

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

1

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

----- X

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE JOINTLY
WITH THE COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT
AND INVESTIGATIONS

----- X

SEPTEMBER 12, 2023

Start: 1:28 P.M.

Recess: 4:28 P.M.

HELD AT: COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL

B E F O R E: Selvena N. Brooks-Powers,
Chairperson of Committee on
Transportation and Infrastructure

Gale A. Brewer,
Chairperson of Committee on
Oversight and Investigations

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Joann Ariola
David M. Carr
Amanda Farias
Ari Kagan
Linda Lee
Farah N. Louis
Mercedes Narcisse
Lincoln Restler
Carlina Rivera
Nantasha M. Williams

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

2

COUNCIL MEMBERS: (CONTINUED)

Julie Won
Kalman Yeger

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

3

A P P E A R A N C E S

1
2
3 Ydanis Rodriguez
4 Commissioner of Department of Transportation

5 Eric Beaton
6 Deputy Commissioner of Department of
7 Transportation

8 Rick Rodriguez
9 Assistant Commissioner of Department of
10 Transportation

11 Agnes Rusin
12 Assistant Commissioner for Payments, Billing and
13 Refunds

14 Jean Ryan
15 President of Disabled In Action of Metropolitan
16 New York

17 Alia Soomro
18 Deputy Director for New York City Policy at the
19 New York League of Conservation Voters

20 Elizabeth Adams
21 Deputy Executive Director for Public Affairs at
22 Transportation Alternatives

23 Kate Brockwehl
24 Families for Safe Streets

25 Jolyse Race
Riders Alliance

Lisa Daglian
Permanent Citizen's Advisory Committee

Michael Ring
Disabled in Action

Michael Cohen
504 Democratic Club

Gib Veconi
Prospect Heights Neighborhood Development Council

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

4

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Santo Cabrera
Constituent

Antonya Jeffrey
Fines and Fees Justice Center

Glen Bolofsky
Parkingticket.com

Joe Fama
WinIt

Kathleen Collins
Downstate New York ADAPT and Disabled in Action

Michelle Beyer
Alana Life and Fitness

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

5

1
2 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good afternoon and welcome to
3 the New York City Council Hearing of the Committee's
4 on Transportation and Infrastructure jointly with
5 Oversight and Investigation. At this time, can
6 everyone please silence your cell phones. If you
7 wish to testify, please go up to the Sergeants desk
8 to fill out a testimony slip. Written testimony can
9 be emailed to testimony@council.nyc.gov. Again, that
10 [is testimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:testimony@council.nyc.gov).

11 At this time and going forward, no one is to
12 approach the dais. I repeat no one is to approach
13 the dais. Thank you for your cooperation. Chair, we
14 are ready to begin.

15 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: [GAVEL] Good
16 afternoon and thank you for joining today's joint
17 hearing of the Committee on Transportation and
18 Infrastructure and the Committee on Oversight and
19 Investigations.

20 Today's hearing revisits once again the City's
21 Streets Plan and specifically the Department of
22 Transportation's noncompliance with legal mandates
23 contained within the Streets Plan law that this
24 Council passed several years ago.

25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

6

1
2 This hearing builds on the robust oversight that
3 our committee has conducted over DOT's noncompliance
4 with that law from hearings earlier this year on
5 street safety infrastructure and on DOT's budgetary
6 needs for meeting the Streets Plan mandates, to a
7 series of letters sent jointly with Chair Brewer and
8 the Council's Oversight and Investigation Division on
9 the Streets Plan Mandates.

10 In those hearings and in their responses to our
11 letters, DOT has not provided much specific detail on
12 how likely they are to meet this year's set of
13 Streets Plan mandates. This despite having hired a
14 designated Streets Plan director and address earlier
15 staffing shortages. We are eager to get more
16 information about DOT's expectations for meeting
17 those mandates this year. Especially with the large
18 portion of the "building season" now behind us.

19 To set the stage for today's hearing, it is
20 important to recount the history of the streets plan.
21 Local Law 195 of 2019 was enacted as a way to
22 coordinate the city's street infrastructure
23 improvements and to support our ongoing efforts to
24 achieve Vision Zero. Local Law 195 required DOT to
25 release five-year comprehensive plans for managing

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

7

1
2 our streets. Among other things, such streets plans
3 would require the expansion of the city's biking, bus
4 and pedestrian infrastructure to make our streets
5 safer, encourage mass transit use, reduce vehicle
6 emissions and increase accessibility for individuals
7 with disabilities.

8 To keep DOT on track, the law mandated that DOT's
9 first Street Plan beginning in December 2021 and
10 operating through 2026, would include the following:
11 150 miles of physically or camera-protected bus lanes
12 over five years, with at least 20 miles in the first
13 year and 30 miles during each subsequent year;
14 transit signal priority at 750 intersections during
15 the first year and 1,000 intersections during each
16 subsequent year; 250 miles of protected bike lanes
17 over five years, with at least 30 miles in the first
18 year and 50 miles in each subsequent year; bus stop
19 upgrades, such as benches, shelters, and real time
20 passenger information at 500 bus stops each year; the
21 redesign of at least 2,000 signalized intersections
22 over five years, with at least 400 redesigns each
23 year; accessible pedestrian signals at no fewer than
24 2,500 intersections with at least 500 installations
25 each year; the assessment and amendment of commercial

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

8

1
2 loading zones and truck routes; the development of
3 parking policies to promote the Street Plan's goals
4 of safety, mass transit use, reduced vehicle
5 emissions and access for individuals with
6 disabilities and within the first two years, a
7 creation and maintenance one million square feet of
8 pedestrian space.

9 These are ambitious but important legal
10 requirements put in place by the Council after
11 careful consideration. And the Council has backed up
12 this legislation by allocating significant resources.
13 When it was first passed, the Streets Plan included
14 \$1.7 billion in funding over ten years.

15 Last year, the adopted budget included an
16 additional \$53.3 million in expense funding and
17 \$585.6 in capital funding for Streets Plan projects.
18 And yet we know that despite this allocation of funds
19 and the City Council's prioritization of the Streets
20 Plan, DOT has struggled to meet its legal mandates.

21 In 2022, DOT installed just 4.4 miles of bus
22 lanes, well below the 20-mile requirement. It
23 installed 14 of 500 required bus stop upgrades and it
24 installed 26.3 miles of the 30-mile required bike
25 lanes.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

9

1
2 While it has done better on other metrics like at
3 adding transit signal priority and pedestrian space,
4 these shortfalls remain concerning. When we last
5 addressed these shortfalls in the spring, it was
6 prior to DOT's "building season." But now, that a
7 large portion of the building season is behind us, I
8 am interested in understanding one, whether DOT has
9 made up for its missed requirements in 2022. And
10 two, whether it is on track to meet the 2023
11 requirements.

12 In addition to the oversight portion of today's
13 hearing, we have a number of bills on the docket,
14 some of which are directly related to street
15 infrastructure, street safety and the Streets Plan.
16 Intro. Number 261 sponsored by Council Member Julie
17 Menin would require curb extensions and certain
18 dangerous intersections.

19 Introduction Number 738 sponsored by the Public
20 Advocate would require DOT to consider the placement
21 of traffic enforcement agents in developing an
22 interagency roadway safety plan.

23 Intro. 885 sponsored by Council Member Mercedes
24 Narcisse, would permit automatic waiver of certain
25 additional penalties for a parking violation of a

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

10

1 vehicle owner response to a notice of violation
2
3 between 45 and 90 days of its issuance.

4 Intro. 1026 sponsored by Council Member Sandra
5 Ung, would require the establishment of a task force
6 to study options, report on and make recommendations
7 for potential locations for the construction of a bus
8 depot in Flushing.

9 I was glad to tour Council Member Ung's District
10 as a part of my citywide Transportation and
11 Infrastructure tour and saw the potential benefit
12 that such a bus depot could have for her constituents
13 and beyond.

14 Finally, we will hear a Preconsidered
15 Introduction, sponsored by me, which would add an
16 investment roadmap to the Streets Plan law to expand
17 on and enshrine in law DOT's work towards making
18 equitable infrastructure investments throughout the
19 city. So many communities, outer borough
20 communities, low-income communities, and communities
21 of color, have not received their fair share of the
22 city's street infrastructure investments.

23 It is important that the Streets Plan Law require
24 the city to regularly take stock of how we are
25 addressing this legacy.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS 11

1
2 I look forward to hearing from DOT, advocates and
3 members of the public regarding the oversight and
4 legislation at this hearing. I thank my staff and
5 Committee Staff for their hard work, Samuel Breidbart
6 Counsel to the Committee, Mark Chen Counsel to the
7 Committee, Kevin Kotowski Senior Policy Analyst,
8 John Basile Senior Policy Analyst, Jack Siegenthaler
9 my Policy and Budget Director and Renee Taylor my
10 Chief of Staff.

11 I also want to thank my Co-Chairs and their
12 staff. I now turn it over to my Co-Chair Council
13 Member Brewer for her opening remarks but right
14 before, I'd like to acknowledge that we are joined by
15 Council Members Yeger, Louis, Narcisse, Carr, Ariola,
16 Kagan, Chair Brewer, Council Member Menin and Deputy
17 Speaker Ayala. And online, we have Council Members
18 Ung and Joseph. I'm sorry, and Council Member Farias
19 is here. How could I forget?

20 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you Chair Brooks-
21 Powers. I'm Gale Brewer, I'm Chair of the Committee
22 on Oversight and Investigation. I want to thank all
23 of my colleagues, members of the Administration, all
24 the amazing advocates who keep us honest and the
25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

12

1 public to work with us on the DOT compliance with the
2 city's Streets Plan Mandate.
3

4 For ten years, city government has developed
5 ambitious plans to radically reduce the number of
6 traffic deaths on New York City streets and make
7 those streets more accessible to all New Yorkers.
8 First under Mayor de Blasio's Vision Zero initiative
9 and since 2019 under the Streets Plan mandated by the
10 Councils Local Law 195, which to his credit was
11 sponsored by then Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez.
12 City's as far away as those in Europe and as close
13 and Hoboken; but I never go to New Jersey, just so
14 you know, have demonstrated just how effective
15 physical interventions like curb cuts and day
16 lighting street corners can be when it comes to
17 reducing traffic violence.

18 Implementing in New York City has been halting.
19 It has been halting a lot. For instance, as we heard
20 earlier, as of late August this year, the city had
21 only installed ten miles of bike lanes, while the
22 streets plan requires the city to install 50 miles by
23 2024.

24 And this Administration had already failed to
25 meet the 2022 goals, only installing two-thirds of

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

13

1 the lanes required for that entire year. The Adam's
2 Administration must install 50 miles of dedicated bus
3 lanes by the end of 2023 and 150 by the end of 2025
4 but so far its managed to install only 6.8 miles of
5 bus lanes, as you've heard earlier. And of course
6 their other has done better – other initiatives like
7 were the bikes lanes much better than the bus lanes.
8 DOT has not been forthcoming, I must admit, with the
9 Council about why the agency has failed to meet the
10 benchmarks set forth by the Streets Plan, which is a
11 legal plan.
12

13 Not only has the agency provided only opaque
14 responses to questions on the street plans slow
15 progress, the Administration has denied that the
16 plans yearly benchmarks are legal at all.
17 Considering this progress, which some would rate poor
18 toward completing the Streets Plan and the DOT
19 seeming unwillingness to explain how it will meet its
20 responsibilities. Outside observers and advocates
21 have to ask how committed the Administration really
22 is to the goals of reducing traffic violence,
23 congestion and carbon emissions because that is and
24 will always be the goal of the Streets Plan.
25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

14

1 We hope the agency representatives testified
2 today can explain how the city will get back on
3 track. I would like to thank the amazing Oversight
4 and Investigations Committee Staff Nicole Catà and
5 Policy Analyst Alex Yablon, Oversight and
6 Investigations Division Staff Director Aaron
7 Mendelsohn, Deputy Director Meg Powers, Counsel Kevin
8 Frick who put a lot of time in on this hearing, Lead
9 Investigator Zach Meher and Investigator Katie
10 Sinise. And on my staff, particularly Stan
11 Goldsmith. Thank you very much and we look forward
12 to the hearing.
13

14 I'd also like to say that Council Member Williams
15 and Council Member Restler have joined us.

16 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you Chair
17 Brewer. We will now hear from Council Member Menin
18 regarding Intro. 261.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MENIN: Thank you so much Chair
20 Brooks-Powers and Chair Brewer for holding today's
21 hearing on several bills regarding the City's Streets
22 Plan. The Streets Plan remain vital to keeping our
23 neighborhoods and communities safe and accessible for
24 all. Some goals of the plan safety, equity and
25 public space are issues that my constituents have

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

15

1 highlighted as serious issues. The plan was must
2 continuing engaging communities to ensure safer
3 streets and accessible areas. That is why I
4 introduced my bill Intro. 261, which requires the
5 Department of Transportation to establish a curb
6 extensions program. This would include identifying
7 intersections or areas with potential curb extensions
8 based on incidents of traffic crashes. DOT would
9 then annually implement these extensions in at least
10 five intersections in each borough.
11

12 In fact, the Department of Transportation itself
13 notes that curb extensions enhance pedestrian safety
14 by reducing crossing distances, can relieve sidewalk
15 crowding and can provide space for functional
16 elements such as feeding, plantings, bike share
17 stations and furniture. Given the benefits, it makes
18 sense to install these curb extensions in areas
19 across the city with high rates of traffic injuries
20 or fatalities.

21 I'm excited that curb extensions are part of the
22 ongoing Streets Plan and I'm thrilled to learn more
23 about how they fit into DOT's overall vision. Other
24 municipalities, such as Chicago, Washington DC, LA
25 and Boston all have curb extensions as part of their

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

16

1 transit plans. In fact, Boston promotes curb
2 extensions with vegetation as part of its green
3 infrastructure plan.
4

5 I want to thank my colleagues who have sponsored
6 this legislation along with the bill drafter Mark
7 Chen and for my team, I want to thank my Chief of
8 Staff Jonathan Szott, Legislative and Budget Director
9 Brandon Jordan and Legislative Aid Jan Mendez and I
10 really want to thank the Chair's for allowing me to
11 speak and I look forward to today's hearing. Thank
12 you.

13 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you. Next,
14 we'll hear from Council Member Narcisse regarding
15 Intro. 885.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Good afternoon everyone
17 and thank you Chair Brooks-Powers and Gale Brewer and
18 to all my colleagues that are doing a phenomenal job
19 to make sure that New York City is a place where we
20 can live and enjoy and be safe at once.

21 The bill before us today is Intro. 885. So it
22 offers a window between 45 to 90 days posted
23 insurance of a violation notice, where the compounded
24 penalties can be waived. This adjustment ensures
25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

17

1
2 that while we encourage timely responses, we also
3 provide a grace period for those who may need it.

4 While driver's must be held accountable, there's
5 no doubt. We must also acknowledge that sometimes
6 life happens, things happen that prevent folks from
7 being compliant as well. There may be genuine
8 reasons causing delays in responding to such notices,
9 from personal emergency to unforeseen sick incidences
10 but we have to keep in mind that New York City is
11 very expensive to live in and we want to keep folks
12 in New York City.

13 As the proud sponsor of this legislation, I am
14 pleased that we are providing a more forgiving
15 approach to parking violations. This is not just
16 about parking. It's about recognizing the realities
17 of everyday life and granting resident a reasonable
18 window to address their obligations. To every New
19 Yorker whose felt the strain of an added penalty,
20 this chance is for you, including myself.

21 I believe this bill is not only the right thing
22 to do but will also reenforce the trust between the
23 city and its resident, showing them that government
24 understand the nuances of their lives. I urge my
25 colleagues to join me to support of this incredible

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

18

1 step forward. When I say including me, I used to
2 remember those days that when you get a ticket,
3 you're scratching your head. You don't know how
4 you're going to pay it because the bill, water is
5 coming, everything's coming at once. It's just to
6 make sure that we support our New Yorkers and I want
7 to say thank you to all the Committee on
8 Transportation that make it possible for those bills
9 to come through. The drafter, everyone that's
10 associated in the City Council that making sure that
11 we make sure New York City is a place that
12 understands and do the right thing by the people.
13 Thank you so much. Thank you.

14
15 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you and next we
16 will hear from Council Member Ung regarding Intro.
17 1026.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Can we unmute Council Member
19 Ung?

20 COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: Oh great, thank you. Good
21 afternoon and thank you to Chair Brooks-Powers and
22 Chair Brewer and the other members of this Committee
23 for holding the hearing to discuss Intro. 1026.
24 Intro. 1026 is a piece of legislation that I
25 introduced that we create a task force to identify

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

19

1 the potential locations for a bus depot in my
2 district in Flushing Queens, as well as a cost
3 estimate for such land acquisition and construction.
4 The intersection of Main Street and Roosevelt Avenue
5 is one of the largest intermodal transportation hubs
6 in New York City mass transit system. Including
7 having the highest number of bus to transfer in our
8 mass transit system. Flushing is a home to the seven
9 train and Long Island Railroad Station and dozens of
10 bus lines that serve the central business district.
11 But many of the transit options also bring the onset
12 of issues, including extreme congestion of our
13 streets through the high number of buses that pass
14 through the busy downtown area and then use of public
15 spaces as layover zones.

17 Flushing streets have become a de facto parking
18 lot for buses and the increasing number of buses
19 laying over the area are causing a havoc of traffic
20 patterns affecting small businesses and creating
21 adverse health conditions for Flushing residents.
22 Flushing is in desperate need of a bus depot and the
23 buses are laying over there before resuming their
24 route and should not be parked on our busy city
25 streets where they pose danger to the pedestrian and

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

20

1
2 block access to small business. My legislation will
3 require DOT, MDA and the New York City Transit and
4 the City Planning Department to form a taskforce
5 which will in turn provide to the City Council a
6 report on the potential location or a construction of
7 a bus depot in Flushing.

8 The study also included the anticipated cost of
9 purchasing the sites and complete design
10 construction. The length of construction at bus
11 depot has only made the situation worse as a number
12 of buses have increased while hospital locations that
13 house people diminished as fortunately they continue
14 to experience ongoing development. The task force we
15 create not only to provide viable locations but also
16 a realistic estimate of what would cost the construct
17 a depot. So, we could begin to plan a path forward
18 to make this long overdue proposal a reality. I'd
19 like to thank my Chief of Staff Alexander Hart and
20 thank you to the Chair and the Committee members for
21 your time and consideration of Intro. 1026.

