

1 COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION JOINTLY WITH THE
2 COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS 1

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CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

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Of the

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COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

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HELD AT: REMOTE HEARING - VIRTUAL ROOM 2

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B E F O R E: Ydanis A. Rodriguez,
Chairperson for Committee on
Transportation

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Vanessa Gibson,
Chairperson for Committee on
Oversight and Investigations

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COUNCIL MEMBERS:

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- Diana Ayala
- Inez Barron
- Selvena N. Brooks-Powers
- Fernando Cabrera
- Margaret S. Chin
- Ruben Diaz, Sr.
- Eric Dinowitz
- Robert F. Holden
- Ben Kallos
- Peter A. Koo
- Stephen T. Levin
- Mark Levine

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3 COUNCIL MEMBERS: (CONT.)

4 Carlos Menchaca
5 I. Daneek Miller
6 Keith Powers
7 Antonio Reynoso
8 Carlina Rivera
9 Deborah L. Rose
10 Helen K. Rosenthal
11 Mark Treyger
12 Kalman Yeger
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4 A P P E A R A N C E S

5 Liza Martinez
6 Member of Families for Save Streets

7 Chris Brimer
8 Member of Families for Save Streets

9 Irma Rosenblatt
10 Member of Families for Save Streets

11 Kim Royster
12 Chief of the New York City Police Department's
13 Transportation Bureau

14 Isa Abbassi
15 Deputy Chief

16 Michael Clarke
17 Director

18 Hank Gutman
19 Commissioner of the New York City Department of
20 Transportation

21 Joshua Benson
22 Deputy Commissioner for Traffic Operations

23 Julia Kite-Laidlaw
24 Director of Safety Policy

25 Rebecca Zack
Assistant Commissioner for Intergovernmental and
Community Affairs

Gale Brewer
Manhattan Borough President

Danny Harris
Executive Director at Transportation Alternatives

Eric McClure
Executive Director of Streets PAC

Sara Lind
Director of Policy at Open Plans

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3 Lisa Orman
4 Chief of Strategy at Open Plans

5 Christine Berthet
6 Founder of CHEKPEDS

7 Rene Luciano
8 Metro Region Operations Manager for the Trucking
9 Association of New York, TANY

10 Carlos Castell Croke
11 Associate for New York City Programs at the New
12 York League of Conservation Voters

13 Jaqi Cohen
14 Director of Climate and Equity Policy for Tri
15 State Transportation Campaign

16 David Achelis
17 President of the West 50's Neighborhood
18 Association

19 Jackson Chabot
20 Director of Public Space Advocacy at Open Plans

21 Doug Gordan
22 Yield time to eight year old son Zeb Gordan

23 Samir Lavingia
24 Resident of Manhattan, a Member of CD5 speaking
25 in individual capacity

Jehiah Czebotar
Ten suggestions to make Safer Streets

Michael Streeter
Speaking in Individual Capacity

Paul Krinkler
Speaking in Individual Capacity

David Ganz
Speaking in Individual Capacity

Avery Decker
Submitted Testimony Already Online

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3 Catherine Montesi
4 Engagement Journalist

5 Richard Robbins
6 Member of Manhattan CB7

7 Gretchen Connelie
8 Pedestrian, Cycle Driver

9 Choresh Wald
10 Reread Parts of Testimony given in January of
11 2020

12 Cecil Scheib
13 Resident of Avenue B Open Street in Manhattan

14 Pedro Rodriguez
15 Speaking in individual capacity

16 Michelle Koppersmith
17 Resident of Lower East Side

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3 SERGEANT BRADLEY: PC recording is up.

4 SERGEANT KOTOWKI: Cloud recording started.

5 SERGEANT PEREZ: Backup is rolling.

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Livestream is good.

7 SERGEANT BRADLEY: Sergeant Kotowski, you may
8 begin the opening.

9 SERGEANT KOTOWSKI: Good morning and welcome to
10 today's Remote New York City Council Hearing of the
11 Committee on Transportation joint with Oversight and
12 Investigations.

13 At this time, would Council Staff please turn on
14 their video. Please place electronic devices on
15 vibrate or silent. If you wish to submit testimony,
16 you may do so at testimony@council.nyc.gov. That is
17 testimony@council.nyc.gov. Thank you. Chair, we are
18 ready to begin.

19 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. First of all,
20 I would like to say good morning and thank you to
21 everyone for joining us at the Committee on
22 Transportation and the Committee on Oversight and
23 Investigations for our joint hearing today.

24 First of all, I would like to encourage all New
25 Yorkers to please stay home if they don't have to go
out and to follow the instruction from the Governor

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3 and the Mayor and especially the Office of Emergency
4 Management to be sure that everyone is safe.

5 [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 00:01:21-00:01:48]

6 First, I will turn it over to our Committee
7 Counsel to go over some procedural items and to
8 acknowledge some of my colleague who are here today.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. I am Elliott Lynn,
10 Counsel to the Transportation Committee at the New
11 York City Council. Before we begin, I want to remind
12 everyone that you will be on mute until you are
13 called on to testify. At which time you will be
14 unmuted by the host. Please listen for your name to be
15 called. I will periodically announce who the next
16 panelist will be. During the hearing, if Council
17 Members would like to ask a question, please use the
18 Zoom raise hand function and I will call on you in
19 order.

20 Unless otherwise indicated by the Chair, we will
21 limit Council Member questions to five minutes
22 including answers. Before I turn it back over to the
23 Chair, we have been joined by Chair Gibson and
24 Council Members Ayala, Barron, Cabrera, Diaz, Holden,
25 Kallos, Koo, Rivera and Yeger. Chair Rodriguez.

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3 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. And again,
4 not only to everyone who we see their faces here but
5 also to everyone behind the camera who also make the
6 livestream possible to allow all New Yorkers to
7 follow our hearing.

8 Today, the Committee on Transportation, the
9 Committee on Oversight and Investigations Chaired by
10 our friend Council Member Vanessa Gibson convene
11 remotely to hold an oversight hearing entitled,
12 Rethinking Vision Zero. Stopping illegal parking,
13 reducing reliance on vehicles, and improving
14 pedestrians and cyclists safety. We have the
15 opportunity to attend New York City a municipality.
16 The best policy in regards to make our streets safe
17 for pedestrians and cyclists.

18 We will also be hearing five bills, Intro. 9
19 sponsored by Council Member Inez Barron in relation
20 to requiring the installation of stopping or traffic
21 control signals at every intersection immediately
22 adjacent to any school. Intro. 2073 sponsored by
23 Council Member Ben Kallos in relation to pedestrians
24 crossing guidelines and right of way.

25 Intro. 2201 sponsored by Council Member Carolina
Rivera in relation to motorcyclists and parking

3 meters. Intro. 2417 sponsored by Council Member
4 Holden in relation to prohibiting the sale or
5 distribution of materials that obscure license plates
6 or distort images of license plates.

7 And Intro. 2422 sponsored by myself and introduce
8 at the request of Mayor de Blasio in relation to play
9 by play parking meters. Today's hearing is about
10 taking a comprehensive look at transportation in our
11 city and asking ourselves important questions. Are
12 our streets and sidewalks working for New Yorkers?
13 And are our city government transportation priorities
14 aligned with our goals for the future?

15 In answer to either of these questions is no. I
16 want to hear from the advocate and the administration
17 about what we should do to immediately get us on
18 track. On the issues of safety, it is clear that the
19 safety approach to slowing traffic violence are not
20 enough. We have made a lot of accomplishments with
21 this administration; however, we must acknowledge
22 that there is always room to improve and especially
23 we expect a lot for the new administration when it
24 came to improving safety for pedestrians and
25 cyclists.

3 While it is true that traffic fatalities have
4 fallen from the height of the earlier 1990's.

5 Recently, we have seen a worrying trend in the wrong
6 direction. Last year, the city saw more fatalities
7 on the street than in any year since 2014. The first
8 year of the Vision Zero Initiative.

9 We must take any opportunity we have to make sure
10 that we are making New York City the most pedestrian
11 and cyclist friendly in the whole nation. We must
12 reimagine how our street should look so that they can
13 prioritize the safety of New Yorkers over the
14 convenience of vehicles. Don't forget, in New York
15 City, we are only 1.4 million New Yorkers who have
16 vehicles. More than seven million New Yorkers are
17 pedestrians, are cyclists, using the bus, the ferry,
18 the bicycle, and even most of us who also have
19 vehicles at the same time, we are pedestrians and
20 also, we are cyclists and we also need to see the
21 streets safe.

22 We know the approving approach for creating a
23 safe street because we have seen other cities
24 implement an approach or even reach the goal of zero
25 traffic deaths. We should be looking into increasing
the numbers of calming devices we use improving

3 pedestrian signal timing. Creating more pedestrian
4 island and pedestrian plaza, especially in
5 underserved communities. If we are to make our
6 streets safer and address the critical environmental
7 challenges we face, we can't continue to make changes
8 in a slow piecemeal way and defer to the interest of
9 the minority New Yorkers who drive private vehicles
10 over those who walk and bike and ride buses.

11 And again, this is not about putting one group of
12 New Yorker against the other. We have the
13 opportunity to make a city, a city where we are there
14 those that have vehicles and for those that rely only
15 on public transportation. This isn't only a
16 transportation or environmental issue. It's also an
17 issue of equity. As we know, our working class and
18 immigrant community disproportionately rely on public
19 transit. Biking - (LOST AUDIO 00:08:38-00:08:42)
20 Biking and walking to get around the city in many
21 cases, most New Yorkers who are working class. Most
22 of them Black, Latino, and Asian. They have to
23 travel an hour, an hour and a half to go to work.
24 While we know that the physical challenges to our
25 streets and public space are the key to addressing
this issue, it's also important that we enforce our

3 parking and traffic rules. This rule is set for a
4 reason. So, keep us all safe. Collaboration between
5 city agencies is key.

6 I hope to hear how DOT is working alongside the
7 NYPD to ensure that when a crash occurs, we are
8 taking all the proper measures to prevent another
9 similar crash. I look forward to Chair Gibson
10 speaking next about our investigation into NYPD's
11 approach to illegal parking complaints. Because this
12 is an issue we can't afford to ignore. Illegal
13 parking complaints must be taken seriously by our
14 Police Department.

15 Finally, today we will also hear legislation that
16 seeks to address some of our fundamental street and
17 sidewalk issues. My bill, introduced at the request
18 of Mayor de Blasio will allow the Department of
19 Transportation to transition to play by play parking
20 meters. A system used in many other cities that will
21 streamline paying for parking meters and aid our
22 ability to address placard abuse.

23 I will defer to my colleague to discuss the other
24 bills in details but Intro. 9 would address a street
25 safety around our schools. Intro. 2201 would address
issue regarding motorcycles and parking meters.

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3 Intro. 2417 would address the obscure license plates
4 and Intro. 2073 would address the critical equity
5 issues around jaywalking violations. I look forward
6 to hearing from the Administration and advocates
7 regarding these bills. (SPEAKING IN SPANISH
8 00:11:10-00:11:29).

9 I will now turn it over to my Co-Chair Council
10 Member Gibson.

11 CHAIRPERSON GIBSON: Thank you so much Chair
12 Rodriguez. Good morning everyone. Thank you all for
13 being here with us. Thank you to all my colleagues
14 in government, to the staff, as well as the Committee
15 on Transportation and the Committee on Oversight and
16 Investigation, members of the Administration, members
17 of the public and all of our advocates. Today is a
18 very important hearing and I truly hope everyone is
19 healthy, well and safe.

20 I am Council Member Vanessa Gibson, I represent
21 District 16 in the Bronx and I am proud to serve as
22 Chair of the Committee on Oversight and
23 Investigations and today's hearing entitled,
24 Rethinking Vision Zero, stopping illegal parking,
25 reducing the reliance on vehicles and improving

3 pedestrian and cyclists safety is truly a very
4 important topic.

5 I first want to begin by sending my condolences
6 and prayers of comfort, healing and strength to all
7 those New Yorkers who have been effected, deeply and
8 personally by traffic related crashes and
9 unfortunately fatalities. This past weekend in New
10 York City was no exception. We had a number of
11 fatalities of pedestrians who were killed by drivers
12 in various boroughs including my borough of the
13 Bronx.

14 So, I want to send love and light to all of those
15 families whose lives will never be the same again.
16 And certainly to all the advocates over the years,
17 that we have worked so closely with. Families for
18 Safe Streets, Transportation Alternatives, Streets
19 Log and Placard Abuse. These advocates have come to
20 us on so many occasions just to make sure that we
21 recognize the work that must be done. Many have
22 turned their pain into purpose and action and you
23 have always been a critical part of the work we have
24 done here in the City Council.

25 And I also want to recognize, this is probably
the last joint hearing that I will have with Chair

3 Ydanis Rodriguez and its been 12 years that our
4 colleague has been serving as a member of the body
5 and eight of those years, I've served closely with
6 you when I Chaired the Committee on Public Safety
7 back in 2014 when we rolled out the Vision Zero
8 Initiative. We traveled from every community, every
9 borough to talk about the work of what Vision Zero
10 entailed and what we attempted to do to create safer
11 streets for all pedestrians, for all New Yorkers, all
12 cyclists and drivers and everyone to share our
13 streets.

14 And so, I wanted to take this opportunity in
15 front of all of my colleagues Chair to say thank you
16 for your years of service. We appreciate your
17 commitment, your dedication and your tireless efforts
18 on behalf of not just your district in northern
19 Manhattan but certainly the entire city of New York.

20 So today's hearing is going to focus on my side
21 of the Committee on Oversight and Investigations
22 after a series of investigations during the months of
23 May through July, our City Council Investigators
24 observed instances of illegal parking including the
25 misuse of parking placards and placed complaints in
the city's 311 system.

3 To access how the NYPD handles parking related
4 complaints. The results were very alarming and
5 extremely troubling. In total, our investigators
6 placed 50 complaints. In many cases, the NYPD did
7 not properly respond either driving by without
8 stopping, or briefly stopping at the scene without
9 taking any action. In 14 of those instances, the
10 NYPD closed out cases without taking any action at
11 all but included written response, such as the Police
12 Department responded and determined that no action
13 was necessary or the Police Department responded and
14 took action to fix the condition.

15 However, our investigators waited at the scene
16 until the complaint was closed and we saw no evidence
17 of the NYPD taking any such action. This is
18 concerning for several reasons. When vehicles block
19 bike lanes and bus lanes, pedestrian lanes, traffic
20 becomes disruptive. And streets can become unsafe
21 for everyone. If illegal parking is not enforced, it
22 will continue unaddressed and unabated.

23 When placard misuse is unaddressed, it
24 perpetuates the perception that the rules do not
25 apply equally to everyone. Most troubling however is
that the NYPD appears to be misleading the public

3 about its traffic enforcement efforts by filing
4 inaccurate complaint responses in the city's 311
5 system. An observation of this phenomenon is not
6 exclusive to this investigation. The Twitter Account
7 Placard abuse, which many of us are very much aware
8 of has countless testimonials and stories of the
9 NYPD's mishandling 311 complaints.

10 And just last week, we saw the Streets Block
11 published a comprehensive article identifying many of
12 these similar issues. On October 12th, Speaker Corey
13 Johnson, Chair Ydanis Rodriguez and myself, sent a
14 letter to the NYPD regarding the City Council's 311
15 investigation that took place this past summer.
16 Including a request for detailed information
17 regarding the most troubling 311 complaint responses
18 identified during our investigation. Today, both
19 Committees seeks to further understand the NYPD's
20 protocol and guidelines for handling 311 parking
21 related complaints and determine how the department
22 intends to remedy this troubling situation.

23 And certainly in a city that continues to grow in
24 places that we understand where we are having a wave
25 of gun violence and other forms of violence, we know
that there are many priorities the department has.

