. Including
8 investigating consumer complaints, enforcing safety
9 violations, tracking down lost property, but most of
10 all, making informed policy decisions. Through the
11 creation of a comprehensive FHV trip record database,
12 this year will mark the first time in history the
13 City and lawmakers will have access to the
14 information about the extent that the livery and
15 black car sectors service our city.

16 And because technology is growing, a part
17 of how our for-hire transportation operates: We
18 improve permanent rules to license e-hailing apps.
19 Apps that allow passengers to hail a green or yellow
20 taxi through their Smart Phone. We're almost in the
21 midst--we're also in the midst of drafting companion
22 rules to licensed apps used to dispatcher livery,
23 black cars and limousines. Although some of these
24 apps have operated in New York City since at least
25 2009, we cannot currently enforce against the base

2 using-- And we can currently enforce against the base
3 using an app. Enforcement against the app itself is
4 illusory without a licensing structure. So we look
5 forward to the Transportation Committee's input as we
6 move forward with the companion FHV App Licensing
7 Package.

8 Although there is much media attention on
9 the many new ways to get a black car and how fast
10 this can happen, there is a segment of the
11 transportation industry that is often overlooked, but
12 is truly a transportation lifeline for many New York
13 City residents. And that's the commuter van network.
14 The TLC is committed to elevating the use and growth
15 of licensed commuter vans. Today, over 75% of our
16 licensed commuter vans are authorized to add TLC
17 branding similar to the T on green and yellow taxis.
18 Informing customers that the vehicle is licensed and
19 properly ensured as well as providing a sense of
20 pride for drivers and operators.

21 NYPD has also been a key partner in
22 increasing our enforcement efforts against illegal
23 commuter vans. And together we pulled 112 illegal
24 vans off the road in the last eight months, but they
25 do come back. So we look forward to working with

2 Council on ways to increase the penalties for the
3 illegal operation of commuter vans. TLC continues to
4 enforce vigorously against unsafe illegal operators
5 especially in hotbeds like the airports. In the last
6 eight months TLC inspectors have seized almost 3,000
7 illegal vehicles, 1,200 at JFK alone, and issued over
8 6,000 summonses for illegal pickup or drop-off. Four
9 months ago, in conjunction with the Port Authority
10 police, we began undercover operations at arrival
11 terminals where hustlers congregate resulting in
12 dozens of arrests. I expect this partnership to
13 continue and grow.

14 TLC also continues to enforce against FHV
15 licensees who illegally accept street hails, and in
16 the last eight months we've issued over 7,400
17 summonses for illegal street hails, up 6% from last
18 year. TLC is also monitoring illegal street hails
19 primarily in Manhattan where we've issued 2,000
20 summonses since July. From July 2014 through January
21 2015, our Licensing Unit has processed over 52,000
22 driver applications, and 34,000 vehicle applications,
23 a marked increased from the same period last year
24 when we processed 46,000 driver applications or 12%
25 less than today. And 27,000 vehicles, 21 less--

2 percent less than today. The difference is even
3 starker when you compare it to Fiscal Year 2013 when
4 we processed 40,000 driver applications, 23% less
5 than today, and 22,000 vehicle applications, 34% less
6 than today. The ever-increasing volume has strained
7 our ability to lessen wait times, a high priority for
8 the agency.

9 In Fiscal Year 2013, the average wait
10 time to get a medallion driver's license was 50 days,
11 and the average wait time to get an FHV driver's
12 license was 20. By June 2014, three months after I
13 started, it took an average of 90 days to process
14 both types of licenses. Despite these heavy and
15 continued volumes, we have introduced efficiency in
16 initiatives that are already working, and last month
17 we decreased that all-time high of 90 days to 62 days
18 for a taxi driver's license, and 35 days for an FHV
19 driver's license. I expect these indicators to
20 improve as we continue to integrate more
21 efficiencies. In the last months we've added
22 barcodes to applications, and created a new
23 application database that allow us to track
24 applications, and identify and resolve bottlenecks.

2 To expedite the licensing process, we're
3 finalizing a program that will send text message
4 notifications to applicants to alert them of missing
5 documents, and other things that hold up the
6 application process. We continue to make
7 enhancements to our online transaction system by
8 adding features that spare licensees a trip to our
9 office, and we're also in the midst of a plain
10 language project to rewrite all pulling facing
11 licensing documents to ensure that they are easy to
12 understand. And by the end of 2015, our licensing
13 unit will be moving to a new, larger and more
14 improved space in Long Island City that will
15 accommodate our growing staff, and better serve the
16 growing universe of TLC licensees.

17 It's important to keep in mind that when
18 I joined the TLC as General Counsel in 2011, there
19 were no green taxis. And although some people used
20 Smart Phones to get cars, apps were the exception,
21 not the norm. Four years later, green taxis complete
22 approximately 50,000 hail trips a day, while the
23 black car sector, which has grown by 200%, is now
24 primarily dispatched by Smart Phone apps.
25 Additionally, the MTA ridership is at a historic

2 high. And as temperatures warm, Citi Bike again
3 becomes a quick and easy transportation alternative
4 throughout parts of Manhattan and Brooklyn. Also,
5 last summer, the City got the Authority to sell 1,600
6 additional accessible medallions, the largest planned
7 influx of medallions to the market since the passage
8 of the Haas Act in 1937. Given these changes
9 occurring across TLC licensed industries and the
10 city's transportation network, not surprisingly
11 there's been a dip in yellow taxi trip volumes, about
12 6% and roughly 3% decrease in yellow taxi fares while
13 few medallion transactions that have occurred the last year have
14 been priced--at prices that are lower than those seen
15 in early 2013 and late 2013 at a time when the above
16 factors had not yet come into play. TLC is currently
17 monitoring and evaluating medallion market trends,
18 but what is clear that even during this time of
19 increased usage of FHV dispatch apps, the hand hail
20 is the overwhelming method of choice for passengers.
21 With hundreds of thousands of passengers hailing
22 yellow taxis every day. While at the same time, the
23 volume of passengers hailing green taxis continues to
24 grow at a rapid pace.
25

2 The Preliminary Budget for Fiscal 2016 of
3 \$68 million supports all of our daily operations and
4 new initiatives in a fiscally responsible manner. Of
5 that, \$38.5 million is dedicated to personal
6 services, and \$29.5 million is for other than
7 personal services. Major line items in the Expense
8 Budget include \$18 million in grant issuance for
9 street hail livery permit holders who bring
10 wheelchair-accessible taxis into service. The grant
11 program supports our accessibility goals by helping
12 to defray the cost of wheelchair-accessible vehicles.
13 As of February 25th, we've awarded 770 grants
14 totaling \$11.5 million with 47 more in the final
15 approval process.