22 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you and next we
23 will turn it over to our Counsel Sam Breidbart to
24 swear in our folks from DOT.

25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

21

1
2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. I'm Sam
3 Breidbart, Counsel to the Transportation and
4 Infrastructure Committee of the New York City
5 Council. Our first witnesses will be from the
6 Department of Transportation Commissioner Ydanis
7 Rodriguez, Deputy Commissioner for Transportation
8 Planning and Management Eric Beaton and Assistant
9 Commissioner for Intergovernmental and Committee
10 Affairs Rick Rodriguez.

11 We are also joined for questions from DOF by
12 Assistant Commissioner for Payments, Billing and
13 Refunds Agnes Rusin. I will now administer the oath.
14 Please raise your right hands. Do you affirm to tell
15 the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth
16 before this Committee and to respond honestly to
17 Council Member questions?

18 PANEL: Yes.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: You may begin when ready.
20 Please turn on your microphone. Thank you.

21 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: SPEAKING IN SPANISH [00:22:21-
22 00:22:28]. Good afternoon Chair Brooks-Powers and
23 Chair Brewer and members of the Committee on
24 Transportation and Infrastructure and Oversight and
25 Investigations. I am Ydanis Rodriguez, Commissioner

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

22

1 of the New York City Department of Transportation.

2 With me today are Eric Beaton, Deputy Commissioner
3 for Transportation Planning and Management and Rick
4 Rodriguez, Assistant Commissioner for
5 Intergovernmental and Community Affairs.
6

7 We are also joined by Agnes Rusin, Assistant
8 Commissioner for Payments, Billing and Refunds from
9 the Department of Finance. Thank you for the
10 opportunity to testify on behalf of Mayor Eric Adams
11 on the New York City Street Master Plan.

12 I first would like to highlight to everyone that
13 the primary elements of the New York City Street
14 Master Plan include the following: Safety, equity,
15 more transportation options, access to jobs,
16 accessibility, public space, sustainable
17 infrastructure, curb management, freight, and public
18 participation. All those areas are included in the
19 Street Master Plan that I have the honor to a Co-
20 prime when we passed this bill in 2019.

21 DOT continues to work hard and creatively with
22 available resources to deliver high quality, high
23 impact project that are around the goals laid out in
24 the New York City Street Plan. We have a number of
25 transformation of projects underway or recently

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

23

1 completed that will help people good and services
2 move around this city in a safe, efficient and
3 environmental responsibility way.
4

5 This morning DOT released our curb management
6 action plan. More than happy to send some copies to
7 the Council Members but it's also available in our
8 DOT website.

9 This is a plan that lays out a strategy to better
10 design and manage the curb lane to reflect the
11 increasingly wide range of need resident workers,
12 visitors, business owners and all New Yorkers. The
13 Plan includes action DOT will be taking at a curb to
14 improve deliveries, pick-ups and drop-offs, bike
15 parking, public space, and more. The priorities in
16 this plan will help reduce congestion, enhance safety
17 and create a more livable city.

18 Turning to buses, DOT is undertaking a number of
19 bus priority in accessibility projects that will
20 improve commutes for more than 250,000 daily bus
21 riders. This includes projects such as Notting
22 Boulevard in Queens, Gun Hill Road in University
23 Avenue in the Bronx, Livingston Street in Brooklyn,
24 Third Avenue in Manhattan, and Washington Bridge
25 connecting Manhattan in the Bronx.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

24

1 We are also undertaking a number of
2
3 transformative bike and public space projects. To
4 share some highlight, in Manhattan we recently
5 completed a phase of our Broadway Vision, which added
6 new plazas, share street in two-way bike connections
7 on Broadway between 25 and 32nd Street. With the
8 next phase from 21st Street to Union Square are now
9 in development. We also recently announced the start
10 of construction on a protected bike lane on 10th
11 Avenue in Hell's Kitchen along with new pedestrian
12 island and Riverside intersection.

13 And as you know, this is a model that a lot of
14 cities right now they are looking on how to replicate
15 it, widening of this bike lane that we have started
16 doing here in Manhattan.

17 In the Bronx, we are making bicycle improvements
18 in Soundview, including installing protected bike
19 lane on Soundview Avenue.

20 Thank you Council Member Farias for being a
21 champion not only by word but also by action standing
22 with us pushing those projects. That sometimes they
23 are not popular in many communities.

24 In Brooklyn, we will install the longest
25 protected bike lanes ever installed in east New York,

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

25

1 along with pedestrian safety improvements [00:27:16]
2 and Louisiana Avenue. We are also transforming the
3 popular open street, various streets into a bike
4 boulevard with two ways tackling loading zones,
5 pedestrian enhancement in the plaza.
6

7 In Staten Island, the not forgotten borough
8 anymore under Mayor Adams and myself, work is
9 underway on a safety project on Lincoln Avenue
10 through which we will install improved markings,
11 signs, and curb extensions.

12 Thank you to all the Council Members who
13 supported it, gave feedback and help promote
14 productive conversation on this project. Sometimes
15 putting your name in support implies that sometimes
16 they're not popular. That's the partnership that we
17 need.

18 We also continue our nation leading programs to
19 install accessible pedestrian signals to help New
20 Yorkers who are blind or low vision navigate a city
21 and transit signal priority to buses. We are so
22 proud of this work that is transforming New York City
23 street, that is a role model nationwide and even
24 across the globe. But we need the Council's support
25 to go further by action. We have faced challenges

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

26

1 identifying bus and bike lane projects that had
2 robust local support. For this reason, following
3 this hearing, we will be reaching out to each Council
4 Member, to the 51 Council Member office with a survey
5 asking you for suggestions on locations where you
6 would like to see bus and bike projects in your
7 district.
8

9 We look forward to receiving your feedback and
10 working together to advance the goals of the Streets
11 Plan. In addition to the bus project, DOT is
12 reimagining public space across New York City in ways
13 that are not quantified in the Street Plan in which
14 were prioritized and fast tracked as a result of the
15 pandemic where many of us worked together in my
16 previous role as a Council Member.

17 Now in its fourth year, open street, something
18 again that we started when I was sitting in your
19 chair. Together with the Administration at that time
20 led by Commissioner Polly Trottenberg, Open Street
21 continue to be the nation's largest and most
22 successful car free program. DOT remains focused on
23 expanding and improving the program with now 200
24 locations across the five boroughs always asking each
25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

27

1 Council Member, where do you want us to build an open
2 street in your district?
3

4 We are also committed to formerly redesign
5 successful Open Street corridor as bike boulevards,
6 pedestrian plazas in shared streets. The agency is
7 working to set up the largest outdoor dining program
8 in the country, dining out in New York City. Thank
9 you to Chairman Powers, Speaker and Council Member
10 Velázquez and all Council Members for making the open
11 restaurant, open dining out together with Mayor Adams
12 a reality. Something that now is permanent and not
13 only for us but also for the future generations.

14 This year, we also have the most ambitious Summer
15 Street program ever. I know that many of you went to
16 one of those locations, more than doubling in size in
17 bringing the program to all five boroughs for the
18 first time and the larger car free earth day.

19 Mayor Adams and I commitment, all of us equity
20 had to be translated into what we did. Summer street
21 use to be only something happening from Brooklyn
22 Bridge to 79th Street at Long Park Avenue. This time
23 around, 23 we went to Staten Island, Brooklyn,
24 Queens, Bronx and Manhattan and we went up to 125th
25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

28

1 Street to the heart of O'Hanlon, 22 miles of summer
2 street.
3

4 We also continue to harden bike lanes including
5 Borinquen Place in Brooklyn and Goethals Road in
6 Staten, which do not count toward the Street Plan
7 bench mark. And this is something that I want for
8 you have in your mind as we ask questions, those
9 projects that we are doing that was not included and
10 that we are not counting as part of this program.

11 On legislation, first the Preconsidered bill
12 sponsored by Chair Brooks-Powers bill T4007. This
13 bill will require DOT to include an investment
14 roadmap in the New York City Street Plan that include
15 investment by community district. DOT share the
16 Council commitment to ensuring we are making the
17 necessary and right investment based on equity, and
18 we are working towards a city with demographics such
19 as race, income and language would no longer be able
20 to be used to predict transportation access and
21 mobility outcomes.

22 In the New York City Street Plan, DOT laid out
23 Priority Investment Area that will help focus our
24 investment to where they can have the greatest
25 impact.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

29

1
2 The PIA's are based on three inputs,
3 demographics, density and previous level of DOT
4 investment and our measure at the neighborhood level
5 using the city's 195 Neighborhood tabulation areas.
6 You can see the map of the PIA's included in my
7 testimony. We will be happy to discuss this bill
8 further with the Council and work with you to
9 implement project in areas that have had less
10 investment previously.

11 DOT is continuing to invest in community across
12 the entire city but they are prioritizing a street
13 designing investment in higher need neighborhood
14 based on the PIA tiers. While still being guided by
15 data such as crash histories and slow bus space. You
16 can see an example of how we will overlay the Vision
17 Zero priority corridors, intersections in areas as
18 well as transit and back priority projects with the
19 PIA's in the maps included in my testimony.

20 This Administration is committed to creating a
21 more equitable city and we are doing better at
22 investing in underserved communities. But we also
23 recognize that there is so much more to do. We look
24 forward to continuing partners with the Council to
25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

30

1
2 advance projects in districts with less investment
3 previously.

4 On Intro. 261 sponsored by Council Member Menin,
5 this bill would require DOT to establish a curb
6 extension program and implement curb extensions at a
7 minimum of five intersections in each borough.

8 Through the Vision Zero Borough Pedestrian Safety
9 Action Plans. DOT used crash data to determine the
10 locations most in need of safety enhancements. We
11 then implement targeted safety treatment that produce
12 a greatest safety benefit at those locations.

13 While curb extensions are an important tool in
14 our toolbox and we use it, we urge the Council to
15 allow our engineer to retain flexibility to determine
16 where safety treatments are needed and which
17 treatments are most effective in those locations. It
18 is important to evaluate location holistically rather
19 than needing to account for a certain number of
20 specific type of treatment. As always, we welcome
21 your partnership in identifying locations of concern
22 and implementing critical safety projects.

23 Next, Intro. 738 is sponsored by Public Advocate
24 Williams. This bill will require DOT as part of the
25 Interagency Roadway Safety Plan to consider placing

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

31

1 traffic enforcement agent in certain areas. Traffic
2 enforcement agents play an important role in history
3 safety. Through the Vision Zero Taskforce, DOT and
4 the NYPD coordinate crossly on roadway safety and we
5 will confer to discuss with the Council and the NYPD
6 about TEA's can be deployed to enhance safety.
7

8 Next, Intro. 885 sponsored by Council Member
9 Narcisse, while the Administration appreciates the
10 Council intent to protect New Yorkers from over like
11 punitive measures. We are concerned that the
12 legislation will have unintended consequences.
13 Specifically, this legislation will carefully
14 construct an escalating penalty scale that
15 incentivize 70 percent of violation to be resolved
16 within 90 of issuance.

17 The city has gone a long way to ensure that
18 customers have options to resolve their parking
19 violation in depth including the pay or dispute act
20 that allow motorists to get a hearing and everybody
21 is using their cellphones and the rollout of self-
22 serve parking payment plans earlier this year.

23 On Intro. 1026 sponsored by Council Member Ung,
24 which would require the city to establish a taskforce
25 to a study option to potential location for the bus

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

32

1
2 depots in Flushing Queens. We agree that a bus depot
3 would benefit the neighborhood and look forward to
4 discussing this further with the Council, the
5 Department of City Planning and the agency that is
6 responsible for that, which is the MTA.

7 In conclusion, I would like to thank the Council
8 for the opportunity to testify before you. We look
9 forward to your partnership in getting critical
10 projects in the ground in your district. In one
11 minute in Spanish. SPEAKING IN SPANISH [00:38:24-
12 [00:38:48]. Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you
14 Commissioner and I'm going to start off with round
15 one of questions and then I'm going to yield to Chair
16 Brewer and my colleagues and come back when I need
17 follow-ups.

18 So first, I want to talk about year-to-date
19 progress. Under the Streets Plan, DOT is required to
20 build 30-miles of protected bus lanes this year. How
21 many has it built this year to date? And how many
22 does it plan to build before the end of the year?
23 And I just want to know the actual number and that's
24 all if that's okay because I want to be respectful of
25 time.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

33

1
2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Could you please put on your
3 microphone? Thanks.

4 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: We will call Eric Beaton
5 Deputy Commissioner for Transportation Planning and
6 Management will respond to the question.

7 ERIC BEATON: Sure thank you Chair and I very
8 much appreciate the question because we are working
9 very hard every day to deliver bus improvements and
10 all of the other Streets Plan elements. I don't have
11 a number for you today because we are actually every
12 day doing more and more. I think what we would like
13 to do -

14 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: What's the last
15 number you have?

16 ERIC BEATON: So, I don't have a current number,
17 so we do more every day.

18 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: But you had to expect
19 that you were going to get asked that question with
20 today's topic. So, you have no number to give to
21 this Committee?

22 ERIC BEATON: We collect all these numbers at the
23 end of the year as the projects finish. We don't
24 think providing a day-by-day uptick is an accurate
25 representation of the work that we have underway, as

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

34

1 big projects tend to finish towards the end of the
2 year.
3

4 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Now, I know you hired
5 a Streets Plan Director. Is that person here today?

6 ERIC BEATON: Uh yes, he's in the audience.

7 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Uhm and so, does that
8 Director not keep a regular tally in terms of how
9 much is completed?

10 ERIC BEATON: So, we tally this all at the end of
11 the year as all of the projects are finished. Many
12 of our big projects -

13 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: At the end of the
14 calendar year or the actual year where you're able to
15 do the building? Because I know in the last hearing,
16 you talked about the seasonal component, which we're
17 almost at the tail end of right now.

18 ERIC BEATON: That's right, our construction
19 season goes through the end of October or mid-
20 November depending on the weather and that's the
21 point where we really start calculating this. When
22 we put together the bill and working with the Council
23 at the time, we agreed that February would be the
24 right point of the year to deliver updates and why
25 it's enshrined in the law because that's really when

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

35

1 we have good information and can count it up
2 correctly. I don't want to be sitting here and
3 giving you bad information because of how much things
4 change day by day.

6 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: And I would like to add on
7 this that is for the Chairman, the Council Member and
8 the advocates, and the city. It's not that we are
9 not prepared to share numbers. As the Deputy
10 Commissioner has said, the Council and Administration
11 passed this bill and we decided that February, the
12 beginning of the year, is the best time for us to be
13 able to know how many miles, what number do we have,
14 and that's a report that we make every year.

15 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: I'm sorry
16 Commissioner but when we met earlier this year around
17 February, there was no numbers that were able to be
18 shared then. So, now we're in the month of September
19 and we are now being told that there are no numbers
20 now. So, what is your best estimate in terms of how
21 many? Because earlier this year -

22 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: We do give - Chair, we do give
23 at the beginning of this year, we give the report of
24 our numbers of the year before. This is how the
25 Council, we passed this bill in 2019, the Street

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

36

1 Master Plan. If we want to make changes to a Street
2 Master Plan, I'm more than happy to follow on your
3 bill. More than happy to look at this. More than
4 happy to include Open Streets, Summer Streets,
5 Pedestrian Plaza as part of the Street Master Plan.
6 We are more than happy to sit down with you and the
7 Council but that's how we passed the bill in 2019.
8 At the beginning of the year, we are able to share
9 the number that we are able to accomplish in the year
10 before. There's a lot of factors that play a role in
11 those numbers.
12

13 Council Member support, community support for bus
14 lane, for bike lane, weather. So, those are things
15 that we know that are important factors. Again, we
16 are prepared in the work that we do but the way how
17 the bill is passed is that at the beginning of the
18 year, the agency, they go back to the Council and
19 share the data of the year before.

20 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: So, throughout the
21 year, are you not like compiling like month to month?
22 Like, how frequently are you looking at this
23 information as an agency?

24 ERIC BEATON: So, there are different ways we
25 look at the information. Project by project, we

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

37

1 follow every project very closely right? There's you
2 know about 100 projects we do in a given year, about
3 60 of them are ongoing right now. And so, we follow
4 each project closely but in terms of how many miles
5 get completed, sometimes it depends how far we get in
6 terms of the weather. Sometimes it depends on you
7 know how closely we're working with communities and
8 making adjustments.
9

10 So, we have a plan and then sort of as each
11 project proceeds, we are tracking it but we feel like
12 the only really accurate number you get is at the end
13 of the season when you can double check everything
14 that's been fully completed.

15 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: But as these projects
16 are happening throughout the year and they're
17 completed and you're checking it off, is no one
18 taking a tally of that information at all?

19 ERIC BEATON: So, we do keep track but most of
20 our projects are not completed. Our big projects,
21 the ones that deliver a significant bus and bike lane
22 mileage tend to occur over the full course of the
23 year.

24 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: So, I understand that
25 most are not completed but of those that are

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

38

1 completed, what is that number? So, so that I can
2 continue with the questions, while we're in this
3 hearing, it would be great if someone from your team
4 is able to give us a number, so that we can go -
5 because I have additional questions on that and I'd
6 like to have an idea of where DOT is with its
7 implementation.
8

9 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: We will follow with you after
10 the hearing on those numbers.

11 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: But we sent a letter
12 and we didn't get the answer in the letter.

13 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Yeah but I said we will follow
14 with you keeping updated where we are. As I said,
15 we're more than happy to you know look at bills that
16 asking -

17 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: My concern though
18 Commissioner, is that we have sent several letters,
19 we have not gotten a clear answer from DOT. DOT is
20 aware that we had this hearing. They were aware what
21 the topic was and to come unprepared to be able to
22 answer and give any type of number I think is
23 unacceptable. And to tell us that we'll get an
24 answer after a public hearing, once again, we haven't
25 been getting an answer.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS 39

1
2 So, while we're here and there's a Streets Plan
3 Director in the room, it would be great if we can get
4 an idea at the minimum as to how many have been
5 completed to date because the season is almost over
6 anyway. It's not substantial work that I would
7 imagine would be left to be done between now and
8 October.