3 But I also recognize that parking abuse is equally as
4 important when you think about New Yorkers safety and
5 their ability to travel to and from. Our police
6 precincts are a part of our communities and we want
7 to make sure that everyone is a good neighbor. Just
8 as we ask of our schools, our health centers, our
9 libraries, and all of our institutions and small
10 businesses to be a good neighbor for the betterment
11 of themselves, their customers, their clients and all
12 of our constituents.

13 And so, the purpose of this hearing today is to
14 understand what we're doing to address these 311
15 calls because if we address it now, we can further
16 prevent any misunderstanding from happening down the
17 line. And so, I want to thank the Committee, the
18 Investigative Committee for O&I did a tremendous job
19 over the summer going out and really looking at all
20 of these 311 calls.

21 I want to recognize the team of Ed Atkin, Emily
22 Rooney, Johnathan Mosarano(SP?), Justin Kramer,
23 Samina Fernandez(SP?), Pearl Moore, Junita John(SP?),
24 Zack Mayor and Noah Meixler. Thank you to the Staff
25 for your amazing work. I look forward to our
continued conversation and I want to also thank my

3 colleagues for joining us today and thank you Chair.

4 And now, I turn it back over to you to continue our
5 hearing this morning. Thank you so much.

6 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Chairperson Gibson, the
7 time goes so fast. Now I have a lot of grey hair and
8 look like my father that saw me winning this race in
9 2009 and swear in his apartment before I got talking
10 with her. So, for me, you know I can say as I said
11 yesterday as we come out from this in Rikers Island,
12 you know still those images are in our brain. That
13 you know there's a lot of work that we have to do in
14 transportation but also in criminal justice but I
15 know that having you as a former Chairman, also the
16 Public Safety and now Council Member Adams, make a
17 big difference to give dignity and respect to those
18 individuals that we serve, who deserve a second
19 change.

20 And we as a city also should learn as we have to
21 establish the pipeline of people dying because of
22 crashes. We also have to establish the pipeline of
23 people in Rikers Island, most of them, they are the
24 poorest New Yorkers. So, you know I know that we're
25 going to be doing a lot of work in the new role that

3 you will have as a Borough President, so you know
4 you're having a great honor too.

5 With that, thank you. With that, now, I would
6 like to - before we hear the administration now, I'm
7 going to back to the Counsel also to acknowledge and
8 call some of the colleagues that also are the main
9 prime of the bills, so that they get to say a few
10 words.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: First, I'd like to
12 acknowledge we've also been joined by Council Members
13 Brooks-Powers, Chin and Reynoso.

14 Uhm, first, we will hear from Council Member
15 Kallos. Council Member Kallos.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Uh, thank you to Chair
17 Ydanis Rodriguez for your eight years of leadership
18 on transportation. Our city's transportation
19 streetscape and our streets have completely changed
20 under your leadership and we couldn't be better for
21 it.

22 I'm here to speak on a bill that I wish I had
23 thought of but I didn't. It was an originally
24 authored and introduced by my good friend and
25 colleague, a former colleague Costa Constantinides.
Introduction Number 2073 would allow pedestrians to

3 legally cross the street outside of a marked
4 crosswalk, as long as the pedestrian yields to
5 vehicular traffic. I know you're like wait, I didn't
6 even this was already, that this was a law. Then it
7 would also remove civil and criminal penalties for
8 the offense commonly known as jaywalking, which is
9 when somebody illegally crosses a street. Again,
10 something most people don't even know. In New York
11 City jaywalking shouldn't be a crime. In New York
12 City, jaywalking is a way of life and you don't have
13 to take my word for it. United States Supreme Court
14 Justice Sonya Sotomayor once wrote, "I'm a New Yorker
15 and I jaywalk with the best of them." And I don't
16 think that a Supreme Court Justice for the highest
17 court in the land should be criminalized in any way,
18 let alone any New Yorker.

19 I don't even know how many times I jaywalked just
20 this morning on the way home from dropping my
21 daughter off at 3K. But I live in a neighborhood
22 where enforcement is nonexistent. In 2019, of the
23 397 tickets issued for illegal or unsafe crossing,
24 aka jaywalking, 90 percent were issued to Black and
25 Hispanic New Yorkers as reported by Streets Blog in
January 2020.

3 40 percent of all the tickets were issued in
4 three precincts in the Bronx where almost every
5 person fined was Black or Hispanic. In Brooklyn,
6 Sunset Park and Red Hook neighborhoods, Black and
7 Hispanic residents receive 65 percent of the illegal
8 crossing tickets but make up only 33 percent of the
9 population within the districts precinct. Nearly
10 half of the city, 77 Police Precincts didn't issue an
11 illegal crossing ticket in 2019. There were no
12 jaywalking tickets issued in 2019 by any of the
13 precincts that cover the neighborhoods that I
14 represent. Yet the NYPD maintains that there is
15 somehow no racial bias in issuing tickets. This
16 jaywalking law was first introduced in 1958 in New
17 York City. In the last few years, the NYPD began
18 cracking down on Black and Brown pedestrians crossing
19 the middle of the street and issuing fines of up to
20 \$250.

21 Introduction 2073 will end arbitrary enforcement
22 overwhelming placed against Black and Hispanic New
23 Yorkers and pave the way for pedestrian friendly
24 streets. I look forward to hearing this testimony
25 today and I hope you all join in supporting this
legislation.

3 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Next, we'll hear
4 from Council Member Rivera. Council Member Rivera.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Good morning everyone.
6 Thank you for being here, for taking the time to join
7 our Committees and I want to thank my fearless Chairs
8 and my colleagues who I love and respect very, very,
9 very much and I learned a great deal. Thank you for
10 bringing us together today.

11 Of course, thank you to the Chairs again. Thank
12 you to the Committee for holding this important
13 oversight hearing on Vision Zero and the COVID-19
14 pandemic has changed the way New Yorkers use their
15 streets. One scene is primarily four cars and
16 vehicular transit. We now hear from families across
17 the five boroughs who have come to value our streets
18 as additional open space to live, play and thrive.

19 As we continue to reimagine the possibilities of
20 our shared spaces, it's also critical that we do so
21 through an equitable lens. My bill that you're
22 hearing today, Intro. 2201, is a direct result of
23 ample feedback and suggestions I have received from
24 motorcyclists and transit advocates on how we can
25 continue to build a city that is supportive of all
modes of transportation.

3 Given the urgency demanded by the climate crisis,
4 we have to embrace policies and changes that reduce
5 widespread car dependency and make it easy and
6 seamless for New Yorkers to seek and utilize
7 alternative transportation.

8 Intro. 2201, like many climate and transportation
9 infrastructure efforts, is a relatively small ask
10 with a potential for enormous impact. Motorcycle
11 equity so rarely factors into our legislative
12 conversations surrounding transportation but they are
13 also used heavily in our city's immigrant communities
14 and often offer fuel economy approaching 100 miles
15 per gallon.

16 Currently with very few parking options designed
17 for their chosen mode of transit, many motorcyclists
18 face tickets and allegations of parking violations at
19 a greater rate. And a hampered by difficult systems
20 of dispute. My bill would allow owners and operators
21 of motorcycles to digitally submit photographic
22 evidence that parking was paid for at the time of an
23 alleged violation in an effort to alleviate this undo
24 burden.

25 I encourage you to support this legislation which
represents an important step toward making our city

3 accommodating to all forms of alternative
4 transportation. Thank you so very much for the time
5 to speak.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Okay, next, we'll
7 hear from Council Member Holden. Council Member
8 Holden.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Good morning. Thank you
10 Chairs Rodriguez and Gibson. I'd like to also thank
11 Chair Rodriguez, Speaker Johnson and Jason Goldman
12 for advancing Intro. 2417 so quickly, and all my
13 fellow co-sponsors in the Council who assisted in the
14 effort.

15 Throughout the City, scofflaws are using products
16 that the distort or hide license plates. So, not
17 only will my bill strengthen the law against using
18 these products but this bill will also prohibit
19 businesses from selling these products as well.

20 I have already met with Amazon which is working
21 on getting sellers of license plate covers off their
22 site. However, we need to give agencies more tools
23 to go after the people who profit from selling
24 illegal products like this.

25 So, those who use these devices put pedestrians,
cyclists, and other motorists in danger. And I've

1 seen this first hand recently driving in my district.

2 A black SUV went against traffic to an intersection
3 directly in front of me, closed the shutter on his
4 license plate and proceeded to run the red light.
5

6 While traveling around the city, I've seen many
7 vehicles driving with film on their license plates or
8 using other methods to obscure their license plates.
9 Additionally, this bill would create a civil penalty
10 of at least \$300 for the first violation and at least
11 \$500 on the subsequent violations. I think we all
12 know that if you're hiding your plate, you're
13 probably committing other crimes as well.

14 So, again, I want to thank everyone who helped
15 move this bill so quickly. I look forward to today's
16 hearing and passing this important legislation.
17 Thank you so much Chairs.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Okay, now we'll
19 hear from Council Member Barron. Council Member
20 Barron.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Yes, thank you so much. I
22 am here to talk about the bill that I am sponsoring
23 Intro. 9 and I want to thank the Chair for moving
24 this quickly to have a hearing. Although the bill
25 has been around a long time. Remember the number is

3 nine. And I also want to thank Speaker Johnson. I
4 want to thank Jason Goldman and Jeff Baker as well as
5 Committee Members who were involved in getting a
6 hearing for this bill. I want to again thank the
7 Chair for having this hearing.

8 I also want to acknowledge Chair Gibson who
9 served with me in the assembly when I first
10 introduced this concept back in 2000 and I think it
11 was nine. As many of you know, most of my career, 36
12 years was spent with the Board of Education in New
13 York City. And I'm always concerned about safety,
14 particularly that of young children. The bill Intro.
15 9 says that at any intersection of a block where
16 there is a school, there should be a traffic signal
17 or an all way stop sign. A traffic signal or an all
18 way stop sign.

19 Simple, straight, direct, that's all it does. It
20 requires the city to make sure that every
21 intersection on a block where there is a school, has
22 a traffic sign or a stop signal. It was first - I
23 tried to get it passed in the assembly, wasn't able
24 to do that and brought it them to the City Council
25 and it's interesting, in January 2020, Mayor de
Blasio as a part of his Vision Zero program,

3 initiative, talked about a pilot, which was exactly
4 this concept of safety device stop sign traffic
5 signal at intersections where there are school.

6 So, it's simple, straight forward, to the point.

7 I do want to also call the names of Patience Heaven

8 Albert and Payson Lot, two young children, Payson was

9 seven. A young boy who was seven and Patience was

10 younger, who was ten killed in February on their way

11 to school, struck by vehicles at intersections. And

12 we can't do enough to ensure the safety of our

13 children as they are on their way to school and I

14 hope that my colleagues who have not signed on will

15 sign on to this bill. All it takes is the will and

16 the money to make it happen.

17 So, if you have not yet signed onto Intro. 9,

18 easy to remember, just one digit Intro. 9. I do

19 encourage you to do that and again, I want to thank

20 everyone for their support and making this happen.

21 Thank you.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair Rodriguez.

23 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you and the rest of

24 the team for the great job that you are doing. Now,

25 we're going to be having Family for Safe Street, to

3 be the first one. And then we will hear from the
4 Administration.

5 I got to say thank you to Family for Safe Street
6 for being able to turn the pain that they have for
7 the loved one that they had lost and fight for their
8 name and under their name for future New Yorkers or
9 visitors that could be in crashes, hit and run and
10 other way or how pedestrian and cyclist lost their
11 life. So, again thank you for your leadership, your
12 guidance and we are here to be working together as
13 partners.

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, our first witnesses
15 will be Liza Martinez, Chris Brimer, and Irma
16 Rosenblatt. Liza, you may begin your testimony when
17 you're ready.

18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

19 LIZA MARTINEZ: Okay, hello everyone. Good
20 morning, thank you all first of all, thank you for
21 allowing me and the other members of Families for
22 Safe Streets to speak first today. It is so
23 important that everyone in this hearing and beyond
24 hear what I have to say. That you know the torture
25 pain and heartache this epidemic of traffic crashes
is causing.

3 My name is Liza Martinez and on September 27,
4 2019, my dear, sweet, beautiful, healthy mother Aida
5 Martinez, which I wouldn't want to show you her on a
6 cardboard but uhm, there she is. She became the
7 177th New Yorker 27 cyclists to be killed in a
8 traffic crash that year. Aida was an amazing,
9 devoted mother to three of us, a proud grandmother to
10 our seven - uhm, her grandchildren, a loving wife of
11 almost 50 years but didn't make it. A dear, dear
12 friend to many to count. She was our family
13 matriarch and a connector, she brought everyone
14 together. She loved to spend time on the Boardwalk
15 near my parents home in the Rockaways and she danced.
16 She loved to dance.

17 She was the love of my fathers life and the two
18 of them had a marriage that was envy and admiration
19 of all who knew them.

20 She moved to New York from Puerto Rico. My
21 father from Dominican Republic uhm, and they started
22 a family business, a hardware store in Bedford-
23 Stuyvesant. That was 40 years there and put me and
24 my siblings through college. She was two steps away
25 from completing the American dream. She had just
bought her retirement home one year prior to her

3 killing. And uh, but they never made that happen. I
4 am so sorry. But that dreadful evening after she and
5 my dad biked to the Rockaway Pier to enjoy the sunset
6 only ten blocks from their home, she was struck by
7 and ambulette, private and stolen from us. We are
8 all adrift without her. Two years later this month
9 is impossible.

10 Seeing my broken father reliving the crash, her
11 cremation, her birthday, all within a few weeks. She
12 was only 66, so she was a baby and we're all broken
13 two years later. There was nothing we could do to
14 make my father feel better and to learn that New York
15 City is on track to have the deadliest year since
16 Vision Zero began is like pouring salt on all of our
17 wounds.

18 We feel like she was murdered by a weapon and a
19 dangerous road by leaders who have let my family and
20 too many others down. As I shared in my previous
21 testimony, whoever was responsible for making sure
22 our systems work is failing now. How can our city be
23 so unsafe when there are known solutions? We should
24 not have to live in the most beautiful city and fear
25 for our lives each day. There should be a way for us
to safely coexist, cars, people, children, getting to

3 work, getting to school. People say the best part of
4 New York City is its people and my mother was one of
5 the best. Shouldn't the main responsibility of our
6 Mayor and our public servants is to keep our people
7 alive. How can our city be letting 1,800 people die
8 when we should be getting closer and closer to zero
9 to zero traffic deaths. I am here today for you and
10 your family, that you never have to stand here to
11 speak about your mother, spouse, child or friend.
12 And I beg of you, which is not easy, please show your
13 leadership and take action now.

14 I urge you to implement without delay the known
15 measures it will take to keep New York safe. Vision
16 Zero can work but must get back on track. New York
17 City trucks and large vehicles, like the ambulette
18 that killed my mother, should be enabled to speed
19 down our streets. New York City should be a leader
20 in the street design and in the car and truck safety
21 standards. A photo was published in the Rockaway
22 Times of my mother's ghost bike, with the beautiful
23 decorations we added on the two year anniversary and
24 in this picture, which is included, you can see an
25 NYPD truck parked in the bike lane.

3 I cringe and cry knowing a cyclist would have to
4 go around that truck or just be killed right there in
5 the same spot that my mother was killed in the
6 street. There are so many proven solution both in
7 the bills discussed today. Thank you all for all
8 your hard work and dedication, like Intro. 2159. I
9 urge rapid passage of this bill and share more in my
10 written testimony about this. We deserve it,
11 everyone deserves it. You must get Vision Zero back
12 on track, and so that no one has to experience this
13 type of heartache. Thank you, sorry.

14 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Liza, I'm sorry about
15 what your going through. (SPEAKING IN SPANISH
16 00:37:49-00:37:51).