16 New initiatives funded in this budget
17 included dedicated field enforcement operation at La
18 Guardia Airport; rollout of a citywide accessible
19 dispatch system; compliance monitoring of trip
20 records submission; and staffing to support
21 enforcement of new technologies and accessibility
22 standards. In addition, the Fiscal 2016 budget has
23 another \$1.1 million in funding for licensing
24 improvements, and additional staff. These new

2 initiatives account for the increase in the agency's
3 headcount from 633 to 700 in the Preliminary Budget.

4 We also continue to evaluate the TLC
5 Revenue Budget and Forecast. For Fiscal 2015 we have
6 a plan that assumed a medallion sale by the end of
7 this fiscal year. That's our current plan, and we
8 continue to study the changes in the market. We also
9 a budgeted \$312 million in revenues for the sale of
10 over--of 345 wheelchair-accessible medallions in
11 fiscal year 2016. We are always evaluating each
12 budget line item, and we recognize it's a small but
13 valuable element to the City's budget. We continue
14 to work with the Office of Management and Budget to
15 ensure a precise revenue forecast. It's been a busy
16 year with increased access for people with
17 disabilities; implemented new programs to improve
18 safety for the riding public; and have expanded
19 accountability measures.

20 In the coming year, I look forward to
21 working Council to address a changing transportation
22 environment, and to ensure that our regulated
23 industries remain safe, accountable and accessible.
24 This concludes the TLC Preliminary Budget Testimony
25 for Fiscal Year 2016. I thank you for the

2 opportunity to testify today. At this time, I'd be
3 happy to answer any questions you may have.

4 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Meera Joshi,
5 you've been like a great partner for us, and I know
6 that as we've been able to do great things, we will
7 continue doing a lot of things together. My first
8 question is about the Preliminary Budget includes
9 \$144,000 in Fiscal 2015, and \$275,000 in Fiscal 2016,
10 and our year for six positions for the Vision Zero
11 Red Light Camera Enforcement Initiative. Can you
12 explain how this initiative will be carried out?

13 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: Sure the
14 \$144,000 was for a partial fiscal year, and the
15 \$279,000 is for full fiscal year funding. And those
16 funds go for staffing as well as OTPS. But I think
17 it's important for me to kind of describe some of the
18 mechanics behind red light summonsing. As part of
19 Vision Zero initiatives in year one, we began
20 identifying drivers that were driving vehicles that
21 were caught in red light cameras. And issuing
22 summonses to those drivers by tracking them down
23 through the TLC databases. [coughs] We initially
24 issued 30 summonses, and those 30 went to hearing.
25 Since that time, we have decided to issue warnings,

2 and that's what we did for the remainder of calendar
3 year 2014. We're now going to do gradual
4 enforcement, which is moving to stipulations. And
5 that would give the opportunity for a person who is
6 caught in the red light camera to agree to a
7 settlement.

8 It will not incur points on their
9 license. But some of the mechanics that are behind
10 the funding are a little complicated. So they're
11 worth discussion. To get the red light data we have
12 to get the data from DOT, and that has a cost. That
13 has a few thousand dollars a month to get all of the
14 data to cover yellow medallion, street hail livery,
15 and livery and black car. All of our TLC licensees.
16 Once we get that data, there's a significant amount
17 of cleaning that needs to happen for us to sort of
18 understand exactly what the data is. Then, we have
19 to match the data against our available databases.
20 On the yellow and green side it's a little easier
21 because we have TPAP and LPAP. So we can take the
22 vehicle's license plate, and determine through TPAP
23 and LPAP who was driving the vehicle at a given time.

24 Before a trip record submission is fully
25 underway, while we're still in sort of--and

2 especially in 2014, to identify drivers on the livery
3 and black car side takes contacting the base. And
4 asking the base to look at their trip records, and
5 then send us an affidavit telling us who was driving
6 on a certain date and time. So that's obviously, a
7 labor-intensive and time-consuming process. And once
8 that's all done, what we did for most of 2014 was
9 issue warnings. Because this isn't about penalizing
10 drivers. This is about changing behavior [coughs]
11 and having drivers understand the full consequences
12 of running a red light. So we issued up to about
13 3,000 warnings in 2014. And, our hope is that
14 through the warning process and through gradual
15 enforcement, we're able to bring those numbers down.
16 Because ultimately, this should not be something that
17 is the source of a large amount of summoning.

18 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. Also,
19 in Fiscal 2015 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report
20 for TLC the average time calendar days from a
21 consumer request for hearing to the hearing, closed
22 days remains above the Commission's target, 55 days?

23 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: Yes. We're
24 not at around 58 days, and our target is 55.

2 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Exactly. So is
3 the Commission concerned that the longer time period
4 could discourage consumers from coming forward with a
5 complaint?

6 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: It's a
7 concern. Obviously, if we're above our target, we
8 have concern. Let me give you a little bit of
9 background. About 60% of our consumer complaints opt
10 to settle. So the settlement takes them out of the
11 hearing process. And then we're--they are not
12 included in this day cap because they settle very
13 quickly.

14 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: What percent did
15 you say:

16 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: Sixty-percent.

17 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay.