9 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, so we are not ready to
10 give you the number today but we are more than happy
11 to follow with you after the hearing.

12 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Will DOT meet the
13 mandate for 30 miles of protected bus lanes this
14 year?

15 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Last year we didn't reach that
16 number. We had a goal at DOT to work toward that
17 goal and as I said before, this is deep to my heart
18 because I was a Co-prime on this bill. As I said
19 before, to get to those numbers that we have as a
20 goal, require a lot. That's why, that's why we are
21 putting the server to each 51 Council Members.

22 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Clarification -

23 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: If you don't mind -

24 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Hmm, hmm.
25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS 40

1
2 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Having Council Members coming
3 back to us where they want bus lane and bike lane
4 will help us out a lot to get to those numbers.
5 Without that level of participation, most likely we
6 will not get to those numbers.

7 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: And point of
8 clarification, it's not a goal, it's a legal mandate
9 that DOT reach this number. It's not a goal, so I
10 just want to clarify the terminology there. On page
11 59 of the 2023 Streets Plan Update, you mentioned
12 several "potential upcoming projects related to bus
13 lanes." How many of these projects are moving
14 forward?

15 ERIC BEATON: I think we're really quite pleased
16 with how many important bus projects we have underway
17 this year. You know we did a tremendous bus project
18 on Northern Boulevard. We have very much underway
19 and I think really shaping up a great bus project on
20 Gun Hill Road in the Bronx with center running bus
21 lanes at boarding islands. We have underway a big
22 bus lane on 3rd Avenue in Manhattan. I think we are
23 really doing a tremendous amount of bus priority work
24 around the city and you know, we're happy to again,
25 as we get towards the end of the year, give you the

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

41

1 full accounting of every project we've done. But we
2 have major, major bus projects serving hundreds of
3 thousands of people on major corridors around the
4 city. We're hard at work on improving our streets
5 and making our buses faster.
6

7 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Yeah and Chair, again like
8 someone that we you know from this side, I'm very
9 proud of the work that you know of working in
10 collaboration with the Council and you in the
11 leadership. You know we are working with that as I
12 say the law, the bill, that mandate the city but
13 there's also things that we want to you know be open
14 here. Let's say we have a goal for a bus lane at
15 Forten Avenue. It was almost two miles. The Council
16 Member say instead of doing the bus lane, we would
17 like for DOT to paint Forten. So, even though we
18 will work along the Council Member and those are more
19 than two miles at Forten, he won because he feel that
20 having a redesign for bus lane is not something that
21 he can support. We will work with him with painting
22 as he wanted to but that work will not be recognized
23 by the Council as the work that we did it.

24 So, those are like the you know the day-by-day
25 reality on how we from this side have to navigate

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

42

1
2 toward getting those numbers that is mandated by the
3 Street Master Plan.

4 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: So, I'm not clear in
5 terms of how many, the number of projects that are
6 moving forward.

7 ERIC BEATON: That can be included in what the
8 Commissioner has said, we will follow up with you
9 about.

10 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: As you know, the MTA
11 has projected that by the end of 2023, around 80
12 percent of bus lanes will be covered by camera
13 enforcement. Does that 80 percent number refer
14 solely to bus mounted able cameras only or does it
15 include coverage from stationary DOT cameras?

16 ERIC BEATON: So, without you know speaking to
17 what the MTA said because of their number, we think
18 that that number sounds very accurate.

19 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: You said accurate or
20 inaccurate?

21 ERIC BEATON: Accurate and it includes both. We
22 work very closely with the MTA on placing both the
23 fixed and the mobile cameras. DOT actually process
24 all of the mobile violations for the MTA to make sure
25 that there aren't conflicts between you know if you

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

43

1
2 get caught by a fixed camera and a mobile camera,
3 that we're not issuing two violations. And the
4 different cameras do different things. The fixed
5 cameras are very good at capturing people who are
6 driving in bus lanes, so moving violations. The on-
7 bus cameras capture people who are stopped in the bus
8 lane parking or standing. So, the two really
9 complement each other well and we work closely with
10 the MTA to make sure that they're a system.

11 As we count miles for the Streets Plan, it's also
12 a little bit of a calculation we have to do because
13 the actual bus lane goal is what they call protected
14 bus lanes in the legislation. Which means either
15 physically protected or lanes that are enforced by
16 camera.

17 And so, an existing bus lane that gets enforced
18 by a camera ends up being something that counts
19 towards that legal target, which also means we were
20 working closely with the MTA about which routes are
21 getting new cameras and that's another thing that is
22 challenging to count. And so, all of the buses are
23 out there and the year is complete.

24

25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

44

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Can you explain in
3 detail how DOT staff coordinates with MTA staff
4 responsible for MTA's able program?

5 ERIC BEATON: Sure, we coordinate at multiple
6 levels. So, on the planning side, we have a unit
7 called the Trends Development Unit that works with
8 the Operations Planning Group at MTA New York City
9 Transit. They help do the planning work around
10 identifying which corridors should be next for either
11 fixed or mobile cameras. And then on the operations
12 side, our Automated Enforcement Team works very
13 closely with the MTA Department of Buses, as well as
14 with the Department of Finance to set up the entire
15 end to end system where violations are you know,
16 potential violations are captured by camera. Every
17 potential violation is reviewed by a human government
18 employee to make sure that you know the person was
19 not avoiding a police car or you know engaging in
20 actually appropriate behavior and then we work with -
21 we mail the notice of violation and work with the
22 Department of Finance to adjudicate.

23 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Will the increase
24 enforcement camera coverage provided by the MTA
25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

45

1 enable you to reach the 2023 Streets Plan Mandate for
2 protected bus lanes?
3

4 ERIC BEATON: So, we are still working with the
5 MTA on exactly which corridors will be added but
6 certainly, that will help us work towards that goal.

7 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: And are you
8 coordinating sufficiently closely with MTA on its
9 Able Camera Program?

10 ERIC BEATON: Absolutely, MTA has been a terrific
11 partner in setting up this on bus enforcement system.
12 We think it's been very effective and are pleased to
13 see that they are rolling it out in so many places
14 around the city, as well as pleased that the State
15 Legislature expanded their ability to do mobile
16 enforcement starting next year.

17 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: That's good to hear,
18 so does that mean you'll be able to say how many of
19 the 600 cameras estimated by the end of 2023 have
20 been installed by the MTA?

21 ERIC BEATON: Well, we'll work with the MTA but
22 given our close relationship, I expect we will be
23 able to report on that.

24 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: So, you're not able
25 to say how many are estimated?

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS 46

1
2 ERIC BEATON: Well, I can't speak for the MTA'S
3 number but we think that that is a number we can work
4 with them to give.

5 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: The MTA shared that
6 the number is about 550. Uhm, under the Streets
7 Plan, DOT is required to install upgrades such as
8 benches, shelters and real time passenger information
9 at 500 bus stops each year. How many bus stop
10 upgrades has it made year to date? How many upgrades
11 does it plan to make before the end of the year? And
12 finally, will DOT meet the mandate for 500 bus stop
13 upgrades this year?

14 ERIC BEATON: Right, so the mandate in the
15 legislation is to install either a bus or either a
16 bench or a shelter and the real time information sign
17 at 500 bus stops per year. We have been working very
18 hard to get a new real-time information contract.
19 The cost for that has been higher than expected and
20 so we've been engaging in very thorough negotiations
21 with the potential vendor.

22 We are hopeful that that will be resolved soon
23 and we can be out there installing more real-time
24 information, which we think is very beneficial to bus
25 riders around the city. In the meantime, we have

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

47

1
2 been focusing on installing new benches at bus stops
3 that already do have real-time information.

4 So again, that's something that's changing day by
5 day and we can follow up on the current number.

6 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: I'm curious to know
7 what numbers you came prepared to share today because
8 I haven't heard any numbers at this point.

9 I'm going to yield my questions at this moment
10 and allow Chair Brewer to ask some questions.

11 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very much Chair.
12 So, just picking up on this issue of numbers. So,
13 how does the Streets Plan Director track progress?
14 Is it - is there like a tool? Is it something that
15 is online at all? Uhm, I know obviously the date of
16 February is important but then that's once a year.
17 So what's the basis for your statement I think back
18 in May about being on target? In other words, how
19 exactly are you tracking?

20 ERIC BEATON: So, when we spoke at the beginning
21 of the season, we had - you know it was a look ahead
22 number and you know as we've said, we strive very
23 hard to meet all of these mandates and we have you
24 know again, about 60 projects underway to do that.
25 During the year we track it on a project-by-project

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

48

1 basis where we're tracking sort of from the
2 operational side. Are the signs up? Is the paint
3 down? You know all the things that go into
4 delivering one of these projects. So, we do keep
5 very close tabs on it from an operational
6 perspective. We then do need to go back and you know
7 make sure that things meet the definition of
8 protected lane. You know make sure that we are
9 complying with the detailed legal mandates that are
10 in the law.
11

12 So, it's not that we're not tracking projects
13 because of course we are, we just, there's very
14 specific definitions in the legislation and to give
15 accurate numbers, we have to make sure that what's
16 implemented at the end of the year is in line with
17 those definitions.

18 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Right, so after this
19 hearing, can you provide some of those reports?
20 Obviously you will in February but can you also do
21 some that are after this hearing today? I didn't
22 know when you said we'll do it later. I didn't know
23 what that meant to the Chair.
24
25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

49

1
2 ERIC BEATON: Sorry, as the Commissioner said, we
3 are happy to follow-up with some more detail after
4 the hearing.

5 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. Uhm, do you – the
6 Streets Plan Director, does that person have staff
7 working with them? Who do they report to? And does
8 that person work exclusively on the streets plan?

9 ERIC BEATON: So, the person?

10 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: The person who's sitting in
11 the audience, yeah.

12 ERIC BEATON: Yeah, Jonathan Hawkins, who is
13 sitting behind me and has I think really done an
14 amazing job pulling all of this together. So, he you
15 know runs our Streets Plan unit but what that really
16 does is it coordinates across all of the different
17 moving pieces within DOT. Right, the Streets Plan
18 isn't something that stands alone. The Streets Plan
19 is a guiding light for our bike program and our bus
20 priority program and our street safety intersection
21 redesigns. Right, so he works to coordinate that
22 entire effort as well as to produce the very detailed
23 accounting and reports that we need at the end of the
24 year.

25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS 50

1
2 So, you know it's not a big office but it is one
3 that gets a lot of support from across the agency.

4 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay, I want to thank you
5 because I know you responded to some of our
6 correspondence on Friday and you mentioned that there
7 are protected bike lanes on Soundview in the Bronx,
8 east New York and Brooklyn, upper east side of
9 Manhattan.

10 So, are these bike lane projects, do they qualify
11 as protected under the plan?

12 ERIC BEATON: Yes, in each of those areas, we
13 expect that the vast majority of the project will
14 count as protected. Again, we do this on a block-by-
15 block rating, sub-block basis that if there's a piece
16 that is not protected, we don't count it.

17 So, we think the vast majority of those will be
18 protected bike lanes but we do make sure that we
19 count carefully.

20 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay and then today to the
21 credit of the Mayor and DOT, I am excited about the
22 notion of UPS and other carriers doing the last mile
23 on a bike as opposed to their truck. So, will these
24 bike lanes be able to handle? I think some are eight
25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

51

1 feet, some are ten feet etc.. Will these bike lanes
2 be able to handle such vehicles or devices?
3

4 ERIC BEATON: Yes, this is something we're very
5 excited about to and we think that -

6 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: We can agree on that.

7 ERIC BEATON: Yeah, okay. So, we do think that
8 as we're designing bike lanes, we're designing them
9 for the world that we have going forward but whereas
10 the Commissioner said in his testimony, we are
11 designing wider bike lanes, designing you know
12 visibility at corners, making sure that the lanes
13 that we are building are ones that can accommodate
14 whether it's just more cyclists, whether it's larger
15 cargo bikes that they reflect what we are seeing on
16 the street and expect to see in the future.

17 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay.

18 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: And also Gale -

19 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Go ahead. I don't think the
20 mic is on.

21 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, just the one on the bike
22 lane and this is something again that I know that
23 this is like a very productive hearing and we're
24 looking forward to continue the conversation. The
25 leadership of the Council, we're here to go over the

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

52

1 Street Master Plan because 2022 we had 200 million
2 bike ridership in New York City. Now we are having
3 an estimated of 450,000 every day. So, as you know
4 as you follow you know, we did those. A lot of the
5 things that happened in the city as you know, we've
6 been doing a pilot project. Like you know we're
7 using the technology, now we're supporting sun sensor
8 in some locations so that we can count the accurate
9 time the numbers of pedestrians, the number of
10 cyclists that is going through important
11 intersections. The reason why we are getting to
12 those pilot projects, because we know that we have to
13 attack and to plan accordingly to the new increase of
14 not only the cyclist but also, we are also doing say
15 the last mile, that now we're also doing a number -
16 identify a number of locations giving UPS, FEDX and
17 the opportunity for them to bring those trucks with
18 those products to a location but from there, we want
19 for them to use electric bikes, cargo, electrical
20 vehicle and also it's responding to this the percent
21 is of 80 percent of New Yorkers are ordering online
22 every week. More than 22 percent are ordering four
23 times a week.
24

25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

53

1
2 So, this is the competition that we had to
3 navigate. Those who want bus lane, those who want
4 bike lane, those who want the delivery and sometimes
5 it takes to community for people to see how important
6 to support those projects in their district.

7 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: And I would argue that it's
8 even more important because of what you said to
9 complete the Streets Plan because this particular
10 suggestion of the cargo, bicycles won't work unless
11 the Streets Plan is built out in the way that you
12 envision. So, it needs to happen faster, that's the
13 bottom line in order to have even the cargo bikes
14 able to succeed and get those God damn motorcycles
15 and mopeds out of the bike lanes, as I saw them today
16 and every day in the bike lanes onto the street. I
17 know that's not part of today but they're horrible in
18 the bike lanes.

19 In your letter Friday again, this is back just
20 the data. You said that ongoing projects impacts on
21 the Streets Plan quantitative goals are not yet
22 available. These details are finalized after design
23 to finalize and approve. So, my question is, are you
24 saying that those designs are not final, even though
25 you are in the peak of your project and season. So,

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

54

1 we're trying to get at the fact that you know time is
2 of the essence. How do we get these designs final so
3 that the Streets Plan is complete and that we can get
4 more data?

5
6 ERIC BEATON: I think one of the real benefits
7 the way our agency operates is our flexibility and
8 our ability to respond quickly to things and what
9 that sometimes means is that as we're out working in
10 the field, there's sometimes a field condition or we
11 get some local feedback that we have to take into
12 account and even change the project as we're working
13 on it.

14 And so, you know we take that feedback very
15 seriously and we think the projects often end up
16 better for it but that means that we do really want
17 to make sure that everything is completed before
18 giving a number of what has been completed.

19 Obviously we have projections earlier in the year
20 based on earlier designs and you know, we want the
21 final numbers to be accurate.

22 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay, along those lines, I'm
23 a big believer in in-house capacity. Uhm, I won't
24 get started on this topic in a different contract
25 discussion but I believe strongly in-house capacity

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

55

1 and I know you talked about particularly for the bus
2 stop etc., finding contractors is an issue, even if
3 you have the funding finding contractors is an issue.
4

5 So, what are you doing to increase your in-house
6 capacity so you don't have to rely on the outside?
7 Detailing, if you could how you're improving in-house
8 capacity.

9 ERIC BEATON: Sure and I very much agree with
10 what you say, like our ability to do so much and to
11 do it you know frankly at very low cost compared to
12 other construction projects, is because we have
13 tremendous in-house capacity to do signs and markings
14 and you know and concrete and other elements. You
15 know it's a little bit in the weeds but one of the
16 big constraints that we've been working through is
17 our facility space. It's something that we also
18 highlighted with the original -

19 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: That's because somebody in
20 the city wants too many developments in Manhattan and
21 then you don't have any space to store anything.
22 Keep going.

23 ERIC BEATON: Yeah, you know light industrial
24 land is in very high demand right now. You know
25 we're very pleased, for example that we're able to

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

56

1 open a new yard on Flatbush Avenue near the Belt
2 Parkway where we were able to stage more concrete
3 crews this year than we had in past years and that
4 lets us do more concrete for safety work. And we're
5 similarly looking for space and working closely with
6 DCAS and OMB around space where we can put more
7 markings crews.
8

9 So, we are very actively working to solve that
10 constraint and you know we believe it is very
11 important to make sure we can deliver on all the
12 milestones going forward.

13 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: And so you are improving and
14 expanding your in-house capacity. You could be
15 specific with contracts for instance relevant to the
16 Streets Plan where you're able to provide maybe even
17 copies as to what these contracts are and then as
18 time goes on, show us where you can do more in-house
19 then outside. So, can you provide copies of
20 contracts relevant to the Streets Plan?

21 ERIC BEATON: Uhm, sure yeah.

22 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: You can provide those
23 contracts?

24 ERIC BEATON: Yeah, I believe they're public
25 record and we can help provide them.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

57

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay, a couple more questions. DOT testified in May that the real time passenger information contract for bus stops had not been finalized. So, I want to know again, you said that it's tough to do this because of the issues that you just listed but has that contract been finalized? When did it begin? If it has been, the name of the contractor? Have any of the bus stop upgrades been completed and you know how many? I think you mentioned that earlier.

It does seem to me that it's not a Council challenge in terms of people who are opposed to do bus stops real time benches and the shelters, people love them. So, that should be something that should be able to be done. Everybody complains about bus lanes. Everybody complains about bike lanes, even though we support them and it's the right thing to do but not bus shelters. So, what's the story here?

ERIC BEATON: Chair, on the real time information, you know I think we're very hopeful at the last hearing. Unfortunately because the cost has been so high and because the city you know frankly has some challenges around the budget, we are working through that contract and you know we are hoping to

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

58

1
2 finalize it soon but we are really pressing the
3 contractor to get the price as low as we possibly
4 can.

5 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay, so can we get copies
6 of those contracts for the bus stops and the real
7 time and the benches and so on, even though you say
8 they're expensive?

9 ERIC BEATON: I think once the contract is
10 finalized, we would be able to share. I don't
11 believe we can share anything in progress.