17 LIZA MARTINEZ: Uh, okay, (SPEAKING IN SPANISH
18 00:37:55-00:38:05]. Just like you Councilman. I
19 hear you talking about your father and now I have my
20 father here. (SPEAKING IN SPANISH 00:38:14-
21 00:38:23). My parents survived the crack epidemic
22 but my mother didn't survive traffic violence.
23 (SPEAKING IN SPANISH 00:38:30-00:38:42). Tell the
24 New Yorkers because like Councilman has said, we are
25 the majority is the pedestrians. (SPEAKING IN SPANISH
00:38:49-00:38:54). And I grew up American because

3 my father but uh, you know, this was their heart and
4 dream here and they built a whole life here. And
5 they weren't able to enjoy the retirement and now I
6 watch my father die, now even being alive. A young
7 man now only as 70 now without his wife and he, my
8 father watched my mother - my father was only a few
9 feet ahead in front of the bicycle and my mother was
10 killed right in the bike lane.

11 So, if you see the picture, so this is real
12 things here. I'm not just giving you tears; I'm
13 giving you a picture of -there's the vehicle that's
14 parked in the actual bike lane where my mother was
15 killed right there. My mother's bicycle was here and
16 it's impossible for someone to now cross or have a
17 bicycle lane that was design. So, instead of us
18 transporting bodies, we should be making sure that
19 these designs are made and thought of, how are they
20 going to work and then also enforce it. Like with
21 the help of all of those. My mother died right
22 around the corner from the Police Department and the
23 Fire Truck. No one was able to do it because of the
24 design. Sorry, my son finds high screen.

25 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony.
Next, we will hear from Chris Brimer. Chris.

3 CHRIS BRIMER: Can you hear me?

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes.

5 CHRIS BRIMER: Great, great, uhm, this has been
6 an extremely emotional week for me. A few days ago,
7 I watched as a ghost bike was chained near the
8 location where my husband Jeff Linton was killed.
9 For those of you who know about ghost bikes, they are
10 bicycles that are painted white to symbolize the
11 violent deaths of cyclists.

12 They are constant reminders of how paralysis it
13 is to negotiate the streets of this city. Even
14 before my husband was killed, it put a pain in my
15 heart to see one. I never dreamed that on Saturday I
16 would be placing flowers next the one 86 and Central
17 Park West, where my husband of 44 years was killed.

18 Jeff was killed three months ago. On June 29th he
19 was coming home for dinner from his office at
20 Midtown. He was riding in the bike lane as he was
21 crossing the intersection with a green light, he was
22 rundown by a mail truck. One of the wheels of the
23 truck crushed my husband's chest, while the other one
24 crushed his vintage racing bike. So far no charges
25 have been filed. It is difficult knowing that he met
such a brutal and senseless end.

3 My husband was an amazing man. He was incredibly
4 intelligent and active. He earned a pilots license
5 before he got a driver's license. He had a sense of
6 humor I have ever heard. At 71, working in the
7 advertising business and a history that puts a
8 premium on youth and wit, he was still a major
9 producer at one of the city's best advertising
10 agencies.

11 It is impossible to communicate how much his
12 death has effected his family, his office and his
13 community. My husband's death was preventable.
14 1,800 people have died since Mayor de Blasio
15 announced Vision Zero. Please help end the carnage
16 cyclists and pedestrians on our street. Please make
17 motorists responsible for the deaths they cause.
18 Please help the trend toward more traffic violence.
19 You all have the power to help. Please vote for
20 these measures.

21 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony.
23 Next, we will hear from Irma Rosenblatt. Irma.

24 IRMA ROSENBLATT: Hi, good morning.

25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

3 IRMA ROSENBLATT: My name is Irma Rosenblatt and
4 I am Member of Families for Save Streets. My mother
5 Ida, on March 24, 2014, was on her way from her
6 meditation class at the Riverdale Senior Center in
7 the Bronx when she was struck by a speeding SUV
8 making a left turn. She was so severely injured that
9 she lost consciousness and after two long grueling
10 days, she died in the hospital.

11 She was a vital, energetic mother, grandmother
12 and great grandmother or abuela as you would say.

13 Uhm, she was involved in many activities such as
14 yoga, tai chi and she was very active on the Social
15 Action Committee at the Center in addition.

16 She advocated for services to the senior
17 community and often went to City Hall to protest and
18 have her voice heard. She was well known by members
19 of the New York City Council, New York State Senate
20 and Assembly and never hesitated to go their offices
21 when she had something to say.

22 Needless to say, she is sorely missed, not only
23 by our family but by the community. My grandson
24 Jacob, her great grandson always talks about his GG
25 and said, she is with the earth and the sky watching
over us.

3 There is no question if my mother were alive, she
4 would be at hearings such as this today. She would
5 be outraged and appalled that 1,800 people have been
6 killed while our city has been implementing Vision
7 Zero. The 1,800 families our pain and heartache. As
8 a member of Families for Safe Streets, I know that it
9 is not because Vision Zero is failing. It is because
10 we need to be doing more and without delay please.

11 New York City has been leading the way on Vision
12 Zero. We have passed historic legend, thanks to this
13 Council. But precious lives are at stake,
14 communities are stake. We cannot read anymore
15 headlines about seniors like my mother, babies like
16 Apaline or teachers like Matthew or anyone sacrificed
17 to a city which prioritizes cars over people. This
18 is an epidemic. The year my mother was killed, that
19 was 2014, was when Vision Zero was supposed to be
20 implemented. 1,800 is a far cry from zero.

21 Please use all the power you have in the City
22 Council to pass the laws being discussed today,
23 particularly 2159 and 2282 and many more needed laws
24 that aren't even on today's calendar, which have been
25 included in my written remarks. You have the power
to prevent this from continuing to happen to others.

2 In memory of my mother and too many others, I thank
3 you and this is a picture of my mother.

4 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: So sorry.

5 IRMA ROSENBLATT: She was in uhm her - City
6 Council was District 11 and I live in District 2.

7 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: So, we are really sorry.
8 It's you know like, unfortunately this is like a
9 story of [INAUDIBLE 00:46:43]. You know there was
10 another person killed in Riverdale less than two
11 months ago too.

12 IRMA ROSENBLATT: Yes.

13 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: So, so, you know as
14 someone that also spends a lot of time not only in my
15 district but also going to Riverdale. I also know
16 like you know this is a citywide epidemic that we
17 have to end. So, thank you for being here with us,
18 following the legacy of your mother. Always fighting
19 for justice. We need to make the streets safe.
20 Thank you.

21 IRMA ROSENBLATT: Thank you Councilman Rodriguez
22 for everything you've done for us.

23 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. I will now
24 have the Committee Counsel call on the Administration
25 to testify. The Administrator or I know that you

3 know Commissioner Hank has always been a partner and
4 also he joined. All that is his responsibility as a
5 Commissioner and as I have said before, it's not
6 about an individual, this is about changing the
7 culture. That the culture that we have inherited in
8 our city. That for many decades, people believe that
9 the streets belong to car owners. However, the
10 streets have to be shared and the priority must be
11 given to the majority who are the cyclists and the
12 pedestrians. Thank you, with that we'll bring it
13 back to you.

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Chair. We've also
15 been joined by Council Members Miller, Levin and
16 Levine.

17 I will now call on the following panelists to
18 testify from NYPD Chief of Transportation Kim
19 Royster, Deputy Chief Isa Abbassi, and Director
20 Michael Clarke. And from the Department of
21 Transportation, Commissioner Hank Gutman, Deputy
22 Commissioner for Traffic Operations Joshua Benson,
23 Director of Safety Policy Julia Kite-Laidlaw and
24 Assistant Commissioner for Intergovernmental and
25 Community Affairs Rebecca Zack.

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3 I will read the affirmation and then call on each
4 individual to confirm the response allowed for the
5 record. Please raise your right hands. Do you
6 affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing
7 but the truth in your testimony before this Committee
8 and to respond honestly to Council Member questions?
9 Chief Royster?

10 KIM ROYSTER: I do.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Deputy Chief Abbassi?

12 ISA ABBASSI: I do.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Director Clarke?

14 MICHAEL CLARKE: I do.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Commissioner Gutman?

16 HANK GUTMAN: I do.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Deputy Commissioner Benson?

18 JOSHUA BENSON: I do.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Director Kite-Laidlaw

20 JULIA KITE-LAIDLAW: I do.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: And Assistant Commissioner
22 Zack?

23 REBECCA ZACK: I do.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. You may begin
25 your testimony when ready.

3 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: And before they begin, I
4 want to acknowledge also that I know Vision Zero
5 would not be possible without the Chief of
6 Transportation and the previous one that's also DOT.
7 So, I know that this is one area where the day by day
8 collaboration between DOT and NYPD have been very
9 important to advance the effort to save lives. And
10 even though as I said before, there's a lot more,
11 much more that has to be done.

12 I also want to acknowledge the effort and the
13 hard work of the men and women in the NYPD led by the
14 Chief of Transit and also or Transportation but also
15 by DOT Commissioner. Thank you.

16 HANK GUTMAN: Thank you. Thank you Chair
17 Rodriguez. Good morning Chair Rodriguez and Chair
18 Gibson, and members of the Transportation and
19 Oversight and Investigation Committees. I am Hank
20 Gutman, Commissioner of the New York City Department
21 of Transportation. With me today are Joshua Benson,
22 our Deputy Commissioner for Traffic Operations,
23 Rebecca Zack, Assistant Commissioner for
24 Intergovernmental and Community Affairs, and Julia
25 Kite-Laidlaw, Director of Safety Policy.

3 I am honored to be testifying alongside our
4 partners in the effort to make Vision Zero a reality
5 and make Zero, Zero. The Chief of Transportation Kim
6 Royster, her Deputy Chief Isa Abbassi, and Director
7 of Legislative Affairs Michael Clarke from the New
8 York City Police Department. I want to thank you for
9 inviting us to testify here today on these very
10 important topics on behalf of Mayor de Blasio.
11 Before turning to my prepared testimony, I just want
12 to say a word about Families for Safe Streets. Every
13 time I have heard them speak or met with them or been
14 in their presence, one cannot help but be moved. I
15 want to thank them for turning their pain into
16 action. We could not agree more with your objective.
17 You remind us that these are not numbers. We always
18 talk about numbers, these are not numbers, these are
19 people, real people with lives and families and their
20 loss is real and that's something that we must always
21 remember and it must be our motivation to do more and
22 to do better.

23 So, I want to thank you for your bravery and
24 being here today and once more sharing your painful
25 and personal stories with all of us. You really are
our inspiration.

3 There is no question that this has been a very
4 challenging, I would say disappointing year for
5 Vision Zero. Since the beginning of the COVID-19
6 pandemic in March of 2020, we have seen changes in
7 driver behavior and crash patterns that have been
8 echoed across the country. This is not unique to New
9 York. We've checked with others; this is a
10 nationwide trend. And unfortunately it hasn't abated
11 as the city has reopened and traffic returns to our
12 street. We are still plagued by what I refer to as a
13 second pandemic. A pandemic of speeding and reckless
14 and irresponsible driving and behavior by those
15 operating the motor vehicles we've been hearing about
16 today.

17 When the streets emptied during, when New York
18 was on Pause, the drivers who remained on the road
19 had more opportunities to speed. But even as traffic
20 volumes have returned to approximate pre-pandemic
21 levels, we are still seeing many crashes involving
22 unsafe speed and overall recklessness, as well as an
23 increased number of hit-and-runs, which can conceal
24 other illegal behaviors like driving under the
25 influence.

3 Another unfortunate and persistent pattern is
4 drivers who continue to drive with a suspended
5 licenses. This was demonstrated tragically on
6 September 11th in the crash that killed three-month-
7 old Apolline and injured her parents who were doing
8 nothing other than walking on the sidewalk. The
9 driver was operating on a suspended license. He had
10 a long record of offences. He shouldn't have been on
11 the road; his car should not have been on the road.
12 But these suspensions often have no effect on the
13 drivers and they go out and drive betting that they
14 won't get caught.

15 2020 was also a record high year for motorcyclist
16 fatalities and the numbers remain similarly high this
17 year. Drilling down into the data, as of the end of
18 September, three-quarters of motorcyclists who were
19 killed on the roads this year were not properly
20 licensed. Moreover, 70 percent of the motorcyclists
21 who were killed, were riding unregistered motorcycles
22 or had unknown registrations. Many of these crashes
23 didn't even involve other motor vehicles, they were
24 the result of a driver speeding and losing control,
25 often hitting a fixed object. This proliferation of
new forms of motorized vehicle was something that we

3 applaud and commend as an alternative to the use of
4 the private automobile raises safety issues and
5 regulatory issues that we must address as one of the
6 pieces of legislation proposed before you today
7 recognizes.

8 Finally, the ecosystem of road users in 2021 is
9 much different from what it was when Vision Zero
10 began in 2014. We have these new modes of mobility
11 that now exist and are used widely, such as e-
12 scooters and e-mopeds. The number of for-hire
13 vehicles has skyrocketed and has been previously
14 referenced food delivery apps that now dominate the
15 market push for faster and faster work, leading
16 delivery workers to face more pressure and use more
17 motorized vehicles. And we are concerned deeply
18 about protecting their safety and the safety of
19 others as they serve as effectively first responders,
20 essential workers, who feed us and upon whom we
21 become more and more dependent over time beginning
22 with the pandemic.

23 Changing the conditions on our roads and new
24 travel patterns on our streets, many of which spiked
25 in the face of the pandemic, make our work to enhance
safety on the city's streets more challenging and

3 critical than ever. And also more important, we need
4 additional tools to double down on Vision Zero.

5 Despite the many operational challenges posed by the
6 pandemic, DOT sustained and expanded our Vision Zero
7 work. We delivered record bike lanes, protected and
8 conventional, bus priority, and safety projects. All
9 of which I'm happy to talk about in response to

10 questions. We relaunched our public education
11 campaign and doubled its budget. For those of you
12 who were here when I testified in the past in the
13 budget cycle, uhm, we were able with the Council's
14 assistance to double the amount of money we were
15 spending on education and we could always use more.

16 We relaunched our public education campaign. We
17 served schools and senior centers with our safety
18 education programs, we've distributed helmets to new
19 riders, and created an online bike-safety skills
20 course. And we kept our automated enforcement not
21 only running but expanding, with over 1,640 speed
22 cameras, making the program one of the, if not the
23 largest programs of its kind. And this automated
24 enforcement is a critically important tool.

25 But, after almost eight years of Vision Zero, far
too many drivers are driving with suspended licenses,

3 far too many motorcyclists are riding unlicensed and
4 without registration or without basic safety training
5 I would add. And far too many of both continue to
6 speed and drive recklessly.

7 We know the tools of Vision Zero work and we will
8 continue to double down, but the DOT cannot do it
9 alone. We're not an enforcement agency. We can't
10 apprehend dangerous drivers and seize vehicles. And
11 for Vision Zero to truly succeed, as the Mayor has
12 said, we must expand the tools we have available to
13 get repeated, reckless drivers and the most dangerous
14 vehicles off the road, a need only heightened by the
15 pandemic.

16 We are resuming implementation of the Dangerous
17 Vehicle Abatement Program, which was delayed during
18 the pandemic, due to resource constraints but we are
19 now on track to have it launched and fully
20 operational this fall, which is exactly as I said
21 when I testified before one of these committees in
22 May. We will be starting classes next month. The
23 first notices are going out to drivers next week and
24 we will be publishing draft rules, we published draft
25 rules for comment last month and we held the public
required rule making.

3 So, the steps to implement the program are all in
4 place and it will happen this fall as we said. But
5 as the Mayor has said, the DVAP program has
6 limitations and much more is needed. Thus, we are
7 calling on the State to do more and the legislature
8 to enact new laws to give the City greater authority
9 to use automated enforcement, all of which would help
10 us combat dangerous driving.

11 We look forward to working with our partners in
12 Albany to address this urgent need and we urge all of
13 you, all of you as advocates to help in that
14 endeavor. Because the speed cameras work. We know
15 our speed camera program works to deter speeding. We
16 published a report just last week outlining the
17 results. We saw a 72 percent decline in speeding, 72
18 percent at locations where cameras are installed but
19 we must go further.