18 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: So 40% don't
19 settle, and those that don't settle, we have to give
20 the respondent ample time to an notice to prepare,
21 which is 30 days. So we're--there's a built-in 30
22 days that we can't actually ever reduce. And then
23 once they do, we have to schedule a hearing date.
24 Where we do have some room, where we can reduce the
25 time is the amount of time it's taking now to

2 schedule a hearing, which is about two weeks. And we
3 are actively going to work with OATH to see if we can
4 reduce that time period. But obviously, we want to
5 do everything to make the process as consumer
6 friendly because the feedback from consumers is what
7 drives a lot of our improvements.

8 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. Can
9 you please update the Committee on the progress of
10 the lower tax implementation? Are the licenses
11 already issued? How many are now in revenue service?
12 What is the status of issuing the second tranche of
13 6,000 SHL permits. And has the amount for the permit
14 been sufficient or lacking?

15 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: So from the
16 first tranche, all 6,000 were sold, and of the non-
17 accessible 4,756 are on the road. And of the
18 accessible, 930 are on the road. [coughs] And of
19 that--of that group, almost 753 of the accessibles
20 have reached--have received grants to help them get
21 on the road. Of the second tranche, 1,382 non-
22 accessibles have been sold; 493 accessibles have been
23 sold; 720 of the non-accessibles are on the road; and
24 85 of the accessibles are on the road. And I think

2 that reflects the increased time and effort it takes
3 to get an accessible car on the road.

4 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: What is the
5 percentage that you say-- What is the percentage of
6 funding assistance has the Commission approved?

7 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: We have-- To
8 date, we have funded 753 grants. That's \$11.5
9 million. We have 47 grants in the pipeline that we
10 expect to approve as they move through the pipeline.
11 So that means that if these are--I'm pretty sure most
12 of them are all from the first wave. So that means
13 about 800 people in the first wave that bought an
14 accessible are getting some grant monies to help the
15 up-fit and continue to run that accessible vehicle.

16 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: What challenges
17 have you faced with regard to increasing the
18 accessibility of the borough taxis?

19 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: The biggest
20 challenge, and it's not on just the green taxi side,
21 it's on the yellow taxi side as well is finding
22 drivers for accessible vehicles. It's not a mystery
23 or a secrete that accessible vehicles tend to be a
24 little clunkier. The MB200 is much--makes much less
25 noise than the Toyota Sienna or the Dodge Caravan.

2 But if you've been in either of them, it's a loud
3 vehicle when they're converted. They use more gas.
4 Again, the MB200 accessible we don't have so much of
5 a problem with, but the Toyota Sienna or the Dodge
6 Caravan, which are popular accessible models use more
7 gas than a traditional car. And they also require
8 the driver to have undertaken wheelchair-accessible
9 training. We're now in the future going to mandate
10 that everybody take wheelchair-accessible training so
11 drivers won't have that as an obstacle. Because it
12 will be a requirement for everybody whether or not
13 they choose to drive an accessible vehicle. But in
14 sum, those pretty much deter drivers from wheelchair-
15 accessible vehicles, and put them in other vehicles
16 which then, you know, puts a stress on our ability to
17 provide that service.

18 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Great. Has the
19 new 30 cent surcharge for accessibility been
20 successful, and how much money have you been able to
21 collect so far?

22 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: We're
23 collecting it on a quarter basis so we haven't done
24 the first collection. The 30 cents went into effect
25 January 1st. And this year we'll be proposing, and

2 we'd love your input on an implementation rules
3 package, which will outline exactly how the money is
4 to be allocated between vehicle owners and drivers.

5 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Is there any
6 registrations, and how to apply for the hail license
7 issued under the inter-borough taxi permit?

8 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: Under the
9 State Hail Law, the only people that can own a hail
10 license are FHV owners and FHV drivers.

11 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. on contract
12 the Commission's Fiscal 2016 budget includes \$3.2
13 million for contracted service of which \$833,000 is
14 for two contracts. Described as contractor service
15 in general. Can you tell you tell the Committee why
16 specific contracts are included in the contractor
17 services general category?

18 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: I'm going to
19 let my colleague Midori answer that one.

20 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER VALDIVIA: Hello,
21 of the \$873,000 allocated for Fiscal Year 2014, it's
22 actually for 14 contacts. And they include regular
23 support services such as translation services,
24 mailing servicing, including our Safety and Emissions
25 Inspections Testing Program, and our Electronic

2 Summoning Services, Systems Integration Services for
3 that.

4 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: How do you
5 announce those requests for proposals? Do you
6 announce it through the website or the Taxi and
7 Limousine Commission?

8 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER VALDIVIA: Yes, if
9 it is required to undergo an RFP process, we will go
10 through the traditional advertising methods for that.

11 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. I just
12 believe it is--I don't know if it's done, but I think
13 it is important also to be advising languages also
14 other than English. And since also we can, as I know
15 is a priority of this Administration also to go that
16 extra mile to attract different sectors of our city
17 to be--to have opportunity to apply when there is a
18 request for proposal.

19 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER VALDIVIA: Yes, we
20 agree with you.

21 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: According to the
22 Fiscal 2015 Mayor's Management Report, TLC conducted
23 13,995 safety and emission inspections for hired
24 vehicles, an increase of nearly 13% compared to that
25 same period last year. Can you tell the committee if

2 any improvements have been made in inspection wait
3 times particularly the time from the initial request
4 for the appointment to the time of inspection is
5 complete?

6 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: Yes, there has
7 been improvement. In Fiscal Year 2013 for the fourth
8 quarter for livery, there was eight days between the
9 appointment and the inspection. A black car 7 days,
10 and a Lux Limo 9 days. For our most recent numbers,
11 which are for the third quarter of 2014, that was
12 reduced by three days on the livery. So it now takes
13 five days for a livery to get their appointment
14 reduced by two on the black car. It now takes five
15 days. And for the Lux Limo, it takes five days as
16 well. And let me add, we're adding a feature called
17 self-scheduling, which will allow the applicant to
18 pick the appointment that works best for their
19 schedule. That may end up with some applicants
20 picking the a day that's further out more than five
21 or six cays, but it has the convenience that it works
22 with whatever their schedule is. It will also allow
23 us to free up a few staff members to work on other
24 licensing priorities.