12 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Alright, uhm, how – the
13 Street Plans were developed before the e-bikes,
14 mopeds etc.. Are you again, I guess you're thinking
15 about the larger size of the bike path but generally,
16 this is probably the number one issue for so many
17 folks. How are you thinking about street design to
18 accommodate these vehicles? Obviously we're thinking
19 about the cargo bikes for one hand and we still have
20 the other challenges that are part of our city. how
21 are you just thinking about that? Even though it's
22 not a contract issue, it does play into bike lanes
23 and bus lanes. Are we educating the public about
24 this issue? How are we making sure that we are using
25 the street as planned? Motorcycles in one place, e-

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

59

1
2 bikes in another, cargo bikes where the bicycles are
3 etc.? It's a more of a general issue than a contract
4 issue.

5 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, I think that we are
6 doing the best we can to our ability as we said at
7 the beginning, the role of this agency is to oversee
8 27 percent of the land in New York City that is under
9 this jurisdiction and we have so much limited space.
10 We are only 350 square miles, not only to plan for
11 the 8.6 million residents but last year we had the
12 average of 50 million tourists. So, we had to you
13 know redesign our street. Having the pedestrian and
14 the cyclist at the top, in the forefront for us and
15 reimagining the use of public space. Having the
16 support of the resources that Mayor Adams have
17 provided in January of last year, we've been able to
18 continue redesigning our street. So, that there's
19 going to be enough space pedestrian, for cyclists,
20 for bike lane. As I said, this increase of the
21 numbers of electric bike, the numbers of the bike
22 share, the bike trip that we have in the city, 200
23 million last year. You know this is a reality and we
24 plan to the best of our ability knowing that we only
25 have 350 square miles in our city where there's a lot

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

60

1 of competition of what the different sector need.

2
3 And as I said, most important, we need support from
4 the 51 Council Members when we have to build those
5 bike lanes and bus lanes in their districts.

6 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you so much. My
7 conclusion is my understanding is you're going to get
8 us all contracts relevant to the Streets Plan, "it's
9 public information." But we'd like to get copies of
10 them, right that's what you said?

11 ERIC BEATON: Yes for any contract that is
12 completed and we can follow up with others.

13 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Right, we definitely need as
14 Chair said earlier, all that other information.
15 Thank you.

16 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: And Gale, Council Member?

17 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Yes Ydanis.

18 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: To you - it's about you and I
19 that served together for so many years.

20 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Yes, many years.

21 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: We have so many agents coming
22 here talking about contracts, the MWBE. One thing
23 that I can be very proud and I know how important it
24 is for the Chair, that the year before to this
25 agency, the numbers of the agency for individuals was

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

61

1 only 11 percent. In this Administration, I moved
2 this number to 21 percent.
3

4 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I think that's commendable
5 but they still need to build more. Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you Chair.

7 Uhm, next we will have questions from Council Member
8 Rafael Salamanca.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Thank you Madam Chair.
10 Commissioner, it's good seeing you. First, I want to
11 thank you. You were in my district last week where
12 we did the uh I would say ribbon cutting for the
13 Sheridan Boulevard or the opening of the Sheridan
14 Boulevard on 172nd Street. And I want to thank you
15 because you also came to my district in August and
16 did a walk through with me on concerns that I have
17 regarding that Westchester Avenue and Whitlock
18 Project. I see some of your staff is looking at me
19 because I'm going to bring that up right now but my
20 first question Commissioner, you know whenever I have
21 concerns with DOT at the moment, I have either call
22 your Chief of Staff or call you to get something
23 done. There is no Borough Commissioner in the
24 Borough of the Bronx. When is that going to change?
25 When am I going to be able to call the Borough

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

62

1
2 Commissioner for the Department of Transportation in
3 the Bronx?

4 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: The Borough Commissioner,
5 we're working the process to bring the permanent
6 commissioner there but again as you said, and it was
7 not only - it was not to be with you you know the
8 Sheridan Boulevard. It's something that I - as I
9 said there, I had the honor to be also the one that
10 carry on that resolution supporting what the state
11 was looking to do there with the leadership. So many
12 elected officials including you also in your previous
13 role that you have in the Community Board, so we will
14 again, more than happy. We're working with that
15 process but as we said before, the Bronx and other
16 boroughs that they were not top priority in the past.
17 It's not the same story right now. Not only was I
18 there last week but after that, I was there with the
19 Commissioner in the Bronx you know finishing the
20 Grand Concourse redevelopment and I'm going this week
21 to the Bronx.

22 Aside being in the other borough, I'm going to
23 the Bronx and the Commissioner in the borough,
24 holding meeting, doing the walk, listening from every
25 one including the Council Member who are partners

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

63

1 with everything that we need to accomplish in the
2 city.

3
4 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: No, I understand that
5 Commissioner and you know you are the Commissioner
6 for the entire City of New York. You are extremely
7 busy. When I have concerns or Community Boards, for
8 example, 12 Community Boards in the Borough of the
9 Bronx, they have concerns about stop signs, speed
10 bumps, sidewalks. They don't have the same access
11 that I have, which is calling you directly or calling
12 your Chief of Staff. There needs to be a level of
13 accountability and our level of accountability is
14 reaching out to that Borough Commissioner, so that we
15 don't have to bother the Commissioner of the entire
16 agency on something that a Borough Commissioner can
17 deal with.

18 So, I just wanted to publicly say, it's needed.
19 Please speed it up and select a Borough Commissioner
20 so that we can work with them and continue to move
21 forward, okay.

22 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: We're working on it and you
23 are partners on what we do in transportation.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Thank you
25 Commissioner.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

64

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you. Next we
3 will hear from Council Member Restler followed by
4 Carr.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Thank you Chair Brooks-
6 Powers and Chair Brewer. Appreciate very much your
7 leadership on these issues and the oversight hearing
8 today.

9 Commissioner, I think that you and your team are
10 trying to do the right thing and I appreciate that
11 you are trying but the results are inadequate and I
12 think that we went from a period just over a decade
13 ago where then, Mayor Bloomberg said to Janette
14 Sadik-Khan, "politics be damned, be bold. Let's go
15 save lives and make streets safer." To now we're at
16 a point where it's all politics all the time and we
17 are failing to execute on the projects that need to
18 be done to finally make our streets safe. We are on
19 pace for one of the deadliest years in a long time
20 and I know that you care deeply about this and I know
21 your team cares deeply about this but the results
22 speak for themselves. The playbook has been written.
23 If you don't like a project, a bus lane, a bike lane,
24 whatever it may be, call Ingrid and she'll kill it.

25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

65

1
2 It's happening time and again and it's a problem and
3 it has to stop.

4 I hope very much that the deep expertise at the
5 Department of Transportation is respected, will be
6 respected in this Administration and that the
7 recommendations that your agency makes to City Hall
8 are finally heard and advanced and implemented.

9 When you make recommendations in our district in
10 District 33, we will have your back and I hope that
11 we'll be able to identify more projects to work on
12 together but I have to ask, I still don't understand
13 where we are on the McGuinness and I'd like

14 confirmation. My understanding is that last week,
15 the Mayor went back on his word for the third time
16 and has now said that no protected bike lane is

17 moving forward on McGuinness at this time. Excuse
18 me, no road diet is moving forward on McGuinness at

19 this time and that you'll assess the traffic data and
20 reconsider. Is that true? Is a road diet happening
21 on McGuinness Boulevard in the spring?

22 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: First of all, I thank you
23 Council Member and we have years of been working
24 together in previous role and we know that it is time
25 for the best to our city. Under Mayor Adams and I

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

66

1
2 can say with the Senior Advisor Lewis, we've been
3 getting a lot of support for projects that we have in
4 front of us.

5 In the case of McGuinness Boulevard, yesterday we
6 started working McGuinness Boulevard and we are
7 building protected bike lane.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: But is a road diet
9 happening in the spring? Just a yes or no. Is a
10 road diet happening in the spring from Meeker to
11 Collier as the Mayor had previously announced again,
12 two or three weeks ago?

13 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: We're doing McGuinness
14 Boulevard. We are starting working the north side
15 and yesterday we started doing the work and that's
16 going to be protected bike lane.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: So, I just want to say
18 how disappointed I am by the dysfunction of this
19 Administration, that you all can't make a decision
20 and stick to it and a road diet was announced by the
21 Mayor himself three weeks ago. This was moving
22 forward and now we're hearing it's not or it might
23 be, we don't know. It's incredibly difficult to work
24 as a partner and to plan when the Mayor changes his
25 mind every week on projects in our community.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

67

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

I have one more question for you.

YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: But we started working on
McGuinness Boulevard yesterday.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: But the road diet that
we were promised is now disappeared. One more
question if I may Chairs is what's the role of
Richard Burick(SP?) with regard to Department of
Transportation projects? What oversight does he have
in reviewing and approving DOT projects relating to
bike lanes, bus lanes and other infrastructure
projects that you're doing around the city?

YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: As the Commissioner, I am
responsible to lead this agency with almost 6,000 men
and women. Of course we do a lot of consultation
with City Hall with many projects that we do. We're
so proud that in January Mayor Adams found \$1 million
for this agency.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: But what -

YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: And last year we added almost
18 percent increase to our budget.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Commissioner, I
appreciate you and I appreciate what you're trying to
do. You are on DOT; I'm asking about City Hall.
When you have a bike lane project and you have a bus

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

68

1 lane project, does Richard Burick have a role in
2 reviewing those projects? What is his role in
3 overseeing the Department of Transportation's work?
4

5 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: As the Commissioner, I work
6 with my team that I have from Eric Beaton on
7 planning, operation, we have a great team.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: I'm asking about City
9 Hall though.

10 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: I'm not getting into who I
11 talk at City Hall. Whatever we talk to at City Hall,
12 as you that have been previously in the other
13 administration, we know that this is not a place to
14 be sharing who you talk to. It's led by Mayor Adams.
15 We have so much support for us to do the project.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Can I ask a different
17 yes or no question?

18 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: I'm sorry, we'll come
19 back on round two because I do want to let our other
20 colleagues ask questions. We're going to hear from
21 Council Member Carr followed by Narcisse.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Thank you Chair Brooks-
23 Powers and Chair Brewer for holding this hearing.
24 Commissioner, good to see you. I wanted to
25 underscore just how great a relationship our office

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

69

1 has with our Borough Commissioner and the work that
2 we do every day to improve the quality of life for
3 Staten Islanders and those in my district, so I thank
4 her and everyone under her for their work. I want to
5 focus in a little bit on the comments you made
6 regarding bike lanes and bus lanes in Staten Island
7 and the city at large.

9 You know, you said earlier that we're the - that
10 we're working not to have Staten Island be forgotten
11 in this Administration. I know the Mayor said that
12 often but sometimes I think we're happier to be
13 forgotten on certain respects and bike lanes and bus
14 lanes are one of those areas. Not so much on
15 resurfacing, we love more attention in that regard
16 and as you know from your time in this body, my
17 predecessor voted against Local Law 195 when it came
18 to the floor for a vote. And it was because he felt
19 and I felt to as someone who was working for him,
20 that the agency would be pressured to meet citywide
21 targets in communities that wasn't interested in that
22 particular kind of improvement, namely bike lanes and
23 bus lanes.

24 So, your comments about bringing this survey to
25 me and my other 50 colleagues, asking us for hey,

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

70

1 where could we put these and work together, that's
2 kind of proof that I think that vote at the time was
3 correct. Because I'm all for my colleagues fighting
4 and working successfully with you for the
5 improvements that they think are best for their
6 streets and their neighborhoods but in my judgement,
7 the need for bike lanes and bus lanes beyond what we
8 already have is zero.

10 So, I just hope that that's something that you
11 take to heart and it sounds to me by consulting with
12 us up front that our opinion is important to you.
13 But I think that these are not the kinds of
14 improvements that we'd be seeking to have and there
15 are other ways I think in which we could collaborate
16 to improve safety in Staten Island as well as the
17 flow of traffic.

18 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Well, one of the things that
19 under Mayor Adams we've been doing is as you
20 described, is developing the best working
21 relationship between Commissioners and elected
22 officials, in this case Council Members. And as
23 someone that was there for three years and the last
24 being the Chairman of the Committee on
25 Transportation, I know how important it is to hear

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

71

1 from the different Council Members. And sometimes we
2 even can agree to disagree and that's part of our
3 job. I feel again you are someone that when we have
4 a moment to talk and disclose any projects to you, it
5 doesn't matter the moment that we don't agree, you
6 recognize that we had one of the best borough
7 commissioners there. So, I will say, you know let's
8 see us continue that conversation. I feel that what
9 as you say, this is something that we need to go
10 through. About where the 51 Council Members stand on
11 bike lane and bus lanes because say you do the 30 and
12 50 miles but don't bring the bike lane to my
13 district. Don't bring the bus lane here. So, at
14 some point again in another conversation we have to
15 look back at the Street Master Plan so that we know
16 exactly how important are those bike lanes and bus
17 lanes in your district and ask you to describe it.

19 So, if we are able to know exactly how important
20 or not for the Council Member, then we can have a
21 better understanding. However, as an agency, we
22 always will be a data driven institution. So, the
23 opinion, the feedback and the surveys as important as
24 Community Board. It is as important as the other
25 elected official. As a PTA, as a block leader, as an

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

72

1 association but this is something that we feel it is
2 important for us to do. In order to continue
3 planning together, it's important to establish this
4 partnership and as you saying, if that's important in
5 your district, I think it is critical for the
6 different 51 Council Members to share. How important
7 is bike lane and bus lane or not.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Thank you Commissioner.
10 Thank you Chair.

11 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you. Next,
12 we'll hear from Council Member Narcisse followed by
13 Louis.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Uhm, thank you Chair
15 again. I want to say thank you to the bill drafter
16 Samuel Breidbart and advocates that work on this bill
17 for me 885 PL, LLC, Fines and Fees Justice Center and
18 of course my staff Saye Joseph and Frank Shea.

19 Commissioner, one thing I'm looking at, when
20 we're looking at the option when you mention the pay,
21 like you helping by you know including the pay or
22 dispute app that allows for people to pay, that's not
23 where I'm at. I'm at with the people that cannot pay
24 the bills and how are we going to help them out? So,
25 that's where I'm at.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

73

1
2 I'm going to ask a few questions quickly because
3 the time is on me. How does this bill help the
4 general public? That's one. What are the complaints
5 from the general public related to tickets? Three,
6 will this bill impact revenue to the city? That's
7 three. Four, will this bill encourage New Yorkers to
8 resolve parking tickets? And five, will this bill
9 have negative consequences?

10 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Yeah. I'm going to -

11 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Take it from one to -
12 so, put your mic on so I can hear it.

13 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Yes. So, I'm going to pass it
14 to Agnes Rusin who is the Assistant Commissioner for
15 Payment, billing and referral from the Department of
16 Finance who will answer that question.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: And try to be quick on
18 the response because it's not much to ask you. It is
19 straight forward questions.

20 AGNES RUSIN: Hmm, hmm. Thank you Council Member
21 for the question. As stated in the testimony, we
22 have to share Councils intent to protect the
23 respondents from the punitive measures. However, we
24 do have concerns with the bill.

25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

74

1 Uhm, you have asked whether the bill has a
2 negative impact? We believe that it does, as it may
3 remove the incentive from the respondents to address
4 the violations in the timely manner either by paying
5 the violation or requesting a hearing. For their, the
6 BMA put the respondents at the greater risk of
7 default and in addition, respondents may be subject
8 to the enforcement including the booking and towing
9 and their debt may be referred to the collections.
10

11 So, in the end, the respondents will end up with
12 the higher cost to retrieve their vehicle.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: How does this bill help
14 the general public?

15 AGNES RUSIN: This bill does not help general
16 public to address -

17 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: It doesn't help the
18 general public?

19 AGNES RUSIN: No.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Okay. Okay, uhm, it
21 will have - this bill will have negative consequences
22 for whom? The city or the people of New York City?

23 AGNES RUSIN: We believe that this bill will have
24 a negative impact on both for under respondents as
25 they may postpone the uh addressing the violations.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

75

1
2 It means that they may incur more penalties and
3 judgement and interest, and if their vehicle are
4 booted or towed, there are some fees related to
5 retrieve the car from the tow pounds. And when it
6 comes to negative impact on the – for the city, there
7 is a negative impact on the potential [01:27:50] as
8 the second and the third penalties may be removed.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Uhm, we can agree to
10 disagree all day around this but at the end of the
11 day you see so many of my colleagues sign on the
12 bill, so it's not something that is – we represent
13 people that complaining, that have a hardship right
14 now in New York City. That's the reason of this bill
15 too.

16 What steps are being taken to address the 14.3
17 percent staff reduction in the transportation and
18 planning management division?

19 ERIC BEATON: Yeah, I think that's for us right?
20 Uhm, so I'm Deputy Commissioner for Transportation,
21 Planning and Management and obviously at the – you
22 know as we all went through COVID and the budget
23 issues associated with that, we did lose a lot of
24 staff. I am very happy to say that we've been hiring
25 quite a number of staff back as well over the past

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

76

1 year but we're, you know we feel like we are really
2 building those ranks and we are doing it with some
3 really, really amazing people. People who are
4 excited about all the work we do. People who know
5 how to design streets and work with communities and
6 also people who we feel like really are
7 representative of the city as a whole.
8

9 We've put a lot of effort into making sure that
10 we are hiring a diverse staff and as well as a highly
11 qualified one. So, we have been hiring a lot of
12 people and we're going to keep working to make sure
13 we build the staff that we need.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Okay. What resources
15 or support does DOT need from us? Because right now,
16 I hear that even what - I don't even know the role of
17 the Street Plan Director and why they're not here in
18 the room to answer the question of our Chair. So,
19 uhm, I'm wondering where can we fit to support you.

20 On that note, I have to talk about Mike Canarsie
21 before you answer that. See view Canarsie, people
22 are complaining a lot. We need to review that street
23 because on weekend, they have no place to park. All
24 the residents around the parks and the parks is not
25 only Canarsie Park, it's being used from folks all

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

77

1
2 over around the city, so please look at that, uhm the
3 street. And one of the things that I spoke before is
4 about the humps. I understand the bumps may be extra
5 money but in the meanwhile if we could use the
6 rubber, I think they're looking at. So, to ease some
7 of the street because we have some large street and
8 long street and especially in Canarsie, Mill Basin
9 area, if we can improve that. And thank you for all
10 the work that you've been doing around and thank you
11 for your visit in our district. We live in the
12 transportation desert. I heard you saying about this
13 bus stop and stuff.