20 In 2020, nearly 30 percent of all fatalities
21 happened in school zones where the DOT has speed
22 cameras, but they occurred in the evenings and on
23 weekends when by state law, we do not have the
24 authority to operate the cameras. I mean, think
25 about this for a moment. The cameras work. The
statistics show it. But by virtue of the state

3 legislature not having given the City of New York the
4 authority to use available technology to enforce its
5 own laws on its own streets to make its own people
6 safe, 30 percent of the fatalities occur within the
7 reach of these cameras during hours when we are not
8 allowed to use them. Imagine uh, we continue to echo
9 the Mayor's call on the state legislature to allow
10 our cameras to operate 24/7 and Senator Gounardes and
11 Assembly Member Glick have pending legislation that
12 would do exactly that. Again, we want your help in
13 advocating for that. It will save lives. We also
14 call for - this is already called for in
15 Transportation Alternatives and Families for Safe
16 Streets' Crash Victims Rights and Safety Act package.
17 We support the package. We want the state
18 legislature to adopt the new measures. And we'd also
19 like the authority to pilot other kinds of key
20 safety-related automatic traffic and parking
21 enforcement.

22 When we hear about people parking in bike lanes
23 and in bus lanes and requiring cyclists to veer
24 dangerously out into the street. We need better
25 tools for enforcing those rules. We need them and
they're available. And for the drivers who

3 accumulate excessive violations from our automated
4 enforcement cameras, the \$50 penalty is not enough to
5 change behavior. We need escalating fines for
6 speeding and for red light camera violations, leading
7 up to and including registration suspension for
8 chronic repeat offenders. And again, suspending a
9 registration without – but doesn't get the trick
10 done. We need the state to strengthen the penalty
11 provisions of applicable law regarding these
12 violations.

13 Recently, I sent a letter to the New York State
14 DMV proposing strategies to ensure that those with
15 suspended licenses do not continue to drive. It
16 sounds simple, we ought to be able to do it. And
17 this is all the more important because recent reforms
18 have narrowed license suspension largely away from
19 financial or debt-related reasons to just focus on
20 key safety-related issues. And we support changes to
21 the law to increase penalties when you injure or kill
22 while driving on a suspended license. That ought to
23 make what is already a very serious offense even more
24 serious when you shouldn't be on the road in the
25 first place.

3 Turning briefly to the legislation before the
4 Council moving from state to city. Intro. 2422
5 introduced by Chair Rodriguez at the request of the
6 Mayor. We thank the Chair, well let me step back.
7 It's been a pleasure working with the Chair this
8 year. We've had some fun outings for open streets,
9 safe streets. Some landmark legislative signing on
10 Dikeman soon I hope to be renamed. You may have
11 noticed Mr. Chair there's a sign behind me.

12 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

13 HANK GUTMAN: I mean we appreciate all of your
14 fine efforts and its been a joy working with you uhm,
15 this past year and we want to thank you for
16 introducing this legislation. What this allows us to
17 do and you can read the details in my written
18 testimony. This allows us to get into the 21st
19 Century in terms of parking enforcement. It will
20 make the system better, more efficient, more
21 effective and far better for everyone. So, we
22 appreciate and look forward to the Council's prompt
23 approval I hope to legislation authorizing us to
24 switch from pay by plate to pay by plate from pay and
25 display. This really is a great improvement and
again, we thank you. We thank you for doing that.

3 2073, Intro. 2073, which would eliminate
4 penalties for jaywalking. We appreciate and agree
5 with the Council's goals as reflected in this bill.
6 It is our mission to make walking safer, to make the
7 city a friendlier place for pedestrian and cyclists
8 and people dining outdoors. We've reclaimed the
9 streets; I mean that's the whole point of most of
10 what we're doing. We are reclaiming the streets for
11 the people and we want them to be able to use them
12 safely and that's means taking away space from cars,
13 private cars and changing their use by creating
14 attractive alternatives. The criminal treatment of
15 jaywalking is excessive and wrong and as the Council
16 Member explained, is applied in discriminatory
17 fashion, which is again another reason to eliminate
18 it.

19 Again, I'm not suggesting that we don't want
20 pedestrians to be careful crossing the street. For
21 heaven sake, we do. Put down the cell phone, watch
22 what you're doing, be defensive, look at your
23 environment. But the current approach to jaywalking
24 is wrong and we're happy to support - uhm, happy to
25 support and work with the Council Member and the
Council on this legislation.

3 As to Intro. 9, requiring stop signs or traffic
4 signals near schools. Again, I would like to thank
5 the Council Member uh, for introducing this
6 legislation. We are in violent agreement with its
7 objectives. There is no higher priority than making
8 the school and the areas around school safe. And we
9 are actively pursuing all available means to do so.
10 And again, the Mayor, has committed to 1,000 safety
11 improvements at school, including stop signs and
12 traffic signals where appropriate. This is a
13 commitment we are on track to deliver. It should be
14 noted and this is just one complication I'm reluctant
15 to add but we need to understand. It is important to
16 note that on certain safety devices including traffic
17 signals and four way stop signs, we are obligated to
18 follow federal regulation in terms of a procedure for
19 studying them, before implementing them, and there
20 are certain criteria that you're supposed to follow.

21 This ought not to prevent us and hasn't prevented
22 us and won't prevent us from providing effective
23 safety protection around all of our schools. That is
24 obviously a shared objective but it does, it does
25 require some added level of complexity in terms of
which particular items go where. Again, we look

3 forward to working with the Council on addressing
4 this legislation and we are strongly in favor of and
5 already proceeding to try and effectuate its goal.

6 Intro. 2417, again, thank you Council Member
7 Holden. One of the frustrating, most frustrating
8 things in terms of trying to enforce, even with the
9 automated devices, especially with the automated
10 devices, is the fact that so many license plates are
11 phony. And even if they're real, people have devices
12 to protect them from detection. So, even if we have
13 the camera there, the camera is functioning, we're
14 during the hours when we have the ability to use it
15 to enforce. If somebody does what the Council Member
16 describes, they evade detection, they evade
17 enforcement. We need to take all available means to
18 prevent that in the name of effective enforcement.
19 And again, I thank the Council Member for introducing
20 the bill and thank all of you for moving it forward
21 so promptly.

22 As to 2201, Council Member Rivera's bill, this
23 one arrived at least on my desk late in the day, so I
24 haven't studied it in detail. But to the extent that
25 the objective is as the Council Member described it,
to regularize and provide for treatment, more

3 effective treatment and regulation within the vehicle
4 ecosystem of the new forms of motorcycles, mopeds,
5 etc., which seem to be reproducing with rapid speed
6 on our streets. We're all in favor of that. It's a
7 challenge keeping up with it. It's a challenge
8 treating it for parking purposes. It's a challenge
9 treating it for registration and licensing purposes,
10 and consistent with our Vision Zero message here. It
11 is a big challenge dealing with an unsafety – for
12 safety purposes. So, coming up with legislative
13 means to regularize how we deal with these new forms
14 of vehicles, I think is a huge step forward. I
15 commend the Council Member for her effort and frankly
16 would very much like to sit down and talk about what
17 we can do to address this issue, because it's a very
18 real one.

19 In conclusion, I just want to thank the Council
20 for the opportunity to testify before you today at
21 this critical moment for our city. And after our
22 colleagues from the Police Department have testified,
23 I would be most happy to entertain any and all
24 questions. Thank you for your time and attention and
25 again, thank you for the partnership we've enjoyed.

3 KIM ROYSTER: Good morning Chair Rodriguez, Chair
4 Gibson, and Members of the Council. I am Kim
5 Royster, the Chief of the New York City Police
6 Department's Transportation Bureau. I am joined here
7 today by Deputy Chief Isa Abbassi and Michael Clarke,
8 Director of Legislative Affairs for the NYPD, as well
9 as my colleagues from the Department of
10 Transportation, Commissioner Hank Gutman, Deputy
11 Commissioner Joshua Benson, Assistant Commissioner
12 Rebecca Zack, and Director Julia Kite-Laidlaw.

13 On behalf of Police Commissioner Dermot Shea, I
14 wish to thank the Council for the opportunity to
15 testify regarding the Department's efforts to ensure
16 safe streets for all New Yorkers. To the Families
17 for Safe Streets, my heart goes out to you. Please
18 accept my sincere condolences. It is very difficult
19 to hear you talk about how your loved ones lives was
20 cut short as a result of a fatality. One fatality is
21 too many.

22 As the Chief of Transportation, I am responsible
23 for ensuring the safety of all New Yorkers as they
24 move about the city and I am responsible for
25 coordinating the NYPD's Vision Zero response. Vision
Zero was launched in 2014 with the purpose of

3 eliminating all traffic deaths and serious injuries
4 in New York City. As part of the Vision Zero plan
5 and process, an interagency task force enables each
6 agency to bring specific expertise to the table. And
7 we at the NYPD are committed to bringing our
8 expertise to ensure the safety of our streets.

9 We meet monthly with the Department of
10 Transportation and discuss issues and share
11 information that helps each agency achieve its
12 mission. Internally, we employ our precision
13 policing model to traffic enforcement to combat
14 dangerous driving behaviors. As an example, I
15 oversee the NYPD's Traffic Safety Forum. This
16 meeting serves as a holistic, multifaceted platform,
17 partnership and collaboration to save lives. The
18 meeting analyzes data concerning collisions and
19 fatalities and helps us ensure that precincts
20 allocate resources to the most dangerous areas in the
21 city. Protection of our most vulnerable road users
22 is at the core of the NYPD's traffic safety plan.

23 The Department has worked with the Department of
24 Transportation to increase our education efforts for
25 motorists and we have reprioritized enforcement when
the failure to yield to the right of way of a

3 pedestrian or a cyclist is violated by a motorist.

4 The Department has conducted multiple citywide
5 traffic initiatives throughout the year. Beginning
6 March of 2019, the Department began the High
7 Visibility Corridor Enforcement and Education plan.

8 We created a highly visible police presence at
9 collision prone corridors. We have conducted 20 such
10 operations in 2021, which has led to the issuance of
11 107,656 parking violations and 32,370 moving
12 violations. We have booted 285 cars and towed 3,092
13 cars as a result of these operations.

14 In addition, we have conducted speed initiatives
15 focused on drivers recklessly speeding on public
16 roadways. Bike and pedestrian safe passage
17 initiatives focused on blocked bike lanes and failure
18 to yield to pedestrians. Motorcycle and drag racing
19 initiatives. Clear bus lane initiatives which focus
20 on vehicles parked in bus lanes. Pedestrian
21 initiatives, school safe driving initiatives which
22 focused on drivers that fail to yield to pedestrians
23 near schools. And distracted driving initiatives
24 which focused on drivers who drive while talking on
25 cell phones and texting.

3 We are troubled by the increase in traffic
4 fatalities since the start of the COVID pandemic.
5 Tragically, traffic fatalities are up 17 percent
6 since last year. The increase has been driven
7 primarily by pedestrian deaths, which were at a
8 record low last year. This is part of a nationwide
9 trend and the National Highway Traffic Safety
10 Administration has attributed to drivers' increasing
11 risky behaviors. These behaviors that began during
12 the unique conditions of the lockdown have persisted
13 to this day.

14 This past April, our Outreach Unit and Collision
15 Investigation Squad attended the Mothers Against
16 Drunk Driving Compassionate Death Notification
17 training class. Which focused on delivering death
18 notifications with professionalism, dignity, and
19 compassion. Further, in collaboration with our
20 advocacy partners, starting May of 2021, the Chief of
21 Transportation's Office's Outreach Unit began
22 providing a resource folder to victims' families.
23 This includes frequently asked questions document, a
24 case investigator contact information, victim
25 services information, the Chief Medical Examiner's

3 contact information, victim's compensation forms, and
4 Surrogate Court information.

5 To date, the Outreach Unit has delivered 71
6 folders to the victims of traffic fatalities. The
7 Department and the city have faced unprecedented
8 challenges these past two years. Despite this,
9 parking enforcement is actually up slightly year to
10 date when compared to 2019. This year, we have
11 issued 7,319,168 summonses as compared to 7,137,415
12 in 2019. This comes out to roughly 24,600 parking
13 summonses issued each day this year. Parking
14 enforcement in bike lanes has remained nearly
15 identical as 2019, with 61,780 summonses issued.

16 This accounts for about 215 bike lane summonses
17 each day. We have, however, towed 25 percent fewer
18 cars in 2021 as compared to 2020. This is largely
19 attributed to the loss of the Manhattan Tow Pound at
20 the beginning of 2021, which drastically reduces our
21 towing capacity.

22 It is true that our enforcement numbers for
23 moving violations are down 51 percent since 2019.
24 The COVID pandemic and cuts to the budget, including
25 the reduction in our headcount, elimination of two
Police Academy classes and 60 percent reduction in

3 overtime and has hampered our ability to enforce. As
4 shootings went up and staffing went down, the
5 Department had to reallocate resources to help
6 respond to the surge in gun violence and to bolster
7 our patrol strength. Every bureau had to send help,
8 including my own. As a result of staffing in the
9 Citywide Traffic Task Force, that staffing was also
10 reduced. Additionally, for the Fiscal Year '21,
11 overtime budget was drastically reduced by \$295
12 million and a total of \$7.6 million dollars in
13 overtime spending, which is directly attributed to
14 Vision Zero priorities, did not occur.

15 With the restoration of limited overtime funding
16 in the current budget and the graduated recruits from
17 the recent academy classes being deployed to the
18 streets, we are seeing an improvement in these
19 numbers. We are continuing to target enforcement on
20 the seven most dangerous moving violations, the
21 violations which are the drivers of collisions on our
22 streets. Between July 1, 2021, and October 10, 2021,
23 as compared to the same time period in 2020, moving
24 summonses are up roughly 32 percent as compared to
25 the same time period in 2020.

3 Vision Zero moving summonses are up 27 percent with
4 increases in all seven categories, including
5 speeding, failure to yield to pedestrians or
6 cyclists, red light, disobeying signs, texting and
7 utilizing a cell phone, and improper turns.

8 Turning to the proposed legislation, Intro 2417,
9 which would prohibit the sale or distribution of
10 materials that obscure and distort license plates or
11 images of license plates. The Department supports
12 the intent of this bill. Obscuring or distorting
13 licenses plates undermines Vision Zero by reducing
14 the effectiveness of speed and red light cameras.
15 This year, the Department has issued 12,255 moving
16 violations to cars with covered plates and 14,340
17 parking summonses, an increase of 92 percent and 78
18 percent, respectively, over last year. This will
19 remain a priority of our enforcement. We look
20 forward to collaborating with the Council on this
21 proposal so that it meets operational and legal
22 objectives and concerns.

23 In closing, we are committed to the goals of
24 Vision Zero and we will continue working toward those
25 goals until Vision Zero is not just a vision, but a

3 reality. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with
4 you today, and I am pleased to answer your questions.

5 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. I assume that
6 there's no more members of the Administration since
7 we heard DOT and NYPD and then we go into the
8 questions to both agencies.

9 Chief, thank you again for the work that you have
10 done for me. You know, it's all about as I said
11 before, all of us working together to address this
12 epidemic. Can you share with us the number of – the
13 total number of crashes that happened in 2021? And
14 again, if you have the numbers together, all crashes
15 that happened including hit and run 20– I just wanted
16 to compare just for you to know. How many happened –
17 have happened in this year by today? And how many
18 happened in 2020? And just the number, you know at
19 this moment, I just want to go straight to the
20 number.

21 KIM ROYSTER: So, the total collisions that have
22 occurred in 2021 is 88,666. The total collisions
23 that have happened, that occurred in 2020 is 92,563,
24 which is a decrease.

25 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Can you repeat the number
please?

1 COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION JOINTLY WITH THE
2 COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS 65

3 KIM ROYSTER: Sure. Total collisions for 2021 is
4 88,666. For 2020 is 92,563.

5 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: And those collisions
6 involve everything, crashes, hit and run, everything,
7 right?