2 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Uber and Lyft.
3 Why isn't Uber and Lyft in the app service companies.
4 It also asks to pay the 30 cent surcharge for
5 accessibility of the yellow and the green.

6 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: Good question.
7 [laughs] So I think it highlights a lot of the work
8 that we did last year. Your question highlights that
9 as well as the work ahead of us and that there are
10 inequities among the sectors. So, some of the work
11 ahead of us this year is addressing inequities in
12 different sector's contribution to the city's
13 infrastructure. And that applies not just to the 30
14 cents. That applies to the 50 cents that the yellows
15 and greens pay towards the MTA. And the livery and
16 black car Lux Limo and other sectors do not pay that
17 50 cents per trip towards the infrastructure of the
18 MTA. Some of the other inequities are the inequities
19 in the level of review before expansion.

20 So a livery base for example has to go
21 through community board approval, police precinct
22 approval, commission approval, and Council gets the
23 opportunity to weigh in on that approval as well.
24 [cough] A commuter van authority has to go through a
25 review and recommendation process with DOT. They

2 have to go through community board approval. They
3 have to go through local precinct approval. Then the
4 number of vans that they can have is capped, and the
5 geographic zone that they can work in is also
6 defined. Taxis have to go through an EIS, which is
7 an expansive economic and environmental and socio-
8 economic study. And that's to add one taxi on the
9 roads. And they need state and local authority again
10 to add one taxi on the road.

11 And green taxis don't have to do an EIS,
12 but they're subject to a cap, 18,000 maximum and they
13 have very rigorous requirements on how much we can
14 sell and when. So we can only sell 800 non-
15 accessibles aver we've sold 200 accessibles. So we
16 must continue in that manner, and they also have
17 geographic bindings. The black car sector and the
18 Lux Limo sector where Uber and Lyft as well as lots
19 of other new apps that are coming into New York City.
20 And lots of just bases that operate, don't have any
21 of these review restrictions prior to expansion. And
22 I don't think they're just bureaucratic restrictions.
23 They're a chance for the community to weigh on.
24 They're a chance for there to be an environmental
25 review and economic review before there is a

2 tremendous vehicle expansion like we've seen. So
3 part of our work ahead, and part of work together
4 with Council will be to address some of these
5 inequities.

6 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Do you feel that
7 we, the City, are providing the resources--in this
8 coming--in this budget 2016, will you have the
9 necessary resources to hire the number of staff that
10 you need from the lawyer enforcements to be sure that
11 we can fight against those in this industry that
12 believe that believe that they are above everyone?

13 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: So, illegal
14 operators?

15 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Illegal operators
16 and people who refuse to provide--to keep records and
17 other information that is important. So for them
18 also to be regulated as yellow immigrant?

19 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: In terms of
20 illegal operators, we have a large enforcement team,
21 and an effective enforcement team about 216
22 inspectors that can seize illegal operators on the
23 street. And we try to work strategically because
24 obviously, I don't--I know that, you know, there are
25 lots of illegal operators out there. And the problem

2 is outsized to our force. But we work strategically
3 and we also work with NYPD to be more of a deterrent.
4 And our numbers I think that I gave in my testimony
5 reflect that hard work. So we feel adequately
6 supported by the City in that venture, and especially
7 in the coming budget where we got a new squad for La
8 Guardia. So we can finally have a permanent presence
9 there, which is another hot bed of illegal activity.
10 We also received funding for staff that help us with
11 enforcing accessibility standards, enforcing trip
12 records compliance, and enforcing new technology
13 standards that are coming down the pipe. So I'm
14 happy to report that this city is well-funded by the
15 Administration in all of these new enforcement
16 initiatives.

17 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Is everyone,
18 again, it started with Uber, who had with years in
19 the past to submit the trip record. Is everyone
20 starting with Uber on time submitting the trip
21 record?

22 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: We have
23 received all the trip record data that we asked for
24 pursuant to a group of directives that we sent out
25 this summer. We recently sent out our first wave of

2 directives for trip records submission pursuant to
3 our rules. The due date for that is the end of March
4 2015. So I will let you know the end of the month
5 whether we have full compliance or not.

6 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: And I just hope
7 that, you know, those that have refused in the past
8 to submit a trip record to you, that they know that
9 whole city is watching them. And as they come with
10 billions of dollars and hire the tabloids and the
11 tabloids that there is a united front in New York
12 City that is sending a message loud and clear that
13 New York City will set an example on how an app
14 service should be able to take advantage of the great
15 opportunity that we provide when we've got 57 million
16 that came here last year. A city of eight million
17 people. That's a great opportunity for everyone to
18 develop.[sic] However, everyone has to play by the
19 same rules. And as you have the date as March 15th,
20 we expect of them as others submit the trip record on
21 time. Council Member Johnson.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you,
23 Chair. Good to see you, Commissioner. I want to
24 just dig a little deeper into the accessibility of
25 the taxis that I know are going to start being

2 implemented in January of next year. You said in
3 your testimony that by June 2014, the TLC is
4 committed to transforming the green taxi fleet as
5 well. By the 2020 the yellow taxi fleet will be 50%
6 wheelchair-accessible. I'm sure that you know and
7 have heard from advocates for folks that are in
8 wheelchairs or need access to taxis that the rear
9 entrance is not safe. Getting into a taxi through
10 the rear doesn't align in many ways with Mayor de
11 Blasio's Vision Zero Initiative. A side door
12 entrance is considered much safer, and it's what
13 people have been pushing for. I understand, though I
14 don't under the specifics, but I understand that
15 there's a waiver that could be granted. And I want
16 to hear your thoughts on do you have any concerns
17 about rear entry for people who are in wheelchairs.
18 And how do we ensure that these changes are actually
19 the safest changes for people who are looking for
20 this accessibility?