14 So, a lot of us in the Canarsie Mill Basin area,
15 we have a difficult time because most of us are
16 driving because we cannot get around. So, we cannot
17 do one size fit all. That's all I can say and thank
18 you Chair.

19 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Thank you everyone.

21 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, so we'll look into - as
22 I said to you Council Member when I walk your
23 district and through most of the Council Members,
24 anyone that is left, I already have my team to
25 coordinate with the staff so that you know we go

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

78

1 through each Council Member in here. Like from a
2 speed bump to other needs that is needed. You know
3 as people we are working hard at DOT to be sure that
4 any recourse that we have in front of us we go
5 through. One of the thing that as former members of
6 the BMT and leadership, we also know that as a city,
7 we have limited resources. It's not only about DOT
8 saying we're going through financial challenges right
9 now. You know from the Bloomberg time when I served
10 my years, at the time and de Blasio, all the
11 Administration been going through PEG and this is a
12 moment we're also going through those PEGs and under
13 this Mayor we are responsible to continue
14 reorganizing you know our agency to be sure that any
15 reduction that we made in any agency, doesn't affect
16 the services that we provide.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: Thank you Chair Brooks-
19 Powers and Brewer. Thank you Commissioner for being
20 here today with your team. I have three questions
21 and two comments. So, I'll just spitfire those.

22 Uhm, under the DOT Street Plan, the 50 miles DOT
23 has to install, do you have the amount that's
24 proposed for Brooklyn? Has DOT — the second question
25 is has DOT avoided in your design plan private

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

79

1 driveways for homes within the five boroughs? But
2 I'll speak about Brooklyn right now. Has that been
3 included in your process?
4

5 And the other question that I have is under the
6 Streets Plan again, is in regards to restructuring
7 Flatbush.

8 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: That 50 miles of bike lane,
9 which is the one that you said? The first one?

10 COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: The bike lanes and I've
11 had this conversation with your staff before but
12 never got a response, so maybe we could do that here
13 today. Within the bike lanes that has to be
14 installed, has DOT figured out a way to redesign and
15 avoid private driveways for peoples private homes?

16 I'm going to go through the third question. The
17 third question is, under the Streets Plan again, has
18 DOT considered a redesign or restructuring of
19 Flatbush Avenue? Because you've come to my district.
20 The Chair has come to my district to Flatbush Avenue
21 where we have a lot of cases of fatalities on
22 Flatbush Avenue. So, if you're creating a Streets
23 Plan, I wanted to know if there's going to be a
24 redesign or restructuring effort on Flatbush Avenue
25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

80

1
2 to address the issues that you've seen with your
3 staff. And then I'll go to my comment now.

4 My comment is in regards to car share. Uhm,
5 Commissioner, you stated today in your statement to
6 us that you want to work with my colleagues and I and
7 the Council and I know that you have on several
8 occasions, but your staff doesn't do the same thing.
9 So, when it comes to implementation of car share, we
10 were not made aware. It was not equitable and we did
11 not get advance notice. So, with that being said, I
12 know you came to the District and had a walk through
13 and I appreciate that. Car share does not work for
14 Districts like Council District 45 and Council
15 District 46.

16 So, we would like to have a real equitable
17 conversation about how to remove car share is my
18 question.

19 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, Council Member before I
20 answer the question on the car share, on the bike
21 lane, your question is coming from concern that we
22 have not done the 50 miles or the concern of where we
23 are looking to do those bike lanes?

24 COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: The proposed, the first
25 question was in regards to the proposed locations in

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

81

1 Brooklyn and I'm thinking about my District right now
2 when I share that with you but in addition to that,
3 are you avoiding private driveways of private homes
4 to ensure that those bike lanes are not interfering
5 with peoples driveways?
6

7 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: We are - as you know, I went
8 back and I walk also; we had Assembly Member but also
9 members of your staff there and we talk about you
10 know our Brooklyn Borough Commissioner Keith, he was
11 there too and we left some of the members of our team
12 to meeting with your staff, the staff of Assembly
13 Members, Community Board. So, we will look in that
14 area where we were proposing to do the bike lane.

15 One of the things that we definitely do is to go
16 back and continue the consultation with the Council
17 Member, the elected official. And sometimes when we
18 build a bike lane it's about building the
19 connections. You know and we as the DOT to be open
20 for suggestions as also for the colleague in
21 government, as a Council Member to understand that
22 sometimes we have to do projects that sometimes it's
23 not popular.
24
25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

82

1
2 When I did a bike lane at Dyckman, most people
3 were against it. All elected officials was against
4 it.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: So Commissioner, with all
6 due respect, I'm not talking about popularity. If
7 you have to implement bike lanes, do what you have to
8 do. It's your job. What I'm asking is, if there's
9 bike lanes being implemented in particular parts -
10 I'm going to talk about Brooklyn right now and I'm
11 going to talk about my district. If there's a
12 private home there and there's a bike lane blocking
13 the person getting out of their driveway, that's a
14 problem.

15 I don't think your team is thinking about that.
16 So, it's either you're putting the Streets Plan
17 Manager on this panel to answer questions that the
18 Chairs had earlier, so that we could get questions
19 like mine and there's answered or we're not having
20 conversations about popularity. It's about is this
21 within the design? And I know you don't have the
22 answer right now because in the beginning of the
23 statement and the conversations, you all said that
24 you didn't have numbers. So, maybe the Streets Plan

25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

83

1
2 Manager can come up here and have conversations with
3 us about what this is supposed to look like.

4 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: First of all, I have the
5 person who oversees the whole thing on the planning
6 Eric Beaton. He will answer that question.

7 ERIC BEATON: Sure and just to be clear, the
8 Streets Plan Director reports to me and that's why
9 I'm up here, it's under my per view.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: Okay, so you should be
11 able to answer the questions that we've had from the
12 beginning of this. And this is not about the
13 Commissioner. This is not about popularity. We need
14 numbers and don't tell us you're going to email to us
15 afterwards because you're still not going to have it.

16 My constituents are watching right now and I'm
17 asking the questions because they're expecting a
18 response. If you are a private homeowner, whether
19 the project is popular or not, you need to
20 accommodate them as well in your design. That's all
21 I'm saying. So, just since you don't have the
22 numbers, that means it's not done yet. Add it in.
23 Add in a design and structure that makes sense for
24 homeowners.

25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS 84

1
2 ERIC BEATON: Sure, and we hear you very clearly.
3 When we design a bike lane, whether it's a protected
4 bike lane or an unprotected bike lane, we do look at
5 every driveway on the street and we have a design
6 standard of making sure we provide enough space for
7 people to get in and out.

8 From what you're saying, it sounds like we may
9 have an issue somewhere and so we'd love to follow up
10 with you.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: It's been an issue a long
12 time ago. What I'm saying is, we don't have to go
13 back and forth. There is other people that have
14 questions. Adding your design to avoid private homes
15 in Council District 45 and 46. Because we had this
16 conversation with this agency several times. It's
17 falling on deaf ears and you don't want the
18 protestors in front of your office and your home, so
19 let's talk about it right now. Include it in your
20 design because you don't have the numbers. That's
21 means it's not done yet. Add it in.

22 When it comes to car share, we would like some of
23 those spaces removed. Those are all the questions I
24 have. I'm going to yield my time and give it back to
25 the Chairs. Thank you.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

85

1
2 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: But for clarity, for the
3 public, the elective and everyone to leave, you know
4 the accurate information, which is about, we went to
5 Brooklyn. I went there personally. We met the
6 elected official from that area and the question
7 about those bike lanes in front of the private street
8 houses came to us. We're working on it. The
9 question about the car share also came. We're
10 working on it and I believe what I saw, definitely
11 there's going to be a moment where you know
12 definitely whatever we do I can say there is not
13 another agency in the nation that have the best
14 qualified top engineer working from the bottom to the
15 top on projects that we require for us to redesign a
16 street.

17 So, but more than happy again to follow any
18 particular concerning area, we are more than happy to
19 take and follow with you Council Member.

20 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you. Next,
21 we're going to have some remarks by the Public
22 Advocate.

23 PUBLIC ADVOATE WILLIAMS: Thank you Madam Chair
24 for the opportunity. This is actually my opening
25 statement and thank you for giving me an opportunity.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

86

1
2 Obviously I see there's some back and forth going on,
3 so hopefully this will make some sense still.

4 As I mentioned, my name is Jumaane Williams, I'm
5 the Public Advocate of the City of New York. I want
6 to thank Chair Brooks-Powers and Chair Brewer and
7 members of the Committees on Transportation and
8 Infrastructure and Oversight and Investigation for
9 holding this hearing. Always a pleasure to be with
10 Commissioner Rodriguez, we caused some trouble back
11 in the day in the City Council. It seems like there
12 still some trouble here. Uhm, you're on the other
13 side of it now.

14 Today the Committee's will hear several bills
15 including Introduction 0738. My bill that would
16 require the Department of Transportation DOT to
17 consider the placement of traffic enforcement agents
18 and the development of an interagency roadway safety
19 plan. In 2011, Local Law 12 was enacted, which
20 required DOT to develop an interagency plan to
21 improve roadway safety and reduce incidents of
22 traffic violations, crashes, injuries and fatalities
23 and for the plan to be updated every five years.

24 My bill will be in addition to the existing law
25 that also stipulates that the plan identifies ongoing

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

87

1
2 recommendations and proposals to improve roadway
3 safety. Traffic enforcement agents placements would
4 be one of the suggestions and considerations for
5 reducing crashes. As we know, traffic enforcement
6 agents are integral to keeping traffic flowing and
7 New Yorkers where they need to go and explicitly
8 naming their roles and placement as part of a greater
9 safety plan is a much-needed addition to what is
10 already required of the DOT.

11 Additionally, the Committees are also hearing
12 Introduction 0885, of which I am a Co-Sponsor. The
13 bill would provide for the automatic waiver of
14 certain additional penalties for parking violations
15 that the vehicle owner responds to notice of
16 violation 45 to 90 days after its issuance.
17 Currently if a vehicle owner responds more than 45
18 days but less than 76 days from the date of the
19 notice, they are subject to an additional penalty.
20 If the owner responds more than 75 days from the date
21 of notice, they are subject to an additional penalty
22 on top of the prior penalties. This bill would amend
23 this current penalty system recognizing that if the
24 vehicle owner makes a concerted effort between 45 and
25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

88

1
2 90 days, the issuance of the violation or additional
3 penalties would be waived.

4 Today I spoke of two bills that cover two
5 different issues that fall under the scope of
6 transportation and protection and a system in place
7 that effects New Yorkers daily lives whether they are
8 a pedestrian or a driver. And I'll end my comments
9 here and hope that the Administration and the Council
10 will support those bills. Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you Public
12 Advocate. We're going to go into round two of
13 questions. Uhm, I just want to pick up on Vision
14 Zero and street safety. Uhm report from earlier
15 this week indicated that people in the ten Council
16 Districts with the highest poverty rates were nearly
17 a quarter more likely to be seriously injured
18 compared to the average district.

19 Moreover, the ten districts with the most people
20 of color were 15 percent more likely to suffer
21 serious traffic injuries compared to the average
22 district. How does DOT consider this information
23 when determining where to situate street safety
24 infrastructure?
25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

89

1
2 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: As the Public Advocate said,
3 we've been you know in this responsibility for many
4 years in different roles. One thing that I got to
5 say with this number is that first of all we need to
6 and again, because it has been years of working
7 together. Years of the Council Administration
8 putting the resources. That since 2014 to today when
9 it came to the numbers of pedestrians losing their
10 life in our street, we are the lowest number because
11 of the work that we do on Vision Zero from the
12 engineer redesigning, education and Vision Zero and
13 also, collaborating with the NYPD from the
14 Enforcement Act.

15 So, I feel again when it comes to those data, you
16 know we look at these numbers by the end of this year
17 and I can tell you this number on severe injuries.
18 2019 we had 2,375, 2020 we had 2,089, 2021 we had
19 1,926, 2022 we had 1761. This year, because we had
20 not get to the end of this year, we are higher than
21 last year 1,840 but that's why sometimes the data
22 that we collect is more accurate when we get to the
23 end of this year.

24 So, we are hoping that we will continue having a
25 good year. One severe injury is too many. One

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

90

1 person die too many and for Mayor Adams and not being
2 able to take this year with the lowest numbers of
3 pedestrian fatality it's a big accomplishment for our
4 city and I really hope again that this data that TA
5 you know advocate, we work closely in many areas, we
6 disagree for them to be putting these numbers so far
7 by now because when the numbers is not accurate if we
8 don't get up to the end of this year.

10 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Uhm, just how can
11 someone assess how much and where pedestrian space
12 under the Streets Plan is added?

13 ERIC BEATON: So, uhm as we do that calculation,
14 we keep a tally and I believe it's in the update but
15 we can also provide those numbers you know from 2022
16 to you if you'd like them.

17 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Well, I want to also
18 know locations, not just a number. So, for example,
19 promise for 2022 page 77 but not implemented in 2022
20 with pedestrian space, particularly in my district,
21 Brookeville and Edgewood. So, I'm looking for
22 locations more so in terms of how you all assess
23 this.

24 ERIC BEATON: Yeah, so we can do a list of how
25 much pedestrian space by each location where we did

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

91

1 it and it's you know any space that is fully
2 pedestrianized. So, it's not shared space, it's
3 space separated from vehicles. And we you know, as
4 the Commissioner said, we are guided through the
5 priority investment areas to make sure that we're
6 serving all over the city. We also look very closely
7 at crash data to make sure that we are doing projects
8 where the crashes are highest. And you know
9 something that we've studied over the years, is
10 making sure that not just as the Commissioner said,
11 that those serious crashes have been declining
12 substantially citywide, but also that that happens
13 all over the city. That we can break it up by income
14 groups and by racial divisions and we're very proud
15 to see that we are bringing down injuries by the same
16 amount if not more in low income and communities of
17 color. So, we are very focused on that and we think
18 we're seeing those results.

19
20 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you. Uhm,
21 moving onto the Equity and Streets Plan. I want to
22 acknowledge the work that DOT has been doing to
23 advance equity and infrastructure. We like to
24 explore all avenues to do more. Do you agree that
25 there are communities in this city that have

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

92

1 historically not received enough infrastructure
2 investments?
3

4 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: On his Administration, he has
5 a Commissioner. For decades New York City was not
6 paying attention to underserved community. I can say
7 that someone that was there questioning agency, the
8 first time that we are giving so much priority to
9 spread the investment. To look at the working-class
10 community that never received those dollars to be
11 sure that they are included as we redesign, you know
12 as I said a few days ago, I was with DDC finishing
13 Grand Concourse, a \$60 million project that has
14 improved the safety of pedestrians and cyclists
15 especially senior citizen with pedestrian island
16 resting area and we feel that you know what we have
17 seen in each borough. I have went from Staten Island
18 to Brooklyn, Queens, Bronx and Manhattan being sure
19 that it's not only the great project that we're doing
20 at Broadway, the Broadway Vision, which is very
21 important but also going across the five boroughs to
22 different social economic and background community.
23 So, this is a top priority Mayor Adams again put in
24 the dollar not only the word.
25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

93

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Do you count every
3 street you pave and every speed hump you install?

4 ERIC BEATON: Yes.

5 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: And do you
6 distinguish between infrastructure spending focused
7 on keeping people safe like protected bike lanes and
8 daylight infrastructure and spending to improve
9 comfort, like fixing roads and upgrading bus stops?

10 ERIC BEATON: Yes, we take all of those into
11 account. You know some of them cost more money than
12 others. Some of them take you know political will or
13 other things more so than money, so that each one is
14 different in its own way.

15 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: And do you track how
16 safety metrics like accidents or serious injuries
17 correlate with these priority investment areas? And
18 have you found that underinvested areas are also more
19 dangerous than average?

20 ERIC BEATON: So, we have found that there is
21 somewhat more incidents of crashes and injuries in
22 communities of color and I think that that relates to
23 what the Commissioner was talking about that some of
24 these areas have not gotten as many treatments over
25 the years as they should have but we are very happy

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

94

1 that in the work that we've been doing, we have been
2 investing in those communities and we have been
3 bringing down those crash and injury rates. So, it's
4 something that we look at each year to make sure that
5 we're not just counting projects and counting miles
6 but that we're counting outcomes. Like, we want to
7 see crashes and fatalities go down and go down
8 equitably around the city. We want to see more
9 people riding bikes. We want to see more people on
10 the bus. Ultimately, like that's the city that we
11 want to see, not just you know the number of miles on
12 a sheet.

14 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Is DOT able to
15 examine prior investment before 2011?

16 ERIC BEATON: Yes, I think it depends on what
17 area -

18 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Let me just explain
19 why. So, like as you know, inequity in the city is a
20 problem with a much longer tale than ten years. The
21 balance in the city's investment over the past decade
22 won't be enough to bring up the communities that have
23 been underinvested in for hundreds of years. So,
24 wanting to know like how you said you inherited this.
25 One, to kind of be able to tell the tale in terms of

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

95

1 even a decade ago or more. What has that investment
2 been? What is it now?
3

4 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: I feel that you know as we
5 mentioned a few projects that we are doing. First of
6 all, we can share with you, we can send you projects.
7 We have in the previous hearing on the budget, we
8 give you details, all the details, project to project
9 on how the different community, underserved
10 community, now they've been getting the investment
11 that they were not getting before.

12 So, I'm more than happy to send you the lease of
13 all those projects that we have done it. I feel that
14 also a side share about what we're doing in the
15 summer street, that for the first time, we went to
16 Staten Island, Queens, Brooklyn and this is different
17 area. You know this is not only a day for community
18 to enjoy biking cultural entertainment. When we do
19 those events, what we are doing also engaging the
20 community, for them to experience the benefit of
21 walking in our street. As we will continue going
22 back you know, meeting with elected official,
23 community board, PTA, you know Black Association
24 because what I feel and I think this is something
25 that many of us agree, is even the conversation about

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

96

1 transportation in the past did not go. Was not seen
2 and taking from the grassroots perspective. So, what
3 is happening right now is that we are dedicating our
4 time. We're going to those communities. At the same
5 time, and listening from them their feedback, what is
6 important for them but also, we've been doing a
7 number of projects. You know back in November; I
8 hold a press conference together with Mayor Adams
9 where we share with everyone how we overpass all the
10 goals that we established at the beginning of 2022.