8 KIM ROYSTER: Yes sir.

9 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: What about can you give
10 me – share the data just for hit and run? How many
11 happened in again 2020 and 2021?

12 KIM ROYSTER: Sure. So, when we look at leaving
13 the scene for 2021, it was 37,927. For 2020, 31,521.

14 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Is that the 2020,
15 is the total for the whole year, so by this time?

16 KIM ROYSTER: For 2020 it's the entire – I'm
17 sorry, I correct that.

18 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: I'm sorry, the 2021, I'm
19 sorry.

20 KIM ROYSTER: For 2021, that's from January 1st
21 this year to October 24th of this year.

22 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay, what about for the
23 2020? Is that from January to December?

24 KIM ROYSTER: I'm sorry Chair, can you repeat the
25 question?

3 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: The number of 2021, the
4 31,521, is that number also up to October or for the
5 whole year, from January to December?

6 KIM ROYSTER: That's the same time period, from
7 January 1st to October 24th.

8 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Why do you think
9 that number has increased so far in 2021 by 6,000?

10 KIM ROYSTER: Well, I think that you know when we
11 look at what has happened in 2020 with the pandemic,
12 uh, drivers as Commissioner Gutman had mentioned has
13 taken on the responsibility to not only speed through
14 our streets but also taken on the actions of leaving
15 the scene when they actually strike someone. There's
16 several issues that maybe involved in leaving the
17 scene. One is definitely the fact of the person may
18 not have a valid license. The person may be impaired
19 or the person may be involved in something additional
20 than just that collision. Some other crime, which
21 we've seen a correlation in crime in traffic violence
22 this year.

23 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay, and information
24 that usually gets shared by the NYPD and DOT under
25 the Vision Zero, is that when we analyze those cases
of hit and run, of course, most of them, they are

3 related to a driver who leave the scene that you know
4 I was baked in a hit and run. Like, I leave my car
5 parked and the day after I came someone hit the scene
6 and NYPD came to the report, no one was inside my
7 car. So, there's many cases like that but we also
8 know that among those numbers, the usual number that
9 has been shared by the city, DOT, NYPD has been that
10 even though most cases are related to damage of a
11 vehicle, that there was at least I think the number
12 of thousand – and I would like to hear the number. I
13 think it was like 4,000 cases of individuals that
14 ended up being in critical condition and an average
15 of one person dying every week.

16 Can you please share the numbers where we are in
17 2021, how many fatalities have we had? One, as a
18 result of crashes in general and second, as a result
19 of hit and run and the other numbers related to – how
20 many of the hit and run have been end with people
21 saying they are in critical condition?

22 KIM ROYSTER: So, I'll just go to the category of
23 leaving the scene. The number of collisions that we
24 have where a person was fatally injured and the
25 vehicle left the scene was 56 for 2021.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: 56 then?

3 KIM ROYSTER: 56, yes fatalities as a result of
4 someone leaving the scene.

5 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay, what about 2020?

6 KIM ROYSTER: In 2020, there was 61 fatalities as
7 a result of a vehicle leaving the scene.

8 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Do you have the number of
9 the other numbers of people being in critical
10 condition even though they didn't die?

11 KIM ROYSTER: Yes, so in 2021, the total number
12 of collisions where someone was critically injured
13 was 74 for 2021 and for 2020, it was 61.

14 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay, so what about -
15 where do you put the other category of the other
16 people who in the around like 4,000 that they have
17 been taken to the hospital, that also they have been
18 in critical condition?

19 KIM ROYSTER: So that 4,000 would be in an area
20 where a person was injured and it wasn't a fatality,
21 wasn't critically injured, but that number would be
22 investigated by the detective borough.

23 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay, okay, thank you.
24 So, I had a question now to DOT. How strong has the
25 city from the Mayor's Office in Albany advocating
changes of legislation where the city should be

3 looking to ask Albany to give all the power on
4 everything related to transportation?

5 HANK GUTMAN: It is my understanding Chair
6 Rodriguez that we are advocating strongly that the
7 city and the Mayor's Office is advocating strongly
8 for these various measures that I referred to. And I
9 can say that the DOT, every time we have the
10 opportunity to speak publicly or privately to anybody
11 who we think maybe able to help, we bring up this
12 issue because it's critically important for us. Top
13 priority.

14 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: I just feel that you know
15 of course we were there together, led by Families for
16 Save Streets transportation opportunity, DOT, and we
17 at the Council in Albany advocating when we were able
18 to redo the speed limit in New York City and we
19 changed the law. And I know that right now there's
20 the numbers also that are important for the City of
21 New York. Now unfortunately, they have now moved on.
22 However, what I feel is that you know, I love to do
23 apple picking upstate with my two daughters but I
24 don't think that the city, which is the large
25 municipality of 8.6 million New Yorkers. Before
COVID, more than 60 million visitors should depend on

3 someone that doesn't have to deal with the same
4 challenge that we have here. When it came to any
5 particular bill that we need to modify.

6 So, has the city asked not only for Albany to
7 support changing with a particular bill but
8 advocating for Albany to give the City of New York
9 all the power or the most important thing on
10 legislation pending or other potential ones when it
11 comes to the city not to be going to Albany in order
12 to pass any bill for things that we believe is
13 important to improve. Not only the pedestrians and
14 cyclists but other things related to transportation.
15 Have you been in any conversation with City Hall when
16 they have shared how much they're asking Albany to
17 give the city all the power to legislate everything
18 related to the most important thing of
19 transportation?

20 HANK GUTMAN: Sorry, had to unmute. I am
21 familiar with the city's efforts to get these various
22 packages of legislation passed. All of which go
23 toward transportation safety and we have done
24 everything we can to encourage as I said, both the
25 city's efforts and when we speak separately with
Albany as we do uhm to push it. But if what you're

3 suggesting Chair Rodriguez is some more fundamental
4 change in the authority of the city in general to
5 regulate such matters. Uhm, I would love to be part
6 of such an effort because on taking this job frankly,
7 I was horrified to discover that we as the greatest
8 city in the world and the largest city in the state
9 do not have the legal authority to use readily
10 available technology. Proven technology to enforce
11 our own safety law for the safety of the people on
12 our streets. I think that's, I think that's
13 outrageous I guess is the most appropriate term and I
14 would love to find a way amending whatever laws need
15 to be amended to give the city the authority to do
16 that.

17 Uhm, I mean it's critically important if we're
18 going to take, if we're going to take all the
19 available steps to keep our people safe. It's hard
20 to imagine how we do it having to go ask for Albany's
21 permission every time we want to change the hours on
22 speed cameras, for heaven sake. I mean, which of
23 your constituents if they, if they were told that
24 would think oh, yeah, that makes sense. I mean,
25 nobody, it doesn't.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, thank you

3 Commissioner. More than happy to partner with you as
4 I know that we introduced language at the Council,
5 trying to see if you know we work with it to make as
6 one of the legacy of this Administration now that we
7 have a new Governor. Now they are in Albany, we have
8 the speaker of the Assembly you know who are very
9 close to the city. So, we just hope again that we
10 can get City Hall to take the lead to bring all of us
11 together now but also to be sure that this continues
12 being one of the top priorities of the new
13 Administration to leave, to get all the empowerment
14 that we need in order to regulate everything related
15 to transportation.

16 My other question is related to the specific
17 thing that we are doing right now to stop the
18 epidemic of crashes. And then I will pass it to the
19 Co-Chair and my colleagues for question.

20 Look, I just think that if we would have 200 as a
21 result of COVID today, we will continue seeing COVID
22 as an epidemic for us to bring all the resources from
23 the federal, the state and the city together. And I
24 think that when one screen that I have unfortunately
25 is that has changed my perspective to when it comes

3 to you know understanding and important to do
4 anything that we can to improve safety. Is because
5 you know being able to interact with so many
6 beautiful families, that they have lost their loved
7 one. And as I say, they Black, the Asian, the
8 Latino, they are working middle, upper classes. All
9 New Yorkers represent unfortunately in that community
10 of people that they have lost their loved one.

11 So, why we and what can we do to turn all
12 intersections in the City of New York with a high
13 numbers of pedestrians crossing in those
14 intersections, intersections that everything should
15 be organized around the whole bouncing bar concept.
16 To separate the time for pedestrian to cross through
17 all the corners and the car to stop, so that the time
18 for driver to turn should be separated for the time
19 of a pedestrian to cross.

20 We have seen a few places. I can see in Kabul
21 and Netherlands in Riverdale. I know that sometimes
22 when I take the bus in that intersection, I have seen
23 all the corners. For 15 seconds is the time for a
24 pedestrian to cross through an intersection. We have
25 seen even you know at the corner close to where I
live on Broadway that the four corners turn the time

3 for pedestrian to cross and to drive it to stop. Why
4 are waiting as a city not to turn all intersections,
5 intersections with bouncing bar to separate the time
6 for pedestrian to cross and to drive it to stop?

7 HANK GUTMAN: I think your point, your point
8 Chair Rodriguez is a very good one. Uh, and that is
9 a very good question. We have the technology. We
10 use it in various intersections as you know and as
11 you've seen. It's I think, I mean, there's a lot of
12 makeup work to do. There are decades of neglect I
13 think involved in terms of focusing on some of these
14 issues. And it's a question of time and resources.
15 We are doing this work as quickly - we are doing this
16 work uhm as we can. We focus based on the data. I
17 mean that's how we decide where to start based on the
18 most dangerous intersections. But Deputy
19 Commissioner Benson could probably give you a more
20 detailed answer if you'd like.

21 JOSHUA BENSON: Than you Commissioner. Yeah, no,
22 it's an excellent question Chair Rodriguez and you
23 know we have studied this uhm, you know to a pretty
24 large extent and I think uhm, we put out a report a
25 few years ago about the you know different signal
treatments that we have and what we have been finding

3 from the data is that leading pedestrian intervals
4 are more effective in more locations than the Barnes
5 dance. The leading pedestrian interval is a head
6 start for pedestrians, the Barnes dance that you
7 described is the full separated pedestrian and
8 vehicle faces. And we've done about 6,000 leading
9 pedestrian intervals over the last few years. So,
10 we're really hitting that pretty hard.

11 The Barnes dance, it is a very appealing concept
12 but I will tell you there are some unintended
13 consequences with it. Which is people lose their
14 patience and don't follow it because they sense a bit
15 of wasted time. So, both pedestrians and motorists
16 and particularly if the volumes are not tremendously
17 high. Look around and say, well, the signal says
18 don't walk but no one else is moving, I'm going to
19 walk. Uhm, the signal must be broken. You know
20 that's the kind of downside of it. So, it works very
21 well in unique situations where there's very high
22 volumes and very you know, where people's
23 expectations are met. So, where the users see the
24 need and follow it.

25 So, it's a great tool. It's limited to certain
instances and the leading pedestrian interval I think

3 gives you some of that same exact benefit with the
4 exclusive pedestrian time but it's a little more
5 adaptable to more situations.

6 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Have you been able to
7 look at the number, the data compare, those locations
8 where we have separated time?

9 JOSHUA BENSON: Yes.

10 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Showing that if there's
11 less crashes in those intersections?

12 JOSHUA BENSON: Yes, we published a report on
13 this a few years ago. Uhm, 2017-

14 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: But as you say right, we
15 have seen many more after that right? So, because
16 this is something that again, working together with
17 you guys, we've been able also to you know I don't
18 know, because of more resources that are needed and
19 the understanding. I have seen in many, as you say,
20 that number that's 8,000 or whatever number they are,
21 you know I think that, that 2017, you know probably
22 doesn't reflect where we are today because in '21, I
23 am sure that from '17 to today, I don't know if you
24 have an updated data. And if you don't, can you put
25 one together?

3 JOSHUA BENSON: It's a good point. Yeah, I mean,
4 certainly we could update the study with fresh data,
5 certainly.

6 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Now, can we say in
7 general that when we — and I get it. Listen, I was
8 elected in 2009. From 2009 to 2013, I went to City
9 Hall and I asked for the redesigning of Dykeman and
10 Broadway. I was told that the engineer said that
11 that was not doable and the pushback was that the
12 only consequence was that it would reduce traffic.
13 It was a different mentality and I didn't get it. I
14 had to wait for Mayor de Blasio to our community to
15 see the benefit. And in a few months, I got DOT to
16 resign the whole Dykeman and Broadway. A big
17 reduction of crashes immediately as a result of that.

18 So, we know that a lot is also what come from you
19 know City Hall from budget director for how much
20 funding are allocated for the agency.

21 But my question is to you and looking at the data
22 you know in that particular one, can we say that even
23 though there could be unintended consequences but in
24 general, is there a reduction of crashes when those
25 intersections are moved on separate time for
pedestrian and cyclist?

3 JOSHUA BENSON: It's a great question and you
4 provide an excellent example, Dykeman and Broadway is
5 an incredibly complex intersection and very busy and
6 that's the kind of place where uhm, we find that the
7 Barnes dance type treatment works well. Where the
8 intersection is so complicated that people really
9 respect these unusual and unexpected signal
10 treatments. Another location that you're probably
11 well familiar with -

12 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm
13 sorry, in general, my question in general because
14 like we don't have the dancing bar in Dykeman and
15 Broadway. We have redesigned that intersection. But
16 what I say, I was told that I couldn't do it from the
17 engineer and DOT, from the Commissioner, from
18 everyone there because that was not a priority from
19 2009 to 2013.

20 But what I say was when the corner one, and the
21 push back was about it would reduce traffic,
22 unintended consequences. And I get the part related
23 you know from the other side of the Administration.
24 My question is, in general, can we say that when the
25 time is separated for pedestrian to cross and driver
to turn, does that reduce crashes yes or no?

3 JOSHUA BENSON: So, this will be an unsatisfying
4 answer but it depends. In some cases yes, in some
5 cases no.

6 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: In general, what are the
7 most cases?

8 JOSHUA BENSON: I really couldn't give a general
9 answer to that. I mean you know how different all
10 intersections are and how unique they can be. So,
11 think - what we found is that in - there are
12 absolutely cases where it reduces crashes to have it
13 all exclusive pedestrian phases and there are others
14 where it doesn't and I think, the approach is to fit
15 the -

16 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay, my question is to
17 you, we have data. NYPD do the report, DOT look at
18 it too. In general, does initiate it to separate
19 time for pedestrian and cyclists in general, does it
20 reduce crashes yes or no?

21 JOSHUA BENSON: The place where we see the most
22 consistency with that is the leading pedestrian
23 interval, which is also available to cyclists. And
24 that's exclusive time for pedestrians to move. Yes,
25 in that sense. Absolutely we see just like an
absolute reduction in crashes and with the Barnes

3 dance, it's not as straight forward is what I'm
4 trying to say is that in some cases it does work and
5 others, it has a negative safety effect.

6 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Does the DOT have the
7 data that show or what percent of project has been
8 sustained after a dancing bar are installed?

9 JOSHUA BENSON: I think we need to follow up with
10 you to get more in depth on the data piece of this.

11 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: That's a typical example
12 or challenge that we have today on the user
13 technology because it is like you know we should be
14 able to deal with the accurate information. We
15 should be able to pull out something in the computer
16 because those reports should be happening for the
17 NYPD when it comes to crashes. DOT as the leading
18 agency when it comes to Vision Zero should be able to
19 say you know before we install, we put this measure,
20 crashes was at this level in this year. After we
21 make those changes, crashes should be reduced. It
22 shouldn't be so high. We shouldn't be waiting for
23 you know coming back and get a team to pull this data
24 together. We need to be more active as an agency
25 leading Vision Zero. You know when we look at this
number and not being able to say by 2030 we reduce

3 the numbers as we expected. Not to zero but the
4 numbers being almost the same than in 2014 when we
5 had started. You know, this is something that
6 definitely we need to rethink Vision Zero and see
7 what is the new thing that we need to do to put the
8 data on the table to collect this data and accurate
9 information and be able to compare.