21 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: We've actually
22 authorized since 2011 both rear entry and side entry
23 wheelchair-accessible vehicles. The popular choice
24 for operators is the rear entry, and I haven't come
25 across in my experience--and I'm not saying that it's

2 all-encompassing--but I have not come across an
3 instance where the rear entry has posed a safety risk
4 for the passengers. But, we haven't--we have offered
5 side entry, and we did for a while have one or two
6 operators that chose the side-entry vehicle, and--but
7 later abandoned it. And so, today we don't actually,
8 although you can operate a side-entry vehicle, we
9 don't actually have any operators that have chosen
10 it. And you're right, there is a waiver provision in
11 the MB200 Rules that allow for actually it's all of
12 the new medallions can choose any rear or side entry
13 vehicles whichever they prefer. 496 of the medallions
14 that need to be converted can choose a side entry if
15 they choose to and 231 of the original accessible
16 medallions that were sold in the '90s can choose a
17 rear or side entry vehicle.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: But it's just
19 like you said, it doesn't sound like operators are
20 choosing side entry.

21 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: No, they are
22 not.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: They're not.
24 And I think just my basic understanding of this is
25 that if are going to do rear entry, and you are

2 someone who is in a wheelchair, pulling into the
3 street and not at the curb to get into the back of a
4 vehicle poses more of a risk for someone. Especially
5 if it's going to take a little bit to get into the
6 back of a taxi. So, you all haven't done any-- Have
7 you done any analysis looking at what is safer? I
8 know other cities just do side door entry.

9 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: Well, these
10 vehicles go through some safety protocols as part of
11 NHTS, and as well as part of the conversion. And
12 there is some debate on side entry versus rear entry
13 in terms of disembarking and embarking. Whether it's
14 possible in Manhattan especially with the crowded
15 streets to safely find a place to put the side entry
16 ramp out. Because there is generally not a space
17 between the cars and the sidewalk to make that
18 connection. Which is why we offer both so that we
19 give people the preference, the choice to choose one
20 or the other.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: No one is using
22 the side entry.

23 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: No one is
24 using the side entry, and I think a large part of it
25 has to do with the cost of the available side entry

2 vehicle. And I would love to see an auto
3 manufacturer rise to challenge, and make a more
4 affordable side-entry vehicle. Because until that
5 happens, it will be difficult to integrate the side
6 entry into the general market.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Well, I would--I
8 would love to have more conversations with you all
9 and your leadership team--

10 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: [interposing]
11 Absolutely.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: --about this.

13 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: Thank you.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: I just--if we're
15 going to--and I recognize it, and I'm happy to pay
16 it, the surcharge when we get into a taxi now to
17 enable the fleet to be more accessible. I want to
18 make sure if we're going to spend all this money that
19 it's actually done in the best way for the people
20 that need it.

21 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: I appreciate
22 that.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: I have a--I have
24 a much more granular hyper local concern to raise
25 with you, which is [clears throat] I represent the

2 West Side of Manhattan and the meat packing district.
3 It is located within my Council District. There have
4 been for years now endemic problems at night in the
5 warm months in the meat packing district being-- And
6 it's not the TLC's fault. Just being overrun with
7 night life, congestion. DOT has spent a huge amount
8 of time looking at how to improve the area, and make
9 it better. We worked with the local police precinct
10 as well. But one of the biggest issues are both
11 black cars and yellow cars [bell] that get into the
12 heart of the meat packing district and sit there and
13 wait, or take up illegal spaces. And I would really
14 appreciate the ability to work with the TLC and with
15 the other relevant agencies in an interagency way to
16 figure out what we can do as we come up to the
17 summers months and warm months to disincentivize this
18 behavior. It's become a huge local nuisance for
19 residents and businesses. In the past, no one has
20 really spent much time there. There have been maybe
21 one or two busts a year. So I would really
22 appreciate the ability to strategize with you and
23 your team on what we can do to try to make a
24 difference because DOT and the Sixth Precinct have

2 spent a huge amount of time. I am less aware of what
3 TLC has done in that area.

4 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: Well, we
5 absolutely can partner with you on that, and the more
6 data we have about the density, the vehicle density
7 and the times of vehicle density I think we could be
8 of great assistance to DOT and PD.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you very
10 much. I know you've had an extraordinarily busy 14
11 months. I think you've done an impressive amount,
12 and I look forward to working with you, and with
13 Chair Rodriguez to ensure that the TLC moves forward
14 in the best way possible. Thank you very much.

15 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: Thank you.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you,
17 Chair.

18 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you,
19 Council Member Johnson. Three more questions and
20 then we will let you go. One is that on Vision Zero
21 how much in this--in the 2016 Budget allocated to do
22 educational to the drivers--to drivers?

23 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: We have in the
24 Vision Zero Budget an increase from 1.1, which was
25 last year's Vision Zero budget to 1.1. And of that

2 1.2, and I'm going to refer to Midori to get the
3 exact. It's a combination of--when you talk about
4 education for drivers it's a combination of PS,
5 because that's personal services. That's our staff
6 that does it. Last year they did over 56 outreach
7 visits to different bases and garages. So that work
8 is going to continue. So our 2015 Budget includes
9 PS, which is the staff members who do that outreach
10 work, as well as at least--probably closer to
11 100,000, although it's not broken out in OTP that
12 goes towards preparing educational materials that are
13 one, you know, interesting to drivers. And also
14 focused on the issues that they need to hear about.

15 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. I didn't
16 like the numbers I saw on livery drivers saying that
17 they will be facing like a 1,000 or that a 1,001
18 drivers they will losing their license because of the
19 Vision Zero combining points. How accurate is that
20 about this--

21 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: [interposing]
22 Yeah, it's not--it's not so much combining points.
23 What is it is there are back in probably the end of
24 2013, we began to get better data streams from DMV.
25 And when we got those better data streams, we were

2 able--we were more cognizant and acting up CD points
3 racking up. So when you got six points you get
4 suspended and ten points you get revoked. So
5 overall, and I'm happy to share those raw numbers
6 with you after the Council hearing. Overall, you'll
7 see a spike in the number by month of people that are
8 suspended and revoked for CD point violations. And
9 those CD point violations in some part mirror our PV
10 violations, but they don't all. So they may, you
11 know, they may include some things that we haven't
12 tagged as hazards. And that's--there's room there
13 for I think the agency and City Council to work
14 together to make sure the drivers who do an extremely
15 hard job or in extremely stressful conditions are
16 being suspended and revoke for the right reasons.