12 So, and again like, New York City is a leading
13 one in the whole nation and this is something that
14 probably Eric will share about, how about we do a
15 second bike lane compared to other city.

16 ERIC BEATON: Sure, as the Commissioner said, we
17 do feel like we're doing a tremendous amount. That
18 we're doing you know more than any other city in the
19 United States and more than most of those other
20 cities combined.

21 So, we hear you. Like, we want to do more.
22 We're always striving towards these goals but we
23 think we can be very proud of the work that we're
24 putting out on the street both in terms of the
25 quantity, the quality in terms of you know using more

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

97

1 concrete on bike lanes, you know not just doing miles
2 for miles. And again in the outcomes that we're
3 seeing record numbers of New Yorkers on bikes. That
4 we're seeing incredibly low numbers of pedestrian
5 fatalities. And we think that the amount of work
6 we're doing is really paying off in those results.

8 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: And Chair, I want to highlight
9 also, how also we work with some partners. Like here
10 we have Ken Podziba from Bike New York that not only
11 we are so proud for Bike New York to hold the largest
12 bike tour in the nation and the second larger one in
13 the whole world but also how his institution is
14 working in partnership with DOT, training's he made
15 coming from Rikers Island to give them a second
16 chance, learning to be a mechanic. How they also
17 partners with Biketober on how during the months of
18 September, October, we're going across community,
19 especially underserved community to expose adults
20 that had never had the experience on how to ride the
21 bike. For them to ride their bike but also to lend
22 the benefit of biking. To understand that biking
23 cannot be something only an upper-class, middle-class
24 people with high level academic degree but the
25 working class had to see that when they bike, it's

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

98

1
2 good for the environment and it's good for the
3 economy too. So, thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: And how long will it
5 take DOT to significantly raise the level of
6 investment in historically underinvested areas to the
7 point that they are on par with the city average?

8 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: This is a social class
9 discussion. This is something that we hope during
10 our time as elected officials and serving
11 administration. So many in administration or they
12 came back to now elective and any change we make.
13 You know this city has not gave priority. We need
14 the outdoor diner and you know before COVID, of those
15 diners no other sidewalk was only most of them, more
16 than 80 percent they were down 59 street.

17 Now we have of the diner, which is in the five
18 boroughs. We're given the opportunity to work in
19 class community to know having a restaurant with a
20 table and a chair in a community that you didn't have
21 it before is something that is your right.

22 So, we will commit it. We will commit it and
23 again, more than happy that you continue making us
24 accountable for us to accomplish this goal. What I

25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

99

1
2 can tell you is that on Mayor Adams' leadership, this
3 equity is not a word, it's an action.

4 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: So, what measures or
5 initiative do you have in the pipeline to accelerate
6 progress towards this goal?

7 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Eric can you know share more
8 detail but I can tell you that as I said, I took this
9 agency and again, I did 27 miles of bike lane last
10 year under Commissioner Janette, under Bloomberg she
11 did seven but I will not be able to be in 27 miles
12 without Bloomberg Administration to started this
13 seven mile. So, one of the things that we also
14 celebrate in the city is the value of continuity and
15 if we feel again that you know there's many areas
16 that we will continue Community 1 is project.

17 Community 1 to be sure that we develop improving
18 safety in their intersection. That pedestrians are
19 as they are right now in the safest year and I want
20 for the advocate to highlight that part.

21 Since 2014 to today, look at the traffic that are
22 all fatality on pedestrians. That's a resource or
23 TA, Family for Safer Street, going to Albany. We
24 working together DOT, Council Member, putting the
25 resources and sometimes we work so hard and we don't

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

100

1 stop to celebrate those changes that we made. Yes,
2 we are dealing with some of those cyclists
3 unfortunately losing their life but this will
4 increase the number of cyclists. As we say 200
5 million bike rider ship in 2022. It's the biggest
6 number and that's why we are working so hard to
7 redesign. To do more bike lanes, to do more
8 protected bike lane. So, this is a word again,
9 sometimes when you look at the number, New York City
10 has more bike lanes that even three or four cities
11 together in this nation. We are the role model that
12 all the cities are looking at us and we will continue
13 working together but it will take time. It will not
14 happen overnight but we're proud of all the
15 accomplishments that we've been able to produce under
16 our time in Mayor Adams Administration.

18 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you. It would
19 be great to know once DOT has identified what
20 measures or initiatives, what they are. In terms of
21 other bills that we have being heard today, I just
22 want to ask a few brief questions before I pass it on
23 to Chair Brewer. Regarding Intro. 261, will DOT be
24 considering curb extensions as a part of their new
25 curb management plan?

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS 101

1
2 ERIC BEATON: If you don't mind. The answer is
3 yes.

4 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: No great. Regarding
5 Intro. 738, when was the last interagency roadway
6 safety plan release? What is the process for
7 developing that plan?

8 ERIC BEATON: So, this plan has been incorporated
9 into our Vision Zero geography updates. So, we
10 released the most recent one of those earlier this
11 year and we are continuing to do it. The Public
12 Advocate had a bill, we were working with him on
13 setting you on a schedule. So, we intend to it every
14 three or four years but you know we work with the
15 Police Department much more often than that. We have
16 a standing monthly meeting where we talk about things
17 like TEA placement as well as many other individual
18 interactions.

19 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Regarding Intro.
20 1026, has DOT considered locations for a potential
21 bus depot in Flushing? And are there any concerns?

22 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: First of all, that's not DOT,
23 that's the MTA area responsibility as you know and we
24 are more than happy to be part of any task forward
25 but this has to be leading initiative on that.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

102

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you for that.

And regarding Intro. 885, what concerns does the Department of Finance have about implementing such a program?

AGNES RUSIN: Looking from the respondents perspective, we believe that the respondent would postpone address the violations and in the end, they may pay additional penalties. And I think it would also accrue interest.

CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Okay, I think the way I took it in was that they're acknowledging this fine and there's an intention to pay it. It's given a little bit more room but you're thinking that they may use that time and still not pay?

AGNES RUSIN: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Uhm and then I have to ask this question to DOT because a few of my constituents asked me this morning on my way here and I know they are probably watching.

In terms of the street signs, in our community a lot of them are faded and uhm you know, there have been members of the community that have called and asked for the signs to be changed out and uhm they've been told by DOT to go in the community and survey it

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

103

1 and then let them know where these need to be done.

2
3 Is there anyone in DOT responsible for looking at
4 these signs like in terms of the maintenance aspect
5 to know when these signs need to change out? Because
6 in Southeast Queens in particular, there are a lot of
7 intersections that are either missing signs or they
8 have faded signs where you cannot see them.

9 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: First of all, we have great
10 Borough Commissioners that could say, most of them,
11 all of them, they're here and the reason why -

12 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Where's Commissioner
13 Garcia.

14 NICOLE GARCIA: I'm here.

15 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Okay, just making
16 sure you're accounted for.

17 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: So, one of the things that the
18 first year and I do it to be sure when I am here, all
19 of my Commissioners are here, so that they can
20 follow-up. It's about building trust in the type of
21 work between Commissioners. My case and as a
22 Commissioner and you it's about a Council Member.

23 So, I think that we do great job with the number
24 redesign that we have, there's so many. We do the
25 inspection through those but more than happy again if

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

104

1 there's any particular case, the Borough Commissioner
2 should be able to follow with you.
3

4 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: We have a few, so
5 Commissioner Garcia, I believe my staff has sent it
6 to you. We're going to pull you aside here, so you
7 can give me an update on it but I know they've
8 already submitted some locations specific to my
9 district.

10 Uhm, also I know the bike lane on Beach 20th
11 Street has been a major contentious issue there and I
12 know DOT was looking to work on that. Is there any
13 updates in terms of what's happening there?

14 ERIC BEATON: Yes, we definitely heard about
15 that. The issue is there and we've seen it
16 ourselves. I think we're trying to get out very
17 quickly and get some green paint down, just because
18 we realize it's not as clear as it should be that
19 it's even a bike lane. You know it's hard to blame
20 people for parking in it when -

21 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: But also there's a
22 hump, so seniors are tripping on it and then I want
23 to know, was the Fire Department from the big house
24 that's located right on Central, were they consulted
25 when you selected that location? That's generally

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

105

1 the major corridor to get to St. Johns Hospital for
2 them and I have video where they cannot get down that
3 block in emergencies and it has increased their
4 response time to emergencies in the peninsula.
5

6 ERIC BEATON: Yeah, so the answer is, as part of
7 every capital project, we review it in detail with
8 the Fire Department. They get everyone to review.
9 We take their comments. We take them seriously and
10 incorporate them. With that said, if a project gets
11 built and we see issues, we recognize we need to go
12 back and make changes. For example, on that
13 corridor, we've been adding a lot of free loading
14 zones to try to reduce the double parking and make it
15 easier for that street to get through.

16 So, I think we are actively responding to it but
17 I think we're happy to sort of keep working until
18 it's right.

19 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Some of the feedback
20 I've gotten from the Fire Department in particular
21 has been there often not consulted or consulted very
22 late in the planning stage of it. In the peninsula
23 where you know we're a peninsula. You have to build
24 differently there and so; I definitely want to be
25 engaged in the next steps for that and make sure that

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

106

1 they're at the table as well. Because to hear that
2 there's an increase in response times, it's
3 concerning to me. Uhm and also, in terms of traffic.
4 Yesterday, it took me more than 43 minutes to get
5 from Auburn to downtown Far Rockaway. Uhm we know
6 that Edgeman Avenue is having a much-needed
7 construction being done, which will raise and expand.
8 Edgeman Avenue is our evacuation route on the
9 peninsula. That's first.
10

11 A stretch of Edgeman Avenue is closed due to
12 construction. There are no bodies that are out there
13 to direct traffic. The flow of traffic has been
14 severely impacted I would say. If you drive down and
15 I have gone both ways, where I've gone down Rockaway
16 Beach Boulevard onto Edgeman Avenue and then cut
17 under the freeway where it's closed. It's traffic,
18 you come down Segar, because we've lost the lane on
19 both sides for the bike lane that's parallel to the
20 protected bike lane on the boardwalk there's traffic.
21 The line is blocks long to be able to make a turn or
22 to go straight.

23 Then yesterday, I decided let me try going down
24 Beach Channel because everybody seems to be on the
25 other side, right? Well, turning onto Beach Channel

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

107

1 from around the 80's, the line for that was super
2 long. The entire stretch of Beach Channel had
3 traffic on both sides. If there was ever an
4 emergency, the fire truck could not get through what
5 I saw yesterday. An ambulance could not get through
6 what I saw yesterday. We need to see and I
7 understand that this is going to take cooperation
8 with my understanding from the response I got from
9 the Borough Commissioner is, the developer but DOT,
10 which is why I advocated with you in terms of having
11 the street dining under your discretion is because
12 DOT is responsible for our streets and the management
13 of it. And so, even though there's a private
14 construction project happening right now that's in
15 partnership with DOT, DOT has a role as well to
16 manage this traffic and we need to put a taskforce
17 together with emergency services, with DOT and the
18 contractor to work this out. School is back in
19 session; people are back at work. This is an unsafe
20 situation. When we had winter storm, uhm, I think it
21 was Elliot. I forgot the name at this point. In
22 December, we were literally stranded on that
23 peninsula for that day. All bridges were shut. You
24 could not get off that peninsula. We have one
25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

108

1 hospital on that peninsula and none that's a trauma.

2 We need to be able to get off that peninsula in case
3 of an emergency, especially right now in hurricane
4 season.
5

6 So, this is an urgent dire situation. I need
7 this meeting to happen as soon as possible. I
8 requested it. I don't feel like I got the sense of
9 urgency that I'm sharing with you right now. But
10 experiencing Beach Channel yesterday, we have to do
11 something.

12 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: I'm happy to follow with you
13 Council Member and as you say it's important also to
14 bring the developer because sometimes when they plan
15 any major construction -

16 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: And they're willing.
17 I talked to them. They're willing to come to the
18 table.

19 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Yes, they will. Yeah, so
20 that's important because as you know as I redid the
21 rezoning in many projects. One of the things that is
22 important for developers is to be responsible to help
23 with that piece related to you know and how they are
24 going to be doing their taking care on construction
25 and also you know contribute to an obstacle for

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

109

1 traffic and things like that but more than happy to
2 follow with you.
3

4 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you. So as my
5 Councilwoman role, I'm passing it on to Chair Brewer.

6 CHARIPERSON BREWER: Thank you very much. I want
7 to thank Ed Pincar, Manhattan Coordinator for all of
8 his work and also thank you for your focus on curb
9 planning on Columbus Avenue. I think that's part of
10 the study that you were talking about earlier.

11 So, just in terms of numbers, I think this is all
12 in the report for 2022. They came out in February
13 but if you talk first about bus lanes, 150 supposed
14 to be taking, built over five years with at least 20
15 miles in the first and 30 in the subsequent.

16 So, so far, 6.8 is that the correct number as far
17 as you know?

18 ERIC BEATON: Yes, that's for the protected – the
19 one that's in the law.

20 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Protected, yup and in terms
21 of transit signal priority at 750 intersections
22 during the first year, 1,000 intersections, 281 is
23 that the correct number?

24 ERIC BEATON: 281 completed last year?
25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

110

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: It says according to again,
3 my data may be wrong. It would have been done in
4 2022 for the report February 23.

5 ERIC BEATON: I want to check that.

6 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay.

7 ERIC BEATON: Because I think we were very close
8 if not at the 750.

9 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay, that's helpful to
10 know. 250— this is the bike lanes, which is done
11 quite well. 250 miles of protected over five years.
12 30 miles in the first year, 50 and you've done 26.3.

13 ERIC BEATON: That's right, it was about 26 and
14 in addition we had done another ten miles of jersey
15 barrier protected lanes.

16 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay, that's good to know.
17 Bus stop upgrades. We talked about this earlier, the
18 benches, the shelters, the real time information at
19 500 bus stops each year and so far 14.

20 ERIC BEATON: That's right. We are working on
21 the contract to do more of the real-time information.

22 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Right, we talked about that
23 earlier. Redesigning of at least 2,000 signalized
24 intersections over five years with at least 400

25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

111

1 redesigns each year and I'm not sure what that number
2 is, do you know?

3
4 ERIC BEATON: So, we'll get the exact number but
5 last year, we well exceeded that. I think we were
6 over 1,400 intersections redesigned.

7 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay, I have 1813, but I
8 don't know if that's correct so but it's something
9 you'll let us know.

10 ERIC BEATON: 1,600.

11 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: 1,600, okay. And then APS,
12 which of course is something that I started many
13 years ago. I feel very strongly for those who are
14 visually challenged APS's and no fewer than 2,500
15 intersections with at least 500 each year. I have
16 494?

17 ERIC BEATON: Right, so I think we're just below.

18 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Right, so that's good.
19 Alright, then the other question I have is, just in
20 terms of the funding. You're obviously you talked a
21 little bit about the contract for the bus shelters,
22 they cost more. So, do you have enough money to do
23 say for instance leaving that aside the other
24 projects. Are they all more expensive? Are you
25 within the ballpark of the capital funding?

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

112

1
2 ERIC BEATON: So, I think what we say is, we have
3 been very well funded in this Administration. Money
4 isn't our real problem, right. As the Commissioner
5 said, it's getting the local support. It's being
6 able to do that work to move it forward. Because so
7 much of our work is done in-house, it's flexible and
8 it's relatively inexpensive. It's certainly not free
9 but you know we feel like we've been well funded and
10 the constraints are much more around political
11 support. There's the issues like the facility space
12 that we need to work through but you know we are very
13 grateful and thankful that we've been so well funded
14 under this Administration.

15 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Yeah, so it's mostly the
16 political support. And then finally, what is the
17 date certain? Because we talked earlier about
18 getting data and contracts after this hearing. Can
19 you give us a date as to when we'll be able to get
20 contracts and data?

21 RICK RODRIGUEZ: I mean as soon as we can pull
22 it. There's no reason to -

23 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: That's on the contract side.
24 Like two weeks, is that reasonable?

25 RICK RODRIGUEZ: I think that's fine.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

113

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay and then some of this
3 data, will that be in the same time period?

4 RICK RODRIGUEZ: We'll have to follow up on that.

5 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay, alright thank you.
6 Council Member Restler.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Thank you very much.

8 Uh, I just want to come back to where I left off and
9 then I have a couple other questions if possible.

10 So, I was asking about Richard Burick and his role in
11 overseeing, in approving, reviewing, overseeing DOT
12 projects.

13 Uhm, does Richard have a role consistently in
14 overseeing DOT projects?

15 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: We report to Deputy Mayor Mary
16 [02:12:42]. In that process we do consultation with
17 many members of City Hall.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Okay, uhm, I'll leave it
19 at that for today but I just have to underscore, well
20 I'll ask a question, maybe I'll come at this a
21 different way. What do you think? It seems like we
22 got a ways to go to catch up in reaching our goals
23 for the Master Streets Plan. Commissioner, what do
24 you think is the single greatest challenge for us to
25 achieve these ambitious targets?

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

114

1
2 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: It has to do with Council
3 Member support in each district.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: So -

5 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: And if you don't mind let me -

6 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Okay.

7 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Explain the why. I say I
8 think that definitely you know you've been champion
9 with McGuinness Boulevard and been going you know we
10 can say here but here it is the political support but
11 you know we've been there and yesterday we started
12 construction. But sometimes like you know in many
13 occasion we go to different districts and there's not
14 political support.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: I appreciate it. You
16 answered the question. I'd like to make two points.
17 One, in District 33, where I and every single elected
18 official, State Assembly, State Senate, Congress,
19 Borough President, Comptroller, Public Advocate, the
20 neighboring elected officials. Each and every one of
21 us have expressed support for the road diet on the
22 Guinness Boulevard but the Mayor changed his mind
23 again on Friday and is no longer supporting it. Uhm
24 and yet in another district, if a Council Member
25 sneezes at a project, you all are taking a different

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

115

1 tact and deferring to the Council Member, deferring
2 to other elected officials.
3

4 Ultimately isn't it DOT's job to make the
5 decisions to implement the projects that can make our
6 streets safe. Why do you need to defer to an
7 influential donor or an elected official who has
8 concerns?