10 HANK GUTMAN: Chair Rodriguez, if I can just jump
11 in and I apologize, I didn't understand your question
12 to me to be specifically about the Barnes dance as
13 opposed to a pedestrian lead. I think what Josh is
14 saying is that the data shows clear safety
15 enhancements for the later, more depending on the
16 position for the former. The report is the Walk this
17 Way report and if your staff needs a copy, we would
18 be happy to get it to you. And we're also certainly
19 happy to update the data from that reported in that
20 report. But again, we are following the data in terms
21 of what we prefer and the lesson here is that there
22 isn't a one size fits all answer to any of these
23 problem. The all depend on the particular
24 circumstances of the geometry of the jurisdiction.
25 The characteristics of these, of the streets etc..

3 But we will get you all of that information and
4 follow up and if you don't get it promptly enough,
5 you have my number.

6 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. Thank you
7 Commissioner. What percentage of crashes happen in
8 intersections?

9 JULA KITE-LAIDLAW: Yes, hello. Thank you
10 Council Member. I uhm, I can tell you that for last
11 year, if you could just bear with me while I pull up
12 my statistic. The percentage of crashes that
13 happened at intersection in 2021 so far has been 46
14 percent. For 2018 through 2020, it's been about 54
15 percent. So, this is not the statistically
16 significant difference uhm, we see this has been
17 pretty stable throughout the Vision Zero years that
18 roughly it's about 50 percent of all fatal crashes
19 that have been happening at intersections.

20 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. I just feel
21 that the city must declare intersections in crisis.
22 Again, giving all the credit, all of us and even you
23 been playing different roles before as you're playing
24 the role now, you know when it comes to advocating
25 for advocates. So, I know that no one has a bigger
heart when it comes to make intersections safer than

3 you and the whole team at DOT. So, this not about
4 lack of intension but this is about the real number
5 that you're dealing with.

6 So, when we, the data is showing very clear most
7 crashes happen at intersections, let's declare
8 intersection in crisis so that we can get you some
9 funding from, you know from COVID. We can work at
10 the federal, the state and the city level and we put
11 a plan together to say, we should be able to say, not
12 only Vision Zero will reduce the number of people
13 deaths by crashes in 2030. What we should say is
14 about – because that one we don't control as a level.
15 What we control are intersections at this moment.

16 Let's declare that in five years, we will reduce
17 the numbers of crashes at intersection by zero. But
18 with that again, thank you for the great job that you
19 Commissioner and the whole team are doing. And I
20 know that you are surrounded with an amazing team of
21 engineers, data collecting and other great people who
22 care for pedestrians.

23 So, this is not about being against any
24 particular individual, this is about what we need not
25 only from DOT but from City Hall to put more
resources to DOT, so that we can be able to reduce to

3 zero in five years the number of crashes that happen
4 at intersection.

5 With that, I'll turn it back to my Co-Chair
6 Vanessa Gibson.

7 HANK GUTMAN: And happy to have your help Mr.
8 Chair anytime.

9 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you Commissioner.

10 CHAIRPERSON GIBSON: Thank you Chair Rodriguez
11 and once again good afternoon Commissioner Gutman and
12 Chief Royster and member of DOT and NYPD. I first
13 want to acknowledge the work you've done over the
14 years on Vision Zero. When it was first launched in
15 2014, it was with the idea that we would do our part
16 to create safer streets for everyone. We were a part
17 of supporting the efforts to lower the citywide speed
18 limit, increasing speed cameras near and around
19 schools and making sure at the end of the day that
20 we're working with our partners in Albany to achieve
21 a lot of the legislative highlights that we needed to
22 achieve in order to get our work done in the city.

23 So, I do want to acknowledge that and I know
24 COVID has been a real devastation for us in the city
25 and its allowed us to really rethink the way we do

3 work but its also paused a lot of the great things
4 that we have started.

5 When I hear the stories of so many families
6 impacted by traffic related crashes and traffic
7 violence, it's truly heartbreaking. I have a story
8 myself of losing one of my childhood friends to a
9 traffic related crash. He was crossing the street in
10 a crosswalk to pick up his child at daycare and he
11 never made it because of an out of control and
12 reckless driver that killed him in the crosswalk.
13 Crosswalks are supposed to be safe for all of our New
14 Yorkers and in so many instances it's not safe
15 anymore.

16 And so, what I hope that we do and I know we've
17 tried and started this process and a lot of this work
18 is going to continue into the next administration but
19 we have to be very preventative in doing our work.
20 We cannot be reactionary and wait until crashes and
21 traffic related violence happens and then we go in
22 and react. There are ways that DOT and NYPD can look
23 at the streetscape of our streets. Why does it take
24 months and months to get stop signs and you know
25 different traffic calming measures in our
communities? We struggle, we reach out the Community

3 Board. We contact our Borough Commissioner but guess
4 what? We have to do studies and studies and studies
5 and it just takes too much time and we're reacting to
6 situations.

7 So, I encourage any of us to do things
8 differently, we have to look at this work from the
9 mindset of being preventative and not reactionary.
10 Let's not wait for the next traffic related crash to
11 say, let's go to this intersection and see what we
12 could have done that would have been a little bit
13 different.

14 And so, I appreciate the work that has been done.
15 Chief Royster, I thank you for your testimony but I
16 do want to acknowledge that in the testimony you
17 talked a lot about the work of your division as it
18 relates to traffic related violence and crashes. But
19 no mention of our investigation over this past
20 summer. I do recognize that the department did send
21 us a letter earlier this week acknowledging receipt
22 of our letter from Speaker Johnson, myself and Chair
23 Rodriguez and referring the investigation to the
24 Internal Affairs Bureau and I appreciate your efforts
25 to look into the specifics of our investigation and
our finding but I want to talk broadly about what the

3 department is doing to prioritize traffic related 311
4 complaints that come into the system, that go to the
5 NYPD, that are related to police vehicles and placard
6 abuse. And parking in bus stops and fire hydrants
7 and cross walks.

8 I want to understand how important are these
9 issues to the NYPD? I realize you've sited some of
10 the budget constraints the department has faced and
11 certainly I understand that but I also want to know
12 what is the department doing to address those 311
13 calls that are coming into the system that are being
14 referred to the NYPD. Can you give us an
15 understanding of what your department is doing? What
16 does the staff look like and at any given time when
17 there is a complaint, how is it responded to on a
18 local precinct level?

19 KIM ROYSTER: Yes Madam Chair. I am - I would
20 like to first provide you with some data on the
21 number of parking placards that we have summonses
22 that we have distributed this year, which is 37,084.
23 Compared to last year 27,469. So, we have a 30
24 percent increase.

25 You are correct, safety is important everywhere
and for everyone and we in the NYPD take it serious.

3 Parking and bike lanes and using placards. But one
4 of the things that we have to do, I think you
5 mentioned before is to make sure that we stop the
6 culture. Stop the culture of people misusing
7 placards. Stop the culture of people parking in
8 bikes lanes or bus lanes.

9 I'm going to now hand it over to Legislative
10 Affairs representative to speak about the specifics
11 about the letter, where we are and then Deputy Chief
12 Abbassi will talk about the guidelines and the policy
13 the NYPD has in place to respond to 311 calls.

14 MICHAEL CLARKE: And as you mentioned uh earlier,
15 you know we did send this investigation, your
16 investigation over to our Internal Affairs Bureau to
17 look into it and obviously we take it seriously if
18 there instances where officers are saying they showed
19 up and didn't show up. You know that's something we
20 are glad you brought to our attention. We want to
21 work with the Council going forward on that. You
22 know the continuation of that investigation but right
23 now, uh, the results of your investigation in the
24 hands of Internal Affairs.
25

3 Uhm, I don't know if Chief Abbassi can talk a
4 little bit about our procedure on 311 calls, uhm, but
5 I'll turn it over to him.

6 ISA ABBASSI: Good afternoon Chair Gibson and
7 good afternoon to all the members present. So, uh,
8 in my capacity, I'm the Executive Officer of Patrol
9 Services. So, the 77 Precincts of New York City, I'm
10 second in command under Chief Juanita Holmes and 311
11 to all the points that you've made, are exceptionally
12 important to us and increasingly so, as it becomes
13 more used by the people of New York City. I think we
14 see the service volume increasing steadily. Year to
15 date, we're over one million calls for service by a
16 311 already.

17 So, that said, you know when we look at parking
18 conditions, we've seen a tremendous increase in the
19 number of illegal parking service request. Year to
20 date we're at 243,000 just in illegal parking service
21 requests.

22 The men and women of the Services Bureau in the
23 77th Precincts are continually reminded about the
24 importance to responding to these service requests
25 and responding to them in an appropriate and
efficient way and part of that efficiency is in

3 reducing our response times. We've noted that uhm,
4 you know through increased focus at meetings, that
5 there are precursors to violence here. Especially
6 with illegal parking, which is part of a reason why
7 we've tried to reduce response times and you see that
8 reduction occurring.

9 You know just from last year to this year we've
10 taken about an hour off of response times. Now, when
11 we talk about the way a service request gets sent out
12 to the field and handled, it will come into the
13 precinct desk from the 311 service center and then it
14 gets dispatched through our telephone switch board to
15 the precinct unit in the field. That unit responds
16 to the job, handles it, supplies the finalization
17 back to the precinct and it gets reentered into the
18 computer. Uhm, supervisor oversight is provided at
19 several different levels and I'm sure you know we
20 could get into that you know as you'd like and then
21 we put some measures in place also to kind of help
22 with the quality control efforts in 311 responses.

23 CHAIRPERSON GIBSON: You talked about a precinct
24 unit, what does that look like? Because what you
25 described is a situation where a 311 call goes into
the command, it's assigned to someone and the

3 expectation is that that call will followed up by the
4 officer and then signed off by a supervisor. Uhm,
5 does that happen in every single precinct? What type
6 of precinct unit are you describing?

7 ISA ABBASSI: So, I'm speaking strictly to a
8 numbered precinct command but you know housing PSA's,
9 transit districts, all you know to some degree handle
10 311 service requests. We by far handle the most
11 volume on patrol.

12 Precinct unit by definition can mean an NCO or
13 YCO, a study sector or a response order, or even a
14 supervisor. Any resource in the field, right? So,
15 once a 311 is dispatched to a resource in the field,
16 it's prioritized based on what they're already
17 handling. So, obviously if they're going to a
18 shooting incident or an assault and they were
19 assigned a 311 for a parking condition, it would be
20 prioritized appropriately. Now, once that 311
21 service request is finalized, that results in a
22 telephone call back to the precinct for manual entry
23 into the computer.

24 CHAIRPERSON GIBSON: Okay uhm, this system to me
25 sounds like it can be improved. I don't like the
idea of the NYO's and the YCO Officers handling these

3 types of calls, when they already have additional
4 responsibilities on their plate. Is there a way that
5 we can relook at this system to make sure that there
6 are dedicated team at each precinct who will deal
7 with 311 service related complaints? I know
8 personally some of my precincts in the Bronx have a
9 dedicated team of officers whose job it is to handle
10 all 311 calls. Whether they're parking related,
11 traffic related, quality of life, noise complaints
12 and a lot of that has come out Chief Holmes
13 leadership.

14 The idea that each precinct can pretty much
15 assign 311 calls to anyone within the command doesn't
16 seem to be very effective to me. Now not speaking
17 specific to our investigation but you know one of the
18 things that we uncovered was that officers did go out
19 and respond to some of the 311 calls that were
20 related to parking but we found that the cases were
21 being closed. And so, my thing is, I don't want
22 anyone to waste time. If an officer is going to
23 respond to a 311 call, the least that can be done is
24 that the complaint will be followed up efficiently
25 and effectively and if it is closed, it means that

3 the solution has been identified and the condition
4 has been addressed, right?

5 That's the goal of what we're trying to get to
6 here. So, is there a way that patrol services can
7 revamp and look at this entire system again? Because
8 what you've described to me is not working. So,
9 you're saying a YCO could respond, an NCO could
10 respond and that's given all the calls and different
11 things that they already have on their plate and how
12 important this particular 311 call is. So, that just
13 doesn't seem to be uh, a process that seems to be
14 very effective.

15 ISA ABBASSI: So, Council Member, you make a
16 couple of really good points there. Let me unpack
17 them one at a time, right.

18 CHAIRPERSON GIBSON: Okay.

19 ISA ABBASSI: So, I don't want to get sidetracked
20 on the YCO and NCO, there may be a 311 service
21 request, child related out of school, most
22 appropriate for the YCO would tend to. That's why
23 they would get it.

24 CHAIRPERSON GIBSON: Okay.

25 ISA ABBASSI: And so similarly right? It may be
something that is NCO specific and they would be the

3 best fit to address that condition. By and large,
4 our 311 service requests are handled by steady sector
5 personnel and our response orders. Those are the
6 people that handle our calls for service via the 911
7 and 311 system, however, sometimes specialization is
8 required. Maybe even the traffic safety team that
9 gets call out to answer a 311 based on the type of
10 service request we see.

11 So, I don't want to get sidetracked and give you
12 the impression that YCO and NCO's are handling you
13 know generic volumes of 311's. That is not the case.
14 To your other point of efficiency, that is absolutely
15 our goal here. And where you know, unfortunately the
16 311 system as you know well, is a citywide system
17 that comes to us from DoITT. There are technology
18 improvements that we would love to see and we are
19 requesting that would help to enhance in efficiency
20 but in the interim and to your last point, I think
21 about making sure that there is resolution to the
22 service requests, Chief Holmes and I have put in a
23 midlevel oversight at the borough level and I know
24 you're very well aware of how we're organized. You
25 precinct, your patrol bureau and then you have us
here at the bureau. We advance it to the policy at

3 the bureau level and we're now actually giving them
4 technology to watch 311 service requests bloom on pin
5 maps. Very large screens in their bureau commands
6 and we could see them as they occur that we were able
7 to identify 311 hot spots. Make sure that our
8 responses are appropriate to what we're seeing in 311
9 and also care to supervision all the way up to the
10 duty captain or duty inspector level to respond to
11 larger scale real time 311 incidents.

12 So, we're looking very, very hard at every point
13 you're bringing up here and there's certainly room
14 for improvement but I think you know our focus is
15 aligned with yours and I'm going to take back
16 everything you just said and see how we can sharpen
17 it up.

18 KIM ROYSTER: So, Madam Chair if I could jump in
19 and just comment on one of the things that Chief
20 Abbassi said. All of the 77 precincts have traffic
21 safety teams. Every week there's a traffic safety
22 forum. The Executive Officer in those precincts are
23 responsible and accountable for looking at the
24 traffic issues in the relative precincts. One of the
25 things Chief Abbassi has just mentioned, is that
they're going to leverage technology to make sure the

3 311 calls are handled properly. Those 311 calls that
4 are pertaining to traffic and parking, we now will
5 have the ability once this technology is stood up to
6 have that discussion in the traffic safety forum and
7 to see what issues are taking place and how they're
8 handled.

9 So, it's a layer effect that we've been
10 discussing to make sure that the 311 calls as it
11 relates to traffic are taken care of.

12 CHAIRPERSON GIBSON: Okay. Well, I do
13 acknowledge that the response times for 311 calls has
14 increased. But I think what we're seeing is that it's
15 an unusual increase and so, as a result of some of
16 our findings and just generally talking to many of
17 the advocates, it appears that a lot of these 311
18 calls are bring closed in a particularly expeditious
19 way that does not seem reasonable. And so, that's
20 why we're bringing this up because as the end of the
21 day, our goal is to change the behavior for everyone
22 and that includes police officers. We don't expect
23 anyone to park and deny access to bike lanes, to bus
24 lanes to fire hydrants to emergency access and
25 officers are no exception. What we struggle with in
the city is a growing population in New York City and

3 police precincts that are in residential communities
4 with residents and home owners and businesses. And
5 so, what I'd like to understand because this is a
6 part of the same conversation, we need to identify
7 parking alternatives for police officers. Many
8 police officers do not live in our local communities
9 that they work in and they travel to come to our
10 communities to work.