17 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Right, and again
18 I'm hoping to looking to continue working with you.
19 Because there is one aspect and I'm very proud of the
20 whole package of Vision Zero, those laws that we have
21 passed, and I think that we have been working in a
22 great working relationship. And I think that because
23 of all those laws that we have passed we have been
24 improving safety in our streets. But I think that
25 one area that I would be--that I will be open. I'm

2 open. I told the drivers that I understand their
3 concerns, which is that those cases where a driver
4 has already paid to the Department of Motor Vehicles,
5 why they also have to come back and pay another fine
6 to the TLC?

7 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: Okay, we're
8 happy to explore that with you.

9 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay, if you can
10 explore that particular one so we appreciate it.
11 With the 2,000 summons that you have given since
12 July--since July you said that most of them are in
13 Manhattan. I'm sorry, 7,400 summons for illegal
14 street hail, 6% from last year. That's on page 2,
15 and then you said that primarily the illegal street
16 hail is the summons have been primarily given in
17 Manhattan.

18 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: I think
19 primarily is probably not the right word because I'm
20 probably not that good at math, but 2,000 is not the
21 majority of 7,000.

22 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Are these given
23 more in the--to the south or the north on 96th
24 Street?

2 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: They're
3 usually in the Central Business District. The 2,000
4 in Manhattan area all going to be Central Business
5 District.

6 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: And most of them
7 are--

8 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: [interposing]
9 Below 96th Street.

10 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Great. On the
11 illegal, the penalty for the illegal operations of
12 commuter vans, definitely this is something that I'm
13 looking to continue working with you. You know, my
14 heart and my action will be always connected with
15 serving our working-class and our middle-class.
16 Knowing that we have to work with all sectors, but I
17 believe that it is unfair for drivers that they go
18 through the whole process and they get their license
19 through the TLC. Then to those--those--the market,
20 from those drivers that they don't have a license.
21 And they are the one in front of the Target at 225th
22 or somewhere in Queens, too. So, this is something
23 that definitely we--I hope that we can work closely
24 and increase the penalty to those individuals not
25 only that they are using the vans. But any driver

2 that they are putting themselves not only at risk,
3 but also the consumer who are getting into their car
4 without them having the proper insurance in case that
5 something happen.

6 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: Absolutely.

7 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you,
8 Commissioner.

9 COMMISSIONER MEERA JOSHI: Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. So
11 now we will be calling our panel of the public. The
12 public section is going to be Lester Marks, Bhairavi
13 Desai and Brit Byrd and Alex Stacking. This time we
14 will put a clock on ten minutes, please. Yeah, you
15 put it on two minutes.

16 [pause]

17 BRIT BYRD: Good afternoon. My name is
18 Brit Byrd. I'm the Senior Fellow for Economic
19 Development for the Roosevelt Institute Campus
20 Network and a student at Columbia University. The
21 Roosevelt Institute Campus Network is the nation's
22 largest student driven policy organization with more
23 than 120 university campuses in 38 states involving
24 thousands of young people nationwide. In my capacity
25 as Senior Fellow, I've examine economics and urban

2 planning implication of New York City's on-street
3 parking spaces. I appreciate this opportunity to
4 share some of my research and policy suggestions,
5 which I elaborate on in depth in the attached White
6 Paper. That paper [coughs] was also presented to
7 members of the National Economic Policy Council at
8 the White House last December.

9 Vehicular traffic congestion presents a
10 serious and ongoing challenge in the City of New
11 York. Most recently the City's Vision Zero program
12 has highlighted the tragic human cost of reckless and
13 haphazard traffic. This is sadly only one facet of a
14 divers and widespread problem, expanding concerns
15 about public health, environmental emissions, losses
16 in economic productivity, and responsible urbanism.
17 The economic costs alone is staggering. The
18 Partnership for New York City estimated that as much
19 as \$1.9 billion is lost annually due to inventory,
20 logistical, and personnel costs. And up to \$4.6
21 billion is lost as unrealized business revenue. The
22 City has not been blind to this problem--

23 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: [interposing]
24 Sorry, Do you have a copy of that testimony?

25 BRIT BYRD: Yes.

2 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay.

3 [background comments]

4 BRIT BYRD: Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

6 BRIT BYRD: Sorry. The City has not been
7 blind to this problem, and has pursued solutions at
8 the State level and to a more limited extent within
9 its own departments. But the City has not taken--
10 fully taken advantage of one of the largest tools at
11 its disposal, the management of on-street parking
12 spaces. De-incentivizing vehicular traffic within
13 the dense transit rich parts of our city is a
14 straightforward task and that raising the cost of a
15 car trip results in fewer car trips. Efforts in
16 enacting a congestion pricing plan in 2008 and
17 current Park Smart NYC Program reflecting awareness
18 of this policy tool. The parking policies that use
19 the same mechanisms have been almost entirely
20 overlooked even though they represent an ideal
21 opportunity for the City to raise the effective cost
22 of driving while operating entirely within its own
23 powers. City administered on-street parking spaces
24 are currently highly under-valued. Currently, it's
25 varied from \$1 to \$5 across the city, where pricing

2 for an hour of parking in a private off-street garage
3 suggests that the market rate is closer to \$15 to
4 \$30. As noted in my White Paper, this is extensive
5 research shown that parking prices in cities with
6 transit alternatives such as New York City respond
7 remarkably well to classic principles to supply and
8 demand. Raise the price of parking, and the demand
9 will decrease. Conversely, lower prices encourage a
10 higher demand. This is especially pertinent when on-
11 street metered parking is so much less expensive than
12 off-street parking. In one study of six different
13 urban sites, roughly one-third of traffic congestion
14 consisted of people avoiding off-street market prices
15 by circling around in areas searching for cheap on-
16 street parking. Parking spaces represent an enormous
17 quantity of public land that is in effect rented out
18 by the city. But the management scheme heavily
19 subsidizes the use of this space for a relatively
20 small portion of New Yorkers. Only 22.7% of New
21 Yorkers commute to work alone in a vehicle, and only
22 46% of households own a vehicle. Today, I'm here to
23 urge the City Council to pursue two policies that
24 would help reduce traffic congestion, discontinue
25 subsidizing car ownership and raise revenue.