9 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Council Member, you've been in
10 this side working for the Administration before and
11 you know that sometimes this project that takes
12 longer than the Administration want to. I know that
13 you've been in many of those projects before. I am
14 proud how previous Administration; they told their
15 plan but it is under Mayor Adams that we did a
16 groundbreaking yesterday starting McGuinness
17 Boulevard. Over all, we are committed toward the
18 goal that we have of the Street Master Plan. We're
19 proud how this Administration in dealing with equity.
20 Many previous one they talk about it. This time, we
21 increase MWBE to 21 percent. We bring diversity in
22 the leadership of this agency. We're doing, over
23 passing and raising crosswalk, speed bump, resigning
24 the street in communities that they never get those
25 investments before. So, and today, you know many

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

116

1 cities across the globe, they're just looking at New
2 York City as a role model.

3
4 When there's a trend or increase of fatality in
5 the whole nation, New York City is leading by number.
6 So, I think that we're doing a great job and this is
7 the result of so many and hard work by Council
8 Member, advocates, Administration and this is the way
9 of how I think that we should continue partnering
10 together, supporting being real partnership when it
11 comes to supporting projects that we need. Not only
12 for the Street Master Plan that involve the bus lane
13 and bike lane. The Council has never included Open
14 Street in the Street Master Plan. The Council has
15 never take back and say what other changes should we
16 make on the Street Master Plan. To say last year, we
17 did 260 Open Street. This year, I don't know by how
18 many but my thing is to instruct you to do everything
19 to overpass those 260 Open Streets that we did.

20 For many years, only the middle class were able
21 to enjoy the summer street. This year we went to the
22 underserved community. Like Mayor Adam took a few of
23 those Open Street and he said, plaza, you will have
24 \$7 million to build it. But I did the same thing in
25 the Bronx. He is doing the same thing in Brooklyn,

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

117

1 so I am proud on how the money is following the
2 commitment of Mayor Adams and the Administration to
3 address equity in our city.
4

5 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Commissioner, I
6 appreciate the point. I appreciate much of the work
7 that's happening in the 33rd. We've got a new bus
8 lane moving forward on Livingston. We got a great
9 new protective bike lane on Schermerhorn. There will
10 be a protected bike lane on McGuinness. Many other
11 projects that are moving forward that are good. I
12 will continue to be a champion for smart projects
13 from the expert teams at DOT.

14 But I want to be clear, the Mayor, the
15 dysfunction at City Hall and the Mayor going back on
16 his word for the third time on McGuinness is not a
17 victory. Killing a road diet on McGuinness is not a
18 victory. It is an extraordinary defeat for the
19 Department of Transportation and for the Greenpoint
20 community and the coalition that has championed this
21 plan and worked with the experts at your agency to
22 craft it and develop it and see it advance and see
23 the Mayor support it, changes his mind and support it
24 and now seemingly change his mind one more time
25 against it, is the furthest thing from a victory. We

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

118

1 will fight and fight and fight until that road diet
2 is implemented. But ultimately, it is up to the
3 Mayor and it is up to DOT to push forward on projects
4 that will buses up that will make cycling safe and
5 achieve the network of protected bike lanes that we
6 need. You all need to get this work done and I will
7 encourage my colleagues to stand with you, just like
8 I do but ultimately the buck stops on the other City
9 Hall and these projects need to move and he needs to
10 respect the expertise of the Department of
11 Transportation and the recommendations that you all
12 make for how we can make our streets safe. I
13 certainly do and I hope that the Mayor finally will
14 as well. Thank you.

16 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: For pedestrian and cyclists,
17 it is a top priority for Mayor Adams. He has said
18 that traffic violence is similar to gun violence and
19 the numbers speak by itself on how we are improving
20 safety for pedestrians and cyclists. That's why many
21 cities in this nation are looking at the great job
22 that we are doing here at DOT.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: But we're seeing project
24 after project get killed by the political operation
25 at City Hall. He says that he believes in these

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

119

1 things but the proof is in the pudding. The proof is
2 in the results and I know that you want to do these
3 projects. Your heart is in the right place
4 completely and your team is good. You hire good
5 people. The agency is trying but the political side
6 of City Hall is killing project after project and our
7 city is hurting as a result of it. People will die
8 as a result of it.
9

10 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Okay, thank you and
11 thank you Commissioner and to the DOT team for and
12 Department of Finance for coming today. I hope that
13 the next hearing we have, we are able to talk through
14 some real numbers. We know that these hearings don't
15 happen every single day and we all have a
16 responsibility and our responsibility is oversight
17 and making sure that the agencies are doing what they
18 are supposed to do and in this case, it's upholding
19 the law and the mandate. And so, we will be
20 following up with the areas that we were unable to
21 get numbers and I hope that in the response this
22 time, we get some numbers. So, thank you once again.

23 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Thank you Chair.

24 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you. Now we
25 will move to public testimony.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS 120

1
2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We will now turn to public
3 testimony. Each panelist will be given two minutes
4 to speak. For panelists testifying in person, please
5 come to the dais as your name is called and wait for
6 your turn to speak. For panelists who are testifying
7 remotely, once your name is called, a member of our
8 staff will unmute you and the Sergeant at Arms will
9 give you the go ahead to begin. Please wait for the
10 Sergeant at Arms to announce that you may begin
11 before delivering your testimony.

12 We'll begin with the in-person testimony as
13 mentioned. Uh, first we'll have Jean Ryan, Alia
14 Soomro, Elizabeth Adams, and Kate Brockwehl. Thanks,
15 we'll begin with Jean Ryan and you may begin when
16 ready.

17 JEAN RYAN: Hi. I am Jean Ryan, President of
18 Disabled In Action of Metropolitan New York. We are
19 in support of Intro 0261-22 but we think it's just a
20 drop in a very big bucket and we think that way more
21 daylighting needs to happen. Every day pedestrians
22 are hurt or have very close calls crossing the street
23 and the crosswalk. Some are killed like the women in
24 Chinatown last Friday who was run over by an Access-
25 A-Ride vehicle.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

121

1 Daylighting should be everywhere where a vehicle
2 could turn into an intersection. Oversight Issues
3 and then I'm moving on to oversight issues and it's
4 not a complete list. DOT needs to step up and do
5 better in the following ways: Fix missing or non-ADA
6 compliant pedestrian ramps faster in all
7 neighborhoods in all boroughs. For example, Broadway
8 in Manhattan was surveyed in 2015 by then Manhattan
9 Borough President Gale Brewer and most corners were
10 unacceptable. Eight years later, conditions are the
11 same, and many corners are totally not able to be
12 traversed in a wheelchair and we must go in the
13 street with traffic. That's dangerous and we all
14 know that. Another thing that DOT needs to do is set
15 all traffic lights to give seniors and people with
16 disabilities a fair chance at safely crossing the
17 street by using leading pedestrian intervals as well
18 as walking speeds set to 2.5 feet per second instead
19 of the current settings of 3.5 to 4 feet per second.
20 DOT must do daylighting at every intersection so
21 pedestrians can be safe. Absolutely do not allow any
22 parking at any T intersection pedestrian ramps. Fix
23 inaccessible bus stops such as the ones on Shore Road
24 in Bay Ridge. Fix broken sidewalks and have a better
25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

122

1
2 program to correct sidewalks and redo streets and
3 roads that have more potholes and patches on them
4 than smooth surfaces. Thank you.

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thanks. You may proceed.
6 The order that it was called in Alia – okay, thanks.

7 ALIA SOOMRO: No worries. Good afternoon, my
8 name is Alia Soomro and I am the Deputy Director for
9 New York City Policy at the New York League of
10 Conservation Voters. Thank you, Chairs Brooks-Powers
11 and Brewer, as well as members of the Committees on
12 Transportation and Investigation for the opportunity
13 to testify today. I have submitted longer written
14 comments online.

15 NYLCV believes that all New Yorkers should have
16 access to clean and sustainable modes of
17 transportation to improve our city's air quality and
18 combat climate change. Efficient and accessible mass
19 transit, pedestrian and cyclist safety, and smart
20 street design are crucial to achieving these goals.
21 NYLCV fully supported the passage of Local Law 195 in
22 2019, which directed DOT to issue and implement a
23 transportation master plan every five years to
24 improve the safety, accessibility, and quality of the
25 city's streets for all New Yorkers.

1 With a comprehensive citywide vision, New Yorkers
2 can more easily pursue sustainable and safer modes of
3 transportation, move away from our dependency on
4 vehicles, reduce air pollution, and breathe cleaner
5 air as a result. This law is also another tool to
6 help our city reduce greenhouse gas emissions and
7 help the State's meet its greenhouse gas reduction
8 goals laid out in the CLCPA.
9

10 Lastly, implementing the NYC Streets Plan is
11 vital as we near the full implementation of
12 congestion pricing.

13 While the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted many
14 aspects of the Plan's initial implementation, we urge
15 the city to get back on track and timely and
16 equitably implement installing protected bus and bike
17 lanes. The city is far behind on many milestones
18 laid out in the Streets Plan. For instance, although
19 the 2022 benchmark target for protected bus lanes was
20 20 miles, only 4.4 were completed last year.

21 Moreover, as we near the implementation of
22 congestion pricing, now is the time to improve mass
23 transit and micro mobility. Simply put, congestion
24 pricing will not result in the declines of congestion
25 and air pollution that we expect and need if the city

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

124

1
2 does not invest in protected bus and bike lanes as
3 well. The investments that London made in buses
4 ahead of their congestion pricing plan taking affect,
5 and the investments in both buses and bike that they
6 made throughout the programs existence are instructed
7 for New York. Timely implementing the New York City
8 Streets Plan is more crucial than ever if we are to
9 improve safety, accessibility and the quality of our
10 transportation network.

11 We urge the city to fully and equitably implement
12 it. Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

13 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: We've also been joined by
14 Council Member Velázquez.

15 ELIZABETH ADAMS: Good afternoon. Thank you to
16 Chairs Brooks-Powers, Chair Brewer and to the
17 Committees. I am Elizabeth Adams, Deputy Executive
18 Director for Public Affairs at Transportation
19 Alternatives. The Streets Plan was enacted by a
20 super majority City Council vote because it
21 recognized that for far too long, we've not been
22 using our streets in service of our communities. It
23 recognizes there is a better way to design our public
24 space and put the interest of millions of transit
25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

125

1 riders, pedestrians and our city's mobility needs
2 front and center.
3

4 It is a legal requirement that includes mandated
5 yearly benchmarks. I want to thank the Chairs for
6 pushing on this point because as of now, we are even
7 further behind on our 2023 bus requirements than we
8 were at this point last year and we never even met
9 our 2022 goals requirements.

10 In addition to the 30 required bus lane miles and
11 the 15 required protected bike lane miles, we also
12 need to implement one million square feet of new
13 pedestrian space by the end of this year. It is
14 already September. The hesitancy to provide even
15 basic numbers of progress is alarming. There are
16 annual metrics for a reason, so we don't continue an
17 outdated system out of at hawk peace mill measures
18 but so we have a real citywide network with better
19 bus access, better pedestrian green space and safer
20 bike infrastructure no matter what zip code you live
21 in.

22 The benefit of a legal mandate is that it has to
23 happen regardless of individual push back or
24 conversation. So, we don't have to relitigate the
25 benefits of basic street safety infrastructure every

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

126

1 single time a project is proposed. We want to see
2 every Council Member pushing for pedestrian safety
3 and bike and bus lanes in their district. We also
4 cannot let politics overrule the law.
5

6 And I want to note that there are a number of
7 projects, which was raised earlier, that have moved
8 through Community Board approval, have checked off
9 all the local outreach and are still being slow
10 today. We need projects in the ground now, for the
11 safety and well-being of all New Yorkers.

12 Lastly, just a quick note on the legislation
13 being heard today. We applaud Chair Brooks-Powers
14 bill on adding an investment roadmap on the Street
15 Plan, especially with the focus on increasing
16 investments in environmental justice communities and
17 communities with low levels of current investment.
18 Thank you for that. The Streets Plan must be
19 implemented equitably. We also support increasing
20 curb extensions at intersections; however, I want to
21 note that that bill requires five intersections per
22 borough per year and DOT actually already exceeds
23 those numbers annually. So, we would recommend that
24 the scope be significantly increased for the bill.
25 Thank you.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

127

1
2 KATE BROCKWELH: Good morning and thank you to
3 Chair Brooks-Powers and the members of the
4 Transportation and Infrastructure and the Oversight
5 and Investigations committees for holding this
6 hearing. My name is Kate Brockwehl. I am a member of
7 Families for Safe Streets, a volunteer, and Co-Chair
8 of our Policy and Advocacy Committee. Families for
9 Safe Streets is an organization composed entirely of
10 individuals who have either lost loved ones to
11 traffic violence, or who have themselves been
12 grievously injured.

13 Traffic violence is a crisis that impacts so many
14 of us. Crashes kill more New Yorkers every year than
15 gun violence. More than 1,000 pedestrians, including
16 100 children, have been killed in New York City since
17 the launch of Vision Zero in 2014. Black, Latino,
18 and Asian New Yorkers make up a disproportionate
19 share of those killed. In total, an astonishing 30
20 percent of New Yorkers have been injured in traffic
21 crashes, and 70 percent know someone who was either
22 injured or killed. And for every person who dies on
23 New York City streets, eleven, like me, are severely
24 injured.

25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

128

1 I was hit by a car on Houston Street on December
2 31, 2017. It was a frigid day, five degrees, and
3 overcast, without a single ray of sun to potentially
4 cause glare for me or a driver; the sidewalks and
5 roads were dry. I was running boring holiday
6 errands. I was in the crosswalk, with the light. I
7 saw the driver before; he had been stopped at the
8 northwest corner of Elizabeth and I tried to make eye
9 contact with them. However, due to the design of the
10 street, they were 100 feet away from me. When I was
11 about two-thirds of the way to the median, four
12 thousand pounds of metal, rubber, and plastic crashed
13 into me.
14

15 The force of the vehicle hitting my leg caused
16 something called a closed degloving injury: the
17 shearing force tore the layers of muscle, fascia, and
18 viscera apart from the skin and tore my lateral
19 meniscus. I felt my leg tear apart. When I look
20 back on the crash, though I have a lot of trauma
21 still about it, I also feel anger and sadness and
22 frustration because every crash like this is
23 preventable.

24 In 1940, Houston Street was widened to facilitate
25 Robert Moses's plan to build a highway connecting the

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

129

1 Williamsburg and Manhattan Bridges to the Holland
2 Tunnel. It was a street that was dangerous by
3 design. It's also one of hundreds of similarly
4 designed streets across New York, a disproportionate
5 number of which are located in lower income
6 neighborhoods, and those with a majority populations
7 that are people of color and in the outer boroughs.
8 These are streets that New York City must
9 systematically redesign, prioritizing the safety of
10 our communities while building out better transit
11 options. Every day that we fall short of
12 implementing, the legal requirements of the Street
13 Plan is the day where someone somewhere is losing a
14 life, a limb or the ability to sleep without
15 nightmares due to governmental inaction.

16
17 Toward that end, we are calling on the Council to
18 do everything within your power to ensure that these
19 legally mandated benchmarks are kept. Thank you.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you all. We'll now
21 call up our next panel Jolyse Race, Ken Podziba, Lisa
22 Daglian, and Michael Ring. I realize that one of
23 those individuals may have left, so we'll call up
24 Michael Cohen as well. Michael Cohen, yeah. We'll
25 begin with Jolyse Race.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

130

1 JOLYSE RACE: Hello everyone. My name is Jolyse
2 Race and I am testifying on behalf of Riders
3 Alliance. I'd like to thank the Committees of
4 Transportation and Infrastructure and Oversight and
5 Investigations for convening today to better
6 understand how the city and work towards achieving
7 it's mandates of the New York City Streets Plan. The
8 Streets Plan envision sweeping changes that require
9 the Mayor and DOT to make our streets safer for
10 pedestrians and cyclists and speed up buses for
11 millions of riders. And the city's millions of bus
12 riders who are taking the nations slowest buses on
13 congested streets every day cannot wait any longer to
14 get this done.
15

16 We are deeply concerned in dismay that despite
17 the Streets Plan going into effect at the beginning
18 of last year, we've since seen progress slowed and
19 staled. The law states that Mayor Adams and the DOT
20 team must implement 150 miles of bus lanes and bus
21 ways by 2026. So far we've only seen a few miles
22 completed when in previous years DOT was able
23 complete many more. Bus riders are particularly
24 concerned that projects are being stalled due to
25 internal politics and powerful forces who don't want

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

131

1 any car space being taken away on city streets.

2 Particularly in neighborhoods with the greatest
3 number of bus riders.
4

5 We all know that for our city to work, bus
6 riders, cyclists and pedestrians need space on our
7 city streets too and on Fordham Road where 85,000 bus
8 riders are stuck waiting in extreme summer heat only
9 to board crowded buses. We've seen wealthy business
10 owners and lobbyists who don't even live in New York
11 City exert political influence to derail a project
12 that would help so many riders right away. This is
13 on a corridor where the vast majority of people rely
14 on public transit every day and where more than 70
15 percent of constituents support the project.

16 Riders Alliance alone has organized over 1,000
17 bus riders in support of this project. What we are
18 missing is real leadership to get these projects
19 done, to make sure that the majority voice of transit
20 riders is heard and not drowned out by well-funded
21 local interest groups. We are here to ask that Mayor
22 Adams and the City Council Members to commit to
23 meeting the mandates of the Streets Plan and giving
24 critical projects like Fordham Road the green light.
25 Thank you.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

132

1
2 LISA DAGLIAN: Hi, good afternoon. I'm Lisa
3 Daglian, the Executive Director of the Permanent
4 Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA, PCAC. PCAC
5 is the official voice of riders of New York City
6 subways, buses, the Staten Island Rail, Long Island
7 Rail Road and Metro-North. We thank you very much
8 for holding this hearing today on issues that are
9 critical to transit riders around the five boroughs.

10 When the Streets Plan was first introduced, we
11 were thrilled to hear about the city's ambitious
12 pledge and legal requirement for 150 miles of new bus
13 lanes and busways by the end of 2025. Bus lanes and
14 busways have been proven to substantially speed up
15 buses, and with New York City's buses among the
16 slowest in the nation, we can't wait until they can
17 finally move faster than a chicken, which you may
18 know can move up to nine miles an hour. Buses don't
19 go that fast.