11 They bring their personal vehicles. They need a
12 place to park. Not on the sidewalk, not in the fire
13 hydrant, not in the bus stop, not in the crosswalk.
14 But that has happened because there is not a
15 sufficient amount of parking spaces. And the people
16 that live in our communities and witness this every
17 single day, are the ones that are coming forth
18 complaining and they deserve to be heard just like
19 anybody else.

20 And so, what I wonder is, is the Department
21 looking at parking alternatives, so that officers can
22 find parking garages and other places. I mean, I say
23 that because we have to get these vehicles off of our
24 streets. In a way that doesn't disrupt their work
25 but also doesn't disrupt the quality of life of the
residents that live and work in our communities.

3 ISA ABBASSI: So, I again completely align with
4 everything your saying Chair Gibson and you know, I
5 know you mentioned an increase in response time but I
6 believe you meant decrease and we see that decrease
7 and I understand exactly what the intend of what
8 you're saying is.

9 CHAIRPERSON GIBSON: Right decrease.

10 ISA ABBASSI: But with regard to alternatives to
11 parking, another very important point. Being good
12 neighbors is something that you know ultimately is
13 very important to us as an agency and at the precinct
14 level, it's something that we focus on.

15 Now, enforcement around the station houses is
16 something that we've been concentrating and focusing
17 you know our personnel on and try to again get that
18 level of oversight to help us with the quality
19 control. But to the point of alternatives, yes we
20 are looking and I know you are aware of the
21 complexities involved with that. I can site one
22 example from memory where we use the empire outlets
23 to provide parking in their private garage for
24 members of the service to keep the streets clear for
25 residents. I know we have other precincts around the
city, some in Queens that have some in Brooklyn,

3 actually all over the city that have some very, very
4 difficult parking situations and we are really
5 creating uhm, you know obstacles to that good
6 neighbor philosophy that we're trying to promote.

7 So, yes, we're looking at it. Yes, it's very,
8 very complicated and it's bigger than this agency.
9 It's something I'd certainly be happy for us to have
10 further discussion with offline but uhm, we are
11 looking at it.

12 CHAIRPERSON GIBSON: Okay. Let me ask the
13 question of the responsibility of the Integrity
14 Control Officer. Whose responsibility is it at a
15 precinct level to oversee and supervise all of the
16 handling of 311 calls that come in to the local
17 precinct? Prior to our investigation in which we
18 shared our findings with you, has the department
19 received any complaints? Have you seen any patterns
20 of mishandling of officers as it relates to any of
21 these 311 traffic parking related calls? Have you
22 been made aware? Are you doing anything about it?
23 What can you tell us that has already been done to
24 address these issues prior to today's hearing?

25 ISA ABBASSI: So, 311 and the Integrity Control
Officer, ultimately the Commanding Officer of each

3 precinct is responsible for the integrity and the
4 oversight of that 311 system. The Integrity Control
5 Officer however, along with Desk Officer for two
6 level supervision, Special Operations Lieutenant.
7 There are layers of supervision over this 311 system
8 to ensure that there is integrity not only in the
9 response but in the handling and the finalization.

10 Uhm, there have been anecdotal 311's that were
11 mishandled by officers where discipline was meted
12 out. If you have examples and I believe you provided
13 us with 14 on 50 observations where you found that
14 our response was in question. We'd be happy to look
15 at them and there will be discipline if they were in
16 fact intentionally mishandled.

17 CHAIRPERSON GIBSON: Okay. Well, have you been
18 looking at some of the data that your department, the
19 Patrol Services Bureau has been receiving from each
20 of the precincts? Like, are there ongoing dialogues
21 that I know we have traffic stat right? Which is
22 just like CompStat.

23 ISA ABBASSI: Public safety forum.

24 CHAIRPERSON GIBSON: Right of course. So, have
25 you seen any of these trends over you know a period
of time where its caused you to uhm, look at the

3 Patrol Guide, look at additional guides and really
4 give the uhm, the information to officers if their
5 behavior does improve as it relates to responding to
6 these calls?

7 ISA ABBASSI: Absolutely. So, we've seen - first
8 of all to the question of oversight in meeting forums
9 and discussion, in addition to the traffic safety
10 forum which is phenomenal for getting information out
11 related to traffic safety. We hold PSB stat on a
12 nearly monthly basis where 311 response and oversight
13 is addressed. It's also addressed in CompStat. We
14 address that on a weekly basis as well.

15 Our response is identified areas of improvement,
16 best practices getting pushed out but to the point of
17 long term improvement and changing culture, uhm,
18 again, I'm going to point you to some technology
19 improvements that we're pushing forward. And this
20 was well prior to this meeting but unfortunately some
21 of the technology improvements take you know a bit of
22 time but luckily we're starting to see the fruits of
23 that starting I think this week. But the iPhone App
24 and the monitor ring of 311's in real time on
25 Department iPhones by every officer on patrol,
supervisor on patrol, all the way up through the

3 ranks, having that capability certainly provides
4 officers with you know a level of oversight that we
5 didn't have before. And then you know, the increased
6 focus that we provide through body camera review now,
7 you know we're asking officers to start increasing
8 body cam activation on what would normally be
9 considered a nonmandatory activation.

10 We want them to start activating body worn
11 cameras so that we can go in and audit their
12 response, see what they're doing, what they're seeing
13 and what they're hearing. And then that way we could
14 either take you know positive action or disciplinary
15 action if necessary if they're not meeting our
16 expectations.

17 KIM ROYSTER: So, if I may add, in the traffic
18 safety forum, the discussion about 311 calls is
19 around whether or not officers are not only
20 responding but contacting, making connections with
21 the caller to actually provider the caller
22 information about what was done about their
23 complaint.

24 We find that this is definitely in the lines of
25 not only just customer service but also letting the
public or the community know that we hear what

3 they're saying. We're listening to it and we're
4 addressing it. So, if we don't get back to the
5 caller, it erodes the trust that the community has in
6 the Police Department.

7 So, that's one of the areas that we focus on.
8 Making sure that the caller is aware that we have the
9 complaint and not only do we have the complaint, but
10 going back, letting the caller know exactly what we
11 have done.

12 CHAIRPERSON GIBSON: Is that being done today
13 Chief? You officers when responding to a 311 call,
14 call back the initial complainant and let them know
15 that the case has been handled and closed?

16 KIM ROYSTER: So, I'll clarify. It's being – the
17 conversation is being conducted yes, on a weekly
18 basis with the Executive Officers in the 77th
19 Precinct that handle 311 calls.

20 CHAIRPERSON GIBSON: Okay, that's not familiar to
21 me. I've never known that to happen, so I need to
22 look into that. But you know, I think our overall
23 efforts is to maintain the integrity of the 311 call
24 system. There's a reason why New Yorkers call and
25 they need to be heard and their voices need to be
heard. And for New Yorkers to take the effort and

3 the time to go through the 311 call system and submit
4 an actual complaint, we owe them the respect to
5 respond expeditiously and efficiently and make sure
6 that the cases are handled with care and compassion
7 just like we would expect if we, ourselves call 311.

8 And I know I call 311 many times when I see
9 condition in the district that are alarming and
10 dangerous to me. So, let me ask, does the Department
11 require that parking related 311 complaints are
12 closed within a specific period of time? Do you have
13 any sorts of timeframes that are mandated on
14 officers? Or is there no window at all?

15 ISA ABBASSI: So, the only mandatory we give in
16 regard to 311 is our service commitment, which is
17 eight hours, right? Other than panhandling and
18 homeless encampments which is four hours I believe;
19 these service requests are supposed to be done within
20 eight hours.

21 You know on patrol and as far as the agencies
22 concerned, we should be doing way better than eight
23 hours, right? So, what we tell our people is we
24 expect a reasonable amount of time. Given the active
25 call for service load at the time, the man power in
the field, the response should be within a reasonable

3 amount of time. Usually I would say a reasonable
4 amount of time is probably going to be under 90
5 minutes.

6 CHAIRPERSON GIBSON: Okay, I mean that eight hour
7 window, that's a long time and I think the
8 frustration is that there are many instances where
9 once a 311 call is submitted and transferred to NYPD,
10 depending on the person it's assigned to, depending
11 on the volume of the precinct, we know there are
12 instances where by the time those officers arrive on
13 the scene to address that 311 call, guess what? The
14 vehicle is gone.

15 And so, you know the case is closed but the issue
16 has not been addressed. Uhm, is there any
17 possibility that the department is going to consider
18 revising that timeframe for anything that's parking,
19 traffic related? You said 90 minutes, I like that
20 better than eight hours.

21 ISA ABBASSI: So, let me clarify the eight hours
22 Chair Gibson.

23 CHAIRPERSON GIBSON: Okay.

24 ISA ABBASSI: The eight hours you know, I think
25 you're aware of this but allow me to just refresh
your memory. Uhm, you know we have agreements with

3 DoITT and 311 and other city agencies. Every agency
4 has a service commitment time. So, our service
5 commitment time to 311 is eight hours but we exceed
6 that every time. I mean it's outliers when we're
7 approaching those numbers.

8 Our citywide response time right now average
9 across over one million calls, is about three hours.
10 So, that's our average across every day. That's with
11 the very highs averaging to the very lows and
12 everything in between. But our average to illegal
13 parking service requests and I think we have 200 - we
14 have about a quarter of a million service requests
15 for illegal parking year to date and our service time
16 is under 90 minutes. It's about an hour and 20
17 minutes. That's the average.

18 So, I think we're doing very, very well on that.
19 What we have to you know make sure we're doing and in
20 some cases to your earlier point do better on, is the
21 quality of service we provide when we get there and
22 that's something we're very focused on.

23 CHAIRPERSON GIBSON: Okay, I agree and I
24 acknowledge that you know there's always, always room
25 for improvement. As long as we recognize that we're
not satisfied with what we see today and I'm not

3 satisfied with what I see today. Uhm, I don't know
4 if any of you answered the question but prior to our
5 investigation, prior to today's hearing, has the
6 department received complaints? And you mentioned
7 some of the disciplinary measures. Would you be able
8 to provide the Council with a more detailed response
9 in terms of what some of those discipline measures
10 were? And what you also, you know, I'm not one for
11 punitive measures. I'm about improving behavior.

12 So, I understand the disciplinary process but I
13 also understand that a lot of this could be
14 retraining and emphasizing what the rules and the
15 guidelines are and reminding officers of how they can
16 respond and should respond to 311 calls.

17 So, would you be able to elaborate in a more
18 detailed way offline for the Committee in terms of
19 those officers that falsify responses and we
20 disciplined and what measures you took to improve the
21 behavior overall?

22 ISA ABBASSI: Agreed and I think Mike Clarke can
23 reach out offline and we may be able to provide some
24 examples of measures that we're taking.

25 CHAIRPERSON GIBSON: Okay. Okay and then I guess
one of my final questions is, looking at the work

3 that the NYPD does collaboratively with the
4 Department of Transportation as it relates to traffic
5 related crashes, overall street safety and making
6 sure that we have a shared streets mindset. It's
7 challenging to change people's mindsets because there
8 are some that think the streets belong to them and
9 not anyone else. And at the end of the day, for
10 those that are drivers, we are pedestrians, we are
11 bicyclists. We have different roles that we fall
12 into every single day.

13 And so, I'm very mindful that the work we do has
14 to have a real impact. These stories are
15 heartbreaking and every time we have another traffic
16 related crash in this city or a fatality it breaks my
17 heart. Particularly when I hear of parents who have
18 lost children and babies. It is not acceptable. And
19 so, we all are responsible for what has happened in
20 this city and we all have to do better. I'm putting
21 myself in this category, my colleagues and everyone
22 that has a responsibility in this city. It is not
23 acceptable. It's not fair and I think we all have to
24 do better.

25 So, what I'm hoping that we will get from the
NYPD to me, is a real commitment to make sure that we

3 prioritize these parking related and traffic related
4 311 calls. We hold every officer accountable and
5 make sure that as they respond to these calls, they
6 do it expeditiously and efficiently.

7 Some of the cases that we found; these cases are
8 being closed way to fast. Less than five minutes is
9 not reasonable. I mean, that's great but it's not
10 reasonable. And I just want to make sure that at the
11 end of the day, everyone is following the rules and
12 they're looking at this as a real priority. I
13 understand we have a lot of challenges in this city
14 but traffic related issues and parking related issues
15 are equally as important as quality of life and all
16 the others issues we deal with right? Nothing less
17 than what we rightfully deserve. And so, it's my
18 hope that the department and the patrol services unit
19 will make sure you have a better handle on this
20 system, with the ICO's and with the XO's and
21 everybody in all of the 77 commands, including
22 housing and transit, to make sure that everybody is
23 doing better.

24 We all want the same thing. The challenge is how
25 we get there, right? We don't have all the answers
and that's why we have advocates and others that work

3 with us to come up with better solutions but at the
4 end of the day, we have to do better. These traffic
5 related crashes are alarming and if we say Vision
6 Zero, then we need to mean actually getting to zero.
7 And nothing more than just zero. And we're not there
8 yet and it's going to take a long time and a lot of
9 effort and a lot of resources and education and
10 outreach to New Yorkers and different advocates and
11 so many others that live and work in this city.

12 And so, I'm hoping that you know we will continue
13 to follow up with you. We will get the results of
14 this investigation from the Internal Affairs Bureau
15 as it relates to our own findings, but also, I hope
16 that we can continue to have a dialogue about ways in
17 which we can improve this system. The parking
18 alternatives that I talked about are very important.
19 For those of us that live in communities with
20 precincts on our blocks, the municipal, the civic
21 area. I represent 161st Street with all the courts,
22 so not only do I have to deal with NYPD traffic, I
23 got to deal with court officers and everyone else
24 that comes along 161st Street.

25 So, it's a real, real challenge and I recognize
that but it's not impossible to get this work done.

3 And so, my hope and expectation as we move forward is
4 that we will identify other measures creatively that
5 can get what we need to be done and assure New
6 Yorkers that we are prioritizing parking related and
7 traffic related issues. If folks are calling 311,
8 then we need to respond and they deserve the answers.
9 They deserve solutions, just as we would ask for
10 solutions ourselves.

11 So, I hope you guys are committed as we are. You
12 have a partner in the City Council. We have to hold
13 ourselves accountable just like we hold you
14 accountable. Because at the end of the day, we all
15 want to achieve the same and that is making sure we
16 create safe streets for every single New Yorker.

17 KIM ROYSTER: Absolutely Chair.

18 CHAIRPERSON GIBSON: Thank you. I'll turn it
19 back over to Chair Rodriguez and our colleagues. I
20 know they have questions. Thank you so much Chair.

21 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you for the great
22 job you know and as I said before, a great honor to
23 be working with you. It could be that probably we'll
24 never know but this could be the last joint hearing
25 that we do. So, and I know that if that would be the
case, I know that in the next role that you will

3 have, you will continue to be the voice in not only
4 addressing this issue but many other issues important
5 for all New Yorkers, working class, middle class and
6 upper class, so thank you.

7 Now I'll turn it back to Elliott, so that he will
8 start calling my colleagues with the timing.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, we will now call on
10 Council Members for questions. First, we will go to
11 the bill sponsors and then we will call on Council
12 Members in the order that they raise their hand to
13 ask a question. Members, please keep your questions
14 to five minutes. The Sergeant at Arms will keep a
15 timer and will let you know when your time is up.
16 Council Member Holden will be first followed by
17 Council Member Barron. Council Member Holden.

18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Well thank you Chairs and
20 again, this is uhm, this topic is near and dear to
21 me. As someone whose been involved in not only
22 overseeing the 311 and trying to improve the 311
23 response, uhm on the local level. But holding the
24 officers accountable for not responding and what
25 Chair Gibson said, obviously five minutes is not
realistic. It's not acceptable and we see a lot of

3 that. In fact Street Blogs reported last week about
4 thousands of service requests about illegal parking
5 and so forth, reckless driving. That the response
6 has been under five minutes and that's not again,
7 that's not realistic and there's thousands of them
8 now when there used to be very few.