2 1. Introduce the residential parking
3 permit system for on-street parking spaces on
4 residential side streets.

5 2. Devote a small number of on-street
6 parking spaces for the exclusive use of car sharing
7 vehicles.

8 Both of these policies would raise
9 additional revenue for the City, which I further
10 advocate should be allocated to capital budgets for
11 City Council districts that employ participatory
12 budgeting.

13 Proposal No. 1: A residential parking
14 permit or RP system. The vast majority of on-street
15 parking within the city is on residential side
16 streets and is completely free. In 2013, research
17 found that free and available on-street parking
18 increased private car ownership by 8.8% for
19 households with off-street parking in the New York
20 City region. Simply put, this free parking
21 represents an indirect subsidy of personal car
22 ownership and induces additional traffic congestion.
23 Moreover, the free use of residential on-street
24 parking represents a complete conception of valuable
25 public resource to a small portion of citizens.

2 In place of free parking on these
3 residential side streets, New York City should
4 implement a Residential Parking Perm, an RPP to set
5 more appropriate price for the public space being
6 rented. this would also eliminate the existing
7 informal subsidy for personal car ownership, and
8 reduce traffic congestion and other vehicle related
9 and negative externalities. In contract to meter
10 parking, and RPP schemes operates by charging a
11 monthly or yearly charge to park within a given zone.
12 An RPP system benefits drivers by making it easier to
13 find a parking spot available close to their front
14 door, and simplifying alternate side parking.
15 [bell]Perhaps for these reasons, there is evidence
16 that New York City drivers are already prepared for
17 RPP.

18 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: I see that you--
19 this is a like a great paper, a great idea. So what
20 I want to do is to follow up. My staff will follow
21 up with you, and would like to meet with you so that
22 we can get into details of this plan.

23 BRIT BYRD: Okay. Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you

2 LESTER MARKS: Good afternoon, Chair
3 Rodriguez. My name is Lester Marks, and I'm the
4 Director of Government Affairs at Lighthouse Guild.
5 Lighthouse Guild provides a full spectrum of
6 integrated vision and healthcare services helping
7 people who are blind, the visually impaired as well
8 as those with multiple disabilities lead productive
9 and dignified fulfilling lives. I'm here today--
10 Chair, you and this committee have been extremely
11 support of people who are visually impaired. Last
12 year we worked together to pass a bill that was
13 signed into law by Mayor de Blasio that increased the
14 number of accessible pedestrian signals to 75 per
15 year. We are extremely grateful for that support.
16 During that negotiation, we discussed the possibility
17 of increasing funds in the upcoming budget beyond the
18 number of 75 mandated. So I'm here today to ask for
19 the committee's support, for your support in
20 expanding the number beyond 75. We recognize that 75
21 is an important number. However, there are 13,000
22 intersections in New York City. There are currently
23 over 450 intersections that have been requested
24 throughout the city by people who are visually
25 repaired. Or, organizations who work with people who

2 are visually impaired. That will not be funded this
3 year, and that will continue to pose problems when
4 people are crossing these intersections.

5 So what we've done, and I work with PASS,
6 which is Pedestrians for Accessible and Safe Streets
7 Coalition. The Lighthouse Guild is a member of that
8 coalition. We have identified council district by
9 council district the intersections that have been
10 requested within that council district. We have
11 letters here addressed to each member of the City
12 Council requesting them to consider funding with
13 their allocated capital funding that they receive
14 each year. Funding those specific locations within
15 their council district, and help us eliminate this
16 backlog of intersections that have or that will go--
17 intersections that in APS will not be installed this
18 year. So I ask the Chair if you can continue to work
19 with the PASS Coalition. And encourage the members
20 of the City Council and specifically this committee
21 to use their capital funding to possibly fund
22 installations of APS in their council districts.
23 Thank you.

24

25

2 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: We will do that.
3 We will follow up. So let's be sure that Lucas also
4 will follow with you so that we can get to those.

5 LESTER MARKS: Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Good.

7 [background comments]

8 BHAIRAVI DESAI: Good afternoon. I am
9 Bhairavi Desai Executive Director of the New York
10 Taxi Workers Alliance. Chairman Rodriguez, some of
11 your panel members were asking the MTA earlier about
12 the different budget divisions. And I just wanted to
13 publicly attest to the fact that the taxi industry
14 because of the fares that drivers serve every single
15 day contributes \$86 million just from the--just from,
16 you know, the MTA tax that we collect, which is 50
17 cents on every ride. In addition, drivers end up
18 paying about \$10 million a year for a tax that they
19 actually pay on the lease of the vehicle. That
20 amount is not very much in the MTA budget, but it
21 amounts to a great deal of, you know, economic burden
22 for the thousands of drivers who have to pay on
23 average \$4.77 every single day just to go to work.

24 You know, the irony is that as
25 independent contractors there's nobody that

2 contributes their taxes to the--you know, to the
3 future of taxi drivers. There is no Social Security
4 contribution because we have no employers in this
5 industry. Meanwhile, a tax for which, you know,
6 other workers such as truck drivers and farm owners
7 are exempt, taxi drivers are subjected to. Where
8 this is a State matter, but I would just like to
9 bring it to your attention especially in light of the
10 budget discussion. We're hoping to have an exemption
11 for ourselves similar to the exemption that other
12 works have across the state. And if we win this
13 exemption, it will mean about, you know, a \$1,000 to
14 \$1,500 a year in income that drivers will not have to
15 suffer. When you work 60 hours a week, with no
16 guaranteed income, every single dollar counts. And
17 certainly \$1,500 will be significant. You know, for
18 taxi drivers, and I think for many people, working-
19 class people, poor people, on one hand you get taxed
20 quite a bit.