20 We've heard from riders and we've all experienced
21 the frustration, inconvenience, and real-life
22 consequences of riding in a bus and being stalled,
23 delayed and just stuck behind cars, trucks, and
24 delivery vehicles. The Streets Plan commitments,
25 when enacted, will make a major difference for

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

133

1 riders, and we're counting on the Mayor and city DOT
2 to ensure their milestones are met. We are asking
3 you to enforce those. A plan without action is a
4 piece of paper.
5

6 Fordham Road is a bus way whose time has come and
7 that has to happen otherwise tens of thousands of
8 people are inconvenienced for the politics that are
9 holding it up. Unfortunately, we've heard today
10 extensively that the city is currently far behind its
11 Streets Plan bus lane targets. We've heard it
12 extensively but with frustrating little detail. Bus
13 stop upgrades are also sorely behind schedule.

14 We propose expanding Zoning for Accessibility to
15 include bus stop upgrades, to incentivize developers
16 to foot the bill and complete installation where
17 there may not be an eligible subway station nearby.
18 We support many of the Intro.'s that are being
19 discussed today, as they will help to improve street
20 safety, access to curbs and buses and to transit
21 itself. We do not support Intro. 0885-2023 that
22 would waive some penalties for parking violations.

23 As transit riders, we strongly support congestion
24 pricing or as we like to say, decongestion pricing.
25 It will help reduce traffic, improve air quality and

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

134

1 raise vital funds for critical transit projects but
2 it's also essential that we get transit rights so
3 that we can draw riders onto our system and that
4 includes making sure that the buses work for
5 everyone. Thank you.

7 MICHAEL RING: Hi, my name is Michael Ring, I am
8 representing Disabled in Action today and I'd like to
9 talk about uhm, daylighting. I'd like to talk about
10 it because uhm not everyone knows what it really
11 means. It means you need a little bit more room in a
12 crosswalk to see what's coming if cars are coming.
13 In some crosswalks, the cars can get really close, so
14 you have to see what's coming. So, you stand up and
15 you can look each way but that didn't work for me for
16 about a year because I needed to use a wheelchair for
17 about one year and I would be this height, and now
18 I'm looking to my right and to my left and I see
19 these are people but they would be cars blocking my
20 vision. And the cars vision of me would be blocked
21 by parked cars. So, this program to add more
22 daylighting is about safety. People are complaining
23 about it because they might lose a couple of parking
24 spots but it's just a kind of minor inconvenience

25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

135

1 considering that you know lives could be saved and
2 serious injuries could be avoided.

3
4 A second thing I wanted to talk about, I wish the
5 DOT was still here. I live a block from Prospect
6 Park and the roadway in Prospect Park isn't governed
7 by the Parks Department, it's governed by the DOT.
8 And the DOT manages lots of roads with cars but they
9 kind of give it up on Prospect Park and it's become
10 the Wild West and I wish they would take some
11 feedback on what the traffic lights should do in
12 Prospect Park because they're blinking red and yellow
13 and green all the time but no one knows what to do
14 and the interaction between cyclists and pedestrians
15 is kind of confusing.

16 Last year, they put in an extra pedestrian lane
17 that made it more confusing. I'm just hoping that we
18 could fix Prospect Park. Thank you.

19 MICHAEL COHEN: Hi, my name is Michael Cohen and
20 I am from the 504 Democratic Club. I would like to
21 say that there has to be a lot of work done to
22 improve bicycle safety and bus service in New York
23 City. I am fully in support of congestion pricing
24 and think that it's a great initiative. Although I
25 would like to see cameras installed to ensure drivers

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

136

1 do not get in the way of bike lanes and have trips to
2 alert drivers of the presence of bike lanes and speed
3 cushions to speed driver's down on major arterial
4 street, and such as 1st Avenue. And I would like to
5 see the bus service improved. I would like there to
6 be more frequent bus service and more bus lanes for
7 sure have a better time than they have now. Like
8 more bus only streets and more bus ways and offset
9 bus lanes rather than those at the curb. And I'd
10 like to see more bus lanes that are open 24 hours a
11 day. When I'm ready to take a bus, you know it's
12 going to be a faster trip and the bus is not going to
13 get stuck in traffic.

14
15 And I'd also like to see an increased number of
16 accessible cabs in New York and an increased number
17 of accessible van service with ridesharing and things
18 like that. And I'd like to see more subway service
19 more frequently on the A-Train. I think that service
20 is not frequent enough. It comes every 20-30
21 minutes. I think it should come more often than that
22 because sometimes taking the A-Train and it takes me
23 a very long time to get a train to where I'm going to
24 and I have to go from uh 21st Street to Harlem, so I

25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

137

1 think that would be good to have more frequent than
2 that.

3
4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you very much. We'll
5 now call on the next panel. Gib Veconi, Santo
6 Cabrera, Patrick Fromuth(SP?). Okay. You may begin
7 when ready. Please put on the microphone. Thank
8 you.

9 GIB VECONI: Pardon me. Good afternoon and thank
10 you Chair Brewer. My name is Gib Veconi and I Chair
11 the Prospect Heights Neighborhood Development
12 Council. For the last four years, we have operated
13 Open Streets on Underhill Avenue and Vanderbilt
14 Avenue in Brooklyn. These programs began as pandemic
15 relief efforts but has since evolved into much more.
16 Underhill Avenue, which is a Vision Zero priority
17 street and home to a public lower school and a
18 playground for young children, saw car crashes fall
19 by more than 50 percent after the Open Streets
20 program began. It has since led to a pedestrian
21 plaza being established at the avenue's north end,
22 which is now used for passive recreation and popular
23 weeknight programming for adults and children. In
24 fact, we have a yoga class tonight at 6:30 there.

25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

138

1 While helping local restaurants survive indoor
2 dining restrictions, the Vanderbilt Avenue Open
3 Street was adopted by residents in ways we didn't
4 anticipate. People came with blankets and picnics.
5 Families brought tables and chairs to have dinner in
6 the street together and we've even had more than half
7 a dozen couples celebrate weddings there. Thousands
8 of people from all over the city now visit Vanderbilt
9 Avenue on weekends representing a significant
10 economic benefit for local businesses.

11
12 Of the 22 restaurants that are part of our
13 program, more than half are minority and women owned.
14 Their success has in turn enabled them to increase
15 local employment. This year, we will produce more
16 than 100 programming events as part of our Open
17 Streets Programs providing visibility and honoraria
18 to a diverse array of local artists and minority and
19 women entrepreneurs.

20 In nearly twenty years of community organizing in
21 Brooklyn, I have never seen a program that has
22 offered the level of agency and self-determination to
23 a local community that Open Streets has provided. It
24 is transformational in terms of creating new public
25 space, improving economic outcomes for local

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

139

1
2 business, fostering safer streets, supporting the
3 city's climate and sustainability goals, and building
4 a stronger sense of community.

5 I thank the Council for making the program
6 permanent and I hope the Council sees the opportunity
7 to support existing Open Streets programs as well as
8 to extend their benefits to more communities in New
9 York City. Thanks for the opportunity to share this
10 testimony.

11 SANTO CABRERA: My name is Santo Cabrera. Thank
12 you for staying here for us, to hear us. Uhm, I just
13 want to say hi Gale. Long time with you. I'm just
14 an observer over here. I just noticed that the
15 neighborhoods are not equal. The maintaining of the
16 bus lanes are not maintained and mostly in the Bronx
17 and mostly in Queens but I noticed that in Manhattan,
18 it's maintained all the time. It's painted all the
19 time.

20 You call Fordham, that hasn't been maintained for
21 a long, long time because I hang out there too so I'm
22 an observer. This is not a thing; we had an incident
23 outside with Gale Brewer and everybody else. We have
24 no protection out there to protest, so we would like
25 to have our City Hall back, the steps because that's

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

140

1
2 our steps. We paid for it and that's you know, we
3 need protection too.

4 We did this a long time ago because your police
5 force, you know somebody got shot over here,
6 outrageous. Somebody is going to get shot out there,
7 there is no protection for us to be protesting out
8 there. Thank you.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you so much. We will
10 now turn to remote testimony. Yeah, you're done.
11 Thank you so much.

12 I would like to now welcome Antonya Jeffrey to
13 testify followed by Glen Bolofsky and Joe Fama.

14 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

15 ANTONYA JEFFREY: Good Afternoon Committee Chair
16 Brooks-Powers, Chair Gale Brewer and esteemed
17 members. I first want to thank Council Member
18 Mercedes Narcisse for sponsoring Intro 0885 and for
19 the opportunity to testify today.

20 Also, thank you to the New York City Council for
21 being partners in the push for fines and fees reform
22 dating back to the successful elimination of phone
23 call fees at Rikers, making New York City the first
24 in the country to make all jail phone calls free, and
25 important legislation to end fees for credit card

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

141

1 payments by people in custody. I have confidence that
2 the Council will continue to be an advocate for
3 eliminating fees and ensuring fines are equitable as
4 reflected in the overwhelming support for Intro 0885
5 by almost the entire Council including many of you,
6 Council Member Powers, Council Member Cruz, Council
7 Member Restler and others, who have been trusted
8 partners in previously related reforms, as well as
9 New York City Public Advocate Jumaane Williams who
10 has demonstrated support to decriminalize poverty on
11 all levels of government.
12

13 My name is Antonya Jeffrey. I am the New York
14 State Director at the Fines and Fees Justice Center,
15 a national organization that seeks to reform the use
16 of fines and fees that harm communities and distort
17 justice. In addition to our national work, FFJC
18 works in four focus states, including New York,
19 building replicable models for comprehensive reform;
20 that is eliminating all justice fees, ensuring fines
21 and equitable, and ending draconian collection
22 practices that punish and criminalize poverty.

23 As FFJC's New York State Director, I lead our
24 state and local campaigns throughout New York and I'm
25 here today because we support the immediate passage

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

142

1 of Intro 0885. This reform is a good first step, but
2
3 it is not enough. The Council's goal should be to
4 eliminate all justice fees and ensure that any fine
5 imposed is proportionate to both the offense and the
6 individual, and ultimately to end the system of
7 taxation by citation that has a disparate impact on
8 low-income New Yorkers and particularly -

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

10 ANTONYA JEFFREY: I'm sorry?

11 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

12 ANTONYA JEFFREY: Okay.

13 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: If you could just
14 submit the rest of your testimony in writing.

15 ANTONYA JEFFREY: I will. I have submitted it
16 and I will submit an updated version.

17 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Perfect, thank you.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you so much. We'll now
19 hear from Glen Bolofsky followed by Joe Fama and
20 Kathleen Collins.

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

22 GLEN BOLOFSKY: Can you hear me?

23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Yeah, we could hear you.

24 GLEN BOLOFSKY: Thank you so much. Good
25 afternoon to everyone. I want to thank everyone for

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

143

1 showing up today. It takes a lot of time and I want
2 to specifically thank Chair Selvena Brooks-Powers and
3 her terrific team, central staff and her district
4 staff. I want thank all the Council Members and your
5 teams for showing up and working so hard, as well as
6 all the advocates here today and the members of the
7 Administration as well because a dialogue is
8 essential. Dialogue is essential.
9

10 I'm here to support all these bills that were on
11 for today, including 221 originally sponsored by
12 Julie Menin for extending, I believe the visibility
13 of the curbs that was just also supported by another
14 advocate. This also relates to visibility and saving
15 lives and relates to the stipulated fine program,
16 which the Council previously had 39 members on. So,
17 that's something that we would like to encourage the
18 Council to reconsider because it aligns perfectly
19 with 221.

20 We also want to provide strong support for 885,
21 which is the reduction of penalties for individuals
22 who are just a few days late on the parking tickets
23 and this relates to the issue of virtual parking
24 ticket hearings, which we've been pushing for more
25 than three years now with the Parking Violations

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

144

1 Bureau, which they're withholding intentionally to
2 cause people to pay tickets. It is draconian as the
3 other advocate said a moment ago, absolutely
4 draconian. And we really urge the Council to push
5 forward on 885 and/or virtual hearings and/or
6 elimination of the stipulating fine program and I
7 want to thank everyone again for your valuable help
8 and this time and if there's a question for me, I'd
9 be happy to take it.
10

11 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thanks so much.

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We'll now move
13 onto Joe Fama followed by Kathleen Collins and
14 Michelle Beyer.

15 JOE FAMA: Good afternoon. My name is Joe Fama,
16 I'm the Former Assistant Commissioner and Director of
17 Fiscal Affairs of the New York City Parking
18 Violations Bureau.

19 Thank you for the opportunity to address you
20 concerning Intro. 885. Let me first state that I am
21 strongly in favor of this proposed legislation and
22 appreciate the Committees work on this bill. I also
23 wish to recognize the efforts of Council Member
24 Narcisse and Committee Chairs Brooks-Powers and
25 Brewer in obtaining 45 member sponsors of the bill.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

145

1
2 The function of the bill is to require at hearing
3 the dismissal of penalties accrued for parking
4 violations when a decision of guilty is rendered by
5 the administrative judge. The intent of this bill is
6 to provide relief and equity for the citizens of the
7 city.

8 The bill is intended to provide financial relief
9 to the citizens of the city by eliminating an
10 unnecessary financial penalty. Penalties are
11 intended to coerce compliance with parking violation
12 fines, not to extract additional dollars from the
13 peoples pocket. Individuals appearing before a judge
14 for hearing in person, by mail, or through the web,
15 are making efforts to comply and resolve New York
16 City violations and do not need to be coerced. The
17 vast majority of New Yorkers are good, hard-working
18 citizens trying to do the right thing and that should
19 be recognized by the city with the dismissal of any
20 accrued penalties.

21 Individuals who adjudicate parking violations at
22 hearing have a very high rate of payment after
23 hearing. Penalty relief is a way to encourage
24 citizens to address their parking violations at
25 hearing. The city should be making every effort to

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

146

1 assist individuals waiting to resolve their tickets.

2 This bill will foster an atmosphere of cooperation
3 and good government, which will result in more
4 violations being satisfied and bring revenue to the
5 city without expensive collection efforts.
6

7 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

8 JOE FAMA: Well, thank you very much and I hope
9 the bill passes quickly.

10 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you so much Mr.
11 Fama.

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We'll now hear
13 from Kathleen Collins.

14 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time has begun.

15 KATHLEEN COLLINS: Good afternoon everyone. My
16 name is Kathleen Collins and I'm on the Board of
17 Disabled in Action and also a Co-Coordinator for
18 Downstate New York Adapt, two disability
19 organizations that believe people with disabilities
20 should be able to live in the larger community
21 completely.

22 We support bill number 261 but would like you to
23 go even further. We understand that curb extensions
24 are not appropriate everywhere, such as where there
25 is a bike lane or traffic shoulder. In those

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

147

1 instances, the curb extension must be small enough to
2 not reach the bike lane. However, we believe that
3 curb extensions should be installed at all curbs in
4 New York City where there is an on-street parking
5 lane available so that pedestrians would be able to
6 cross a safe as possible at all such intersections
7 and not just intersections that are at this time the
8 most dangerous.
9

10 We recognize that this cannot occur overnight and
11 that such extensions should be installed at the most
12 dangerous intersections first but it should not stop
13 there. Further, we believe that the minimum
14 installed each year at intersections should be
15 increased to at least 30 percent each year. Of those
16 intersections where there is on street parking lane
17 available in each borough, that the Department of
18 Transportation identifies at the most dangerous and
19 with the most pedestrian traffic. So, this work gets
20 completed as quickly as quickly as possible, so many
21 more lives can be saved. The final goal should be
22 that all intersections where there is an on-street
23 parking lane available have curb extensions and thus
24 result in a safer city for all pedestrians and
25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

148

1 driver's alike. Thank you so much for your time and
2 effort today.

3
4 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you Ms.
5 Collins.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and we'll now hear
7 from Michelle Beyer.

8 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time has begun.

9 MICHELLE BEYER: Hi there. Thank you for this
10 opportunity to check in and it sounds like everybody
11 is really working towards making the streets safer
12 and uhm, and also alleviating some of the traffic
13 congestion and the environmental impact that it has.
14 I am, I came in and listened today because I was a
15 small business owner. I own a business, a women's
16 health club. My partner and I we're minority owned
17 two women and it's in Bay Ridge Brooklyn and we were
18 invited to be part of DOT Department of
19 Transportations Summer Street this year in Staten
20 Island and in Brooklyn. We had a performance and a
21 table and I really wanted to check in and thank
22 everybody for that opportunity. It has helped drive
23 our small business that suffered immensely with
24 COVID. 50 percent of our industry, in the health
25 industry, closed for good, gyms and health clubs. We

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

149

1 were lucky to survive because we are a small business
2 and we maintain a very nice relationship within our
3 community.
4

5 So, I am just here to say kudos to everyone
6 that's working on this project. It's a difficult
7 project and you can hear from many different sides
8 where some of the hesitations and challenges come in.
9 And I would love to see more events that promote and
10 support small businesses in New York City.

11 Sorry, I got my camera, I got a little nervous
12 and there I am. Hi. So, again, thank you, thank you
13 so much for working towards helping small businesses
14 get back on track after COVID. It's been a struggle.
15 We continue to struggle but contacts like these,
16 incentives like these Summer Street, Open Street,
17 these really help the communities and help small
18 businesses get noticed. Thanks for taking the time.
19 Have a great day everyone.

20 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. If we have
22 inadvertently missed anyone that is registered to
23 testify today and has yet to have been called, please
24 use the Zoom hand function if you are testifying
25

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

150

1
2 remotely and you will be called in the order that
3 your hand has been raised.

4 If you are testifying in person, please come to
5 the dais. Seeing no one, I will now turn it over to
6 Chair Brooks-Powers for closing remarks.

7 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: I'd like to say thank
8 you to all of my colleagues and to the members of the
9 public that took time today to testify and give
10 remarks as it pertains to the Streets Plan. We look
11 forward to our follow-up conversations with the
12 Department of Transportation as we move a number of
13 the bills that we heard today forward and ensuring
14 that the agency is upholding its mandate on the law.

15 So, thank you and this meeting is now adjourned.
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

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 September 22, 2023