21 On the other hand you contribute. There
22 are summonses. In the taxi industry there is cap in
23 how much fine the TLC can charger to a driver. In
24 the City of Chicago, which is the second biggest taxi
25 market in this country after us, there is actually a

2 cap of \$400 that was recently instituted. We need a
3 similar cap in New York City. Otherwise, drivers are
4 being impoverished not just from 60 hours of labor in
5 a very difficult industry, a very difficult job, but
6 from the fines and fees that they have to routinely
7 pay to the TLC. I particularly think it's important
8 that we need to have a better analysis of the TLC
9 budget to really understand how much that is coming
10 from fines from taxi drivers. Meanwhile, there is
11 the Lease Caps Enforcement unit, which is supposed to
12 target fleet owners that overcharge drivers on the
13 lease. There is about I think like one attorney in
14 that unit. We need that unit to be beefed up.
15 Imagine the revenue that could come in from going
16 after big companies that exploit hard-working
17 drivers.

18 Lastly, why should a driver have to pay a
19 fine if they have been suspended and revoked. As
20 lease drivers you have to bear your expenses even
21 when you're not able to drive that drive. On top of
22 that, you now have to pay a hefty fine. You know,
23 it's impossible. It's a horrible situation, and it's
24 something that the Council could address, you know,
25 with legislation. It would have a significant

2 economic impact for tens of thousands of taxi
3 drivers. And we need a universal license. Part of
4 the reason the TLC is overwhelmed is because many
5 drivers will have a Hack [sp?]. They can't operate
6 an FHV, are now having to go and apply for FHV
7 license and vice versa. The Hack was always
8 considered a universal license. They go through 80
9 hours of training, a drug test every year. A strict
10 licensing requirement. That needs to be a universal
11 license. So drivers can work across sectors. It
12 would be a good benefit also to the TLC who will have
13 less of an administrative burden. Thank.

14 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Another meeting--
15 another meeting to be scheduled.

16 BHAIRAVI DESAI: [laughs] Thank you.

17 ALEX SLACKIE: Hi. Good afternoon. My
18 name is Alex Slackie. I'm representing Triple A
19 Northeast, which serves a membership of over 570,000
20 drivers in the five boroughs in New York City.
21 Thanks for holding this hearing, Chairman Rodriguez
22 and thanks to all the staff. And may I say I'm
23 extremely impressed with the patients of young Ms.
24 Rodriguez who I'm sure would rather be outside and
25 playing snow. I'd rather I'd be outside playing in

2 the snow if I had my way also. So I'll try to be as
3 brief as possible to get us out of here. I'm here to
4 talk about road resurfacing and road conditions. We
5 heard from Commissioner Trottenberg that the DOT
6 plans to resurface a little over 1,000 lane miles
7 this year. The Preliminary Ten-Year Capital Strategy
8 allocates about \$206 million to fulfill that goal.

9 And this would be the largest effort in
10 20 years, and it would fulfill the thousand lane mile
11 benchmark that the City needs to maintain the status
12 quo. But unfortunately, the status quo is not very
13 good. And it's a result of under-investment really
14 over those past two decades. Given that 1,000 lane
15 mile benchmark, we've resurfaced about 2,000 fewer
16 miles than we needed to over the past 15 years since
17 1999. And the results are pretty staggering. In
18 '99, 14.3% of city streets had a pavement condition
19 rating of fair or poor. Now, it's more than double
20 to 30% of our streets are fair or poor. Back then in
21 '99, we had 80,000 potholes. Now, we have over
22 300,000 potholes. It's more than quadrupled. And
23 that trend is not subsiding. Just in the most recent
24 Mayor's Management Report the pothole totals for the
25 first four months of Fiscal Year 2015, are 50%

2 greater than those in '14, and it has real
3 consequences for drivers.

4 I mean this is a fun step, and I like to
5 say it's no so fun for drivers. But for Triple A, we
6 service a call for a flat tire call in the five
7 boroughs of New York City on local streets once every
8 ten minutes, and that's over the year. So it's been
9 awhile. We've probably serviced 30 drivers for flat
10 tire calls just in the, you know, in the time of this
11 hearing. And the obvious response is well the snow
12 is bad, the weather is bad. And it's true. You
13 know, heavy snow, frigid temperatures that
14 contributes to potholes. But in 2003, we received
15 55.5 inches of snow, and we filled fewer than 125,000
16 potholes. Just a few years ago in Fiscal Year 2012,
17 we received only seven inches of snow. Yet, we still
18 filled over 200,000 potholes. So it's not just the
19 snow. It's not just the cold.

20 It's not just the cold that's causing
21 this even if Punxsutawney Phil didn't see his shadow,
22 you know, there would still be potholes [bell]
23 hogging the ground. So, the only sure fire way to
24 improve road quality is to invest. And the Mayor and
25 the Commissioner and the Council have definitely been

2 at the highest level of their commitment to road
3 quality than they have been in decades. But we need
4 to do more. We need to be more aggressive to make up
5 that 2,000 lane mile gap. You can see 250 more
6 miles, 1,250 miles a year for the next eight years.
7 That would just get it back to 1999. You can call it
8 the Prince Plan getting us back to '99. That one
9 bombed, I guess. [laughter] But this is really an
10 investment. It saves drivers money. It saves the
11 City money in the long term. It saves them money on
12 pothole claims. We don't want to delay maintenance.
13 If you agree that the roads need to be fixed, now is
14 the time to do it. Thanks and have a good day.

15 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: [off mic] Thank
16 you. [on mic] As I said, like we're getting to the
17 closing of this hearing with you four in this public
18 panel. It is a great honor. You come out with great
19 contribution. So I may be looking to have a meeting
20 with all of you individually and see how we can
21 incorporate some of your suggestions. So thank you.
22 And with that, this meeting is adjourned.

23 ALEX SLACKIE: Thank you.

24 [gavel]

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1 COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

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C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date March 22, 2015