9 But I've caught officers doing that in my
10 precinct and I've contacted the CEO of the precinct
11 and he looked into and said, yeah, they didn't
12 respond to it, they just falsified it and we're going
13 to discipline them. And I don't know what the
14 discipline could be. It could be a loss of a
15 vacation day. But it really is still happening over
16 a long period of time and it's unacceptable. So, I
17 just want to echo that Chair Gibson's comments and
18 her obviously important Committee investigation.

19 But uhm, we can't allow that you know and again,
20 I introduced a bill, it's 1002, which would require
21 311 customer service center to indicate that an
22 agency is unable to respond to a service request.
23 That means, let's get some honest feedback from the
24 agency, whether it's police or otherwise.

25 But Chief, I just want to talk about uhm, uhm, my
bill. In December of 2019, the City Council passed a

3 bill Intro. 1412 at the time, which would allow the
4 NYPD to tow vehicles from sidewalks, crosswalks, fire
5 hydrant spots and bike lanes. The law required that
6 the NYPD issue a report in January of 2021, with a
7 number of vehicles towed by the police precinct. I
8 have not seen any report on this. Can you speak to
9 that at all?

10 MICHAEL CLARKE: So, Council Member, I believe
11 the report is on our website. The towed vehicles
12 obstructing traffic report, I believe is what you're
13 talking about. Uhm, but if it is not what you're
14 talking about, then we'll certainly look into what
15 happened -

16 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: I'll look at that. I'll
17 look at that but uhm, uhm, it's you know what I get
18 on the local level is that the precinct can't uhm,
19 tow the vehicles because of the pound issue, which is
20 - is there any resolution to that? I mean, I keep
21 hearing this now about there's no space at the pound
22 to tow these cars. So, what's the resolution? When
23 are we going to hear something that solves that?

24 MICHAEL CLARKE: Well, and I think unfortunately
25 the situation came a little bit more difficult for us
in terms of the two pound. This year we lost our

3 entire Manhattan tow pound at the beginning of the
4 year.

5 Uhm, I know this is something our facilities team
6 is always looking into and trying to find a new space
7 for us to go and be able to continue to tow you know
8 cars that are blocking you know sidewalks, hydrants
9 and bike lanes. It is definitely a challenge that
10 we're facing and I agree with you that you know,
11 space limitations in the city are a challenge.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Yeah, but I've been
13 hearing - see again, we're not getting any solutions.
14 Who is working on trying to find a solution? What
15 are the possible solutions? How many locations can
16 we identify that maybe we can start towing the cars
17 to? This again, we keep going around in circles.
18 I've been hearing this for a long, long time about
19 the lack of not only tow trucks. The lack of heavy
20 tow trucks. The lack of space in the pound. So,
21 what's the use of having laws that we're going to put
22 on the books that if we can't tow them and we're not
23 going to tow them? And we're not going to answer 311
24 honestly and we're not going to and by the way, just
25 getting, I know I'm on the clock here. But I heard
mentioned about parking around precincts. I can tell

3 you how many decades I've been dealing with that and
4 it's never - there are so many CEO's, it never gets
5 resolved.

6 The officers block crosswalks, fire hydrants
7 routinely. Everything they block and they are
8 allowed to do it. And if you call a 311 complaint
9 about that, uhm, what you get is, the oh, the uhm,
10 the problem was corrected and it wasn't. They don't
11 tell you what the resolution was but the police
12 responded and corrected the problem. And that's a
13 joke. To be honest, that's a joke and we're sick of
14 it. You know all around the precincts -

15 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: So, we need honest,
17 honesty from the NYPD in not only 311 but in real
18 solutions to problems, not just talk. So, I want to
19 hear a real plan as to what you're going to do about
20 the tow problem, you know tow pound problem and what
21 you're going to do about parking of officers around
22 the precincts that are endangering everyone. And
23 they should not be above the law. They should park
24 legally like the rest of us do and when they don't,
25 they should be ticketed and that's what I'm not

3 seeing. I don't think anybody is seeing that.

4 Crickets.

5 ISA ABBASSI: Oh, no, no crickets here. Uhm,
6 what I will say Council Member. A couple points that
7 you bring up. I think you know we do a very - we
8 concentrate and try very, very hard to solve problems
9 in our communities right? In some cases, we're the
10 cause of the problem. I know I've sat down with you
11 personally in our conference center downstairs to try
12 to work on some issues that were important to you.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: I'll take you out to the
14 104 precinct now and we'll take a walk and you'll see
15 at night that people have to walk in the street
16 because they can't even get into the crosswalk.
17 There is fire hydrants blocked all over the place.
18 The CEO said they were going to address it. Nothing
19 happens. How many CEO's do I have to go through on
20 this?

21 ISA ABBASSI: I would be happy to take that walk
22 with you and we will, you know we will stay focused
23 on solving problems for our community. And we will
24 double those efforts when we are the cause of that
25 problem. But what I will say is, you know, we - our
focus, our complete focus and everything about us in

3 our community is to be problem solvers and not
4 problem causers.

5 Now, I hear what you're saying and I'd be happy
6 to work with you offline on it and I'd be happy to
7 sit down with you and the CEO to 104 or any other
8 precinct you'd like. Uhm, but I'll also say that to
9 the five minute response issue that you brought up,
10 which uh, I agree can be a problematic indicator. I
11 just want to make yourself and anyone else who's
12 looking at the data aware. There are some, there are
13 some use cases where that would be a legitimate
14 timeframe right.

15 So, and it's one of the technology movements that
16 we're trying to correct, so that we can eliminate the
17 legitimate under five responses, so that could look
18 at the problematic ones.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Right, right but listen,
20 I use the 311 app every day alright. And when I put
21 my name on it, usually the police precinct responds
22 but my constituents are complaining about the same
23 thing over and over again, that it wasn't corrected
24 and they closed the case. And sometimes within five
25 minutes and again, we've caught officers not doing -

3 not going to the scene. And not even report- you
4 know not doing it the right way.

5 So, I understand five minutes could be legit here
6 and there but by and large, there is a - it's an
7 epidemic and it has to be corrected on the precinct
8 level and people have to be held accountable when
9 that's happening.

10 ISA ABBASSI: So, Council Member, I want you to
11 hear what I'm saying clearly to you. We have work to
12 do. We want to do it and we want to do it with you.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Okay, and I want to -
14 but see, I seem to be going around in circles because
15 you know we catch the officer doing it, you know he's
16 disciplined. We never hear the discipline; we're not
17 allowed to hear what happened but it's still every
18 day we're getting the police responded and corrected
19 the situation. That is not acceptable. When
20 somebody takes the time to report you know somebody
21 parked illegally at a hydrant and police responded
22 and took the necessary actions or - that's vague and
23 that means that the person usually had a placard and
24 they called the person to move the car.

25 But what we need is, we need really honest
reporting. And that's what you know, I think we all

1 want that but I just feel we're going around in
2 circles. I'm just getting frustrated to the point
3 where we need real, real measures to correct this.
4 That means parking around the precinct you know
5 illegally should not be tolerated. You go on the BQ,
6 you get off of Tillery Street Chief, take a look at
7 what that looks like with fire and police officers
8 parking every where they want and then there's no
9 cleanup. There is - it's just a mess down there and
10 everybody's looking the other way.
11

12 So, don't say that the NYPD is addressing this
13 because they're not. It's not happening, it's
14 getting worse. So, you're either going to address it
15 or not.

16 ISA ABBASSI: What I said was and what I'll say
17 again is, I agree with you. I see what you see. We
18 need to work on this together and we're here to do
19 it.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: I want to hear the plan
21 to work on it.

22 ISA ABBASSI: Well, we could talk about a plan
23 offline. I'll be happy to get in touch with you
24 today.

25

3 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Alright, okay. Take a
4 look at the Tilery Street. Take a look at Tilery
5 Street and tell me if that looks great. That's the
6 City of New York. Take a look at how that looks when
7 you get off the BQE and they're parked on the
8 shoulder. You can't even - it's dangerous. You
9 can't even see oncoming traffic when you're getting
10 off the BQE at Tilery.

11 ISA ABBASSI: Be happy to follow up Council
12 Member.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: That's not even my
14 district but it's a mess. Alright, thank you
15 Chief's.

16 KIM ROYSTER: Council Member, I'd like to respond
17 to your uhm, issue about the tow pound and I just
18 want to bring to your attention how losing the
19 Manhattan tow pound, which we have been on since
20 1977, has effected the day to day operations on how
21 we tow.

22 We are still towing Manhattan but you're right,
23 the pounds that are outside of Manhattan are now
24 getting populated with everything that we're towing
25 from 59th Street and above gets towed to the
Manhattan tow pound, I'm sorry, the Bronx tow pound.

3 And everything below 59th Street goes to the Brooklyn
4 tow pound.

5 So, we are still in conversations with our
6 facilities management team to actually identify a
7 location where we can get a tow pound for strictly
8 Manhattan.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Alright, I just think
10 this has to be solved and not just we're you know,
11 we're identified, we're talking. I think we need to
12 solve it eventually and the sooner the better. Thank
13 you Chief.

14 KIM ROYSTER: You're welcome.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next we'll hear from
16 Council Member Barron. Council Member Barron.

17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you very much.
19 Thank you to the Chairs and thank you to the
20 panelists that are here to respond to our questions.
21 My question relates to the bill that I've introduced,
22 Intro. 9 once again, going way back to the beginning
23 of the numbering system, which requires installation
24 of traffic control signals or a stop sign at any
25 intersection adjacent to a school.

3 I'm glad to know that the Administration
4 vigorously supports this legislation and is looking
5 to see it become law. I'm glad to hear that. My
6 questions are specifically, do you know how many
7 intersections adjacent to schools do not presently
8 have a traffic signal controlled device or stop sign?

9 HANK GUTMAN: Yeah, no, no, no, I'm sorry. I was
10 muted.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you.

12 HANK GUTMAN: I know that we are on track to have
13 addressed 1,000 of them as promised by the mayor by
14 the end of the year. How many that leaves, I don't
15 know. Perhaps Deputy Commissioner Benson would have
16 that number.

17 JOSHUA BENSON: I think we have just round
18 numbers on this and it changes you know as we
19 complete each location. Uhm, and I'm just looking in
20 my files to see if I can find something that has
21 those round numbers. Uhm, but I think the good news
22 is, most, more than half, most of the intersections
23 that are around schools have either a signal or an
24 all way stop already, so. But there certainly are
25 some that we are you know working to address under
the Mayor's initiative.

3 And I do want to add also you know school's are
4 obviously very important locations but even taking a
5 step further back, something we've been doing for the
6 last four years actually is not waiting around for
7 uhm, requests to come in from the public for studies
8 of intersections for signals or all way stops but
9 actually using the crash data that we have available
10 through NYPD to select intersections, screen them to
11 see if you know if they don't have a signal and all
12 way stop. And proactively study them before the
13 request comes in. And so, that's been a productive
14 process for us as well.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you.

16 JOSHUA BENSON: To try to head some of these off.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you., SO, my next
18 question is uh, the Mayor announced his initiative
19 for the 1,000 intersections and I believe it was
20 January of 2020 just before the pandemic. And you're
21 on target to have 1,000 of them done by the end of
22 this year? Is that what the timetable is?

23 HANK GUTMAN: Uh, there are a handful of signal
24 installations that will extend into early 2022. But
25 we are, according to the records I have here.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: So -

3 HANK GUTMAN: But we are addressing it and I
4 should say that there – in not every instance is it
5 either an all way stop or a speed signal. There have
6 been some instances where based on the studies that
7 we're required to do by federal law, the indication
8 is that the speed hump or turn calming installation
9 of some sort is the appropriate remedy. But will
10 have addressed 1,000 of those schools by early in
11 2022.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: So, then we assume that
13 or expect that the same rate of completion will
14 continue hopefully with the next administration
15 understanding the importance and the severity of this
16 topic and if so, when can we expect that every
17 intersection adjacent to a school will have a stop
18 sign, a traffic control signal, a calming device or a
19 speed bump.

20 HANK GUTMAN: Again, I can't speak for the next
21 Mayor but we would certainly encourage that this
22 continue as a priority. Because for the reasons that
23 you've identified in the legislation and obviously
24 did some time ago when Intro. 9 was introduced, uhm
25 it is critically important that we do whatever we can
as a practical matter to safeguard our children at

3 the schools. And those intersections both the
4 intersections, I mean also crossings that aren't at
5 the intersection. I remember with Council Member
6 Holden looking at one of those on your school in his
7 district.

8 I mean we need to make the ways that kids and
9 parents and teachers get to and from schools as safe
10 as we possibly can.

11 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay, thank you very much
13 for your responses and thank you to the Chairs. That
14 concludes the questions that I wanted to present.
15 Thank you.

16 COMMITTEE COUNCIL: Thank you. Next, we will
17 hear from Council Member Levin who had his hand
18 raised first. He will be followed by Council Member
19 Miller. Council Member Levin.

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Thank you very much
22 Counsel and thank you very much Chair. Thank you
23 Commissioner and Chief as well. Uhm, my first
24 question is so I represent downtown Brooklyn and in
25 downtown Brooklyn we have a you know a real problem
with illegally parked cars in bike lanes, in

1 crosswalks, on sidewalks and uhm, generally there is
2 some type of placard involved. It may be a state
3 placard. It could be a hand printed placard.
4 Somebody could draw it on with a crayon. There'll be
5 fake police badges or PBA cards. It doesn't matter,
6 everywhere you go in downtown Brooklyn there is an
7 illegally parked car with some kind of placard. My
8 question is for the Police Department, whose
9 responsibility is it to ticket those cars.
10

11 KIM ROYSTER: So, I'll start off Councilman. I
12 am very familiar with the area that you're speaking
13 about. As a matter of fact, I am probably on the
14 telephone or speaking through Zoom with the Precinct
15 Commander that actually covers that area and there
16 are times when we get calls of cars parking in that
17 area and he will send resources over to address it
18 but definitely I will send resources over to address
19 it.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: But is it the precinct -
21 is it the precincts responsibility or is it
22 Transportation?

23 KIM ROYSTER: It's the precincts responsibility
24 however, the Transportation Bureau will support their
25 efforts if it's a problematic location.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Cause, so the ticketing
4 agents are all precinct police officers, is that
5 right?

6 KIM ROYSTER: No, let me just clarify. We have
7 traffic agents that are responsible for enforcement.
8 Enforcement if anyone is parking in violation. So,
9 they will handle that issue. But police officers can
10 also handle the issue.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Because you can't throw a
12 tennis ball in downtown Brooklyn without hitting an
13 illegally parked car. I promise you it is absolutely
14 impossible. They are everywhere and it is total free
15 rein. And then there's a guy that's been Twitting at
16 me that showed me that he did a lot of 311 calls and
17 as a response, he got an anonymous text message uhm
18 from a 631 number, that's Eastern Long Island. Uhm,
19 and it said, keep f-ing around is what it said. Just
20 not, not signed by anybody but it just happened to be
21 that he was the guy that was calling 311 repeatedly
22 over and over and over again, probably being perhaps
23 a little obnoxious about it. Uhm, but the response
24 he got was an anonymous text message from somebody.
25 Now, if that happens - if that turns out to be a

1 police officer, you know there has to be some kind of
2 consequences for that.
3

4 But that's what he has and I sent that over to
5 the Commanding Officer of the 84th Precinct. Uhm,
6 how many, how many, how many tickets have been issued
7 by the NYPD like say in the last month. If for the
8 month of September, for cars parked in bike lanes?

9 KIM ROYSTER: So, I'm not sure if I had that
10 specific data set but I can tell you the number of
11 bike lane parking summonses that we've had this year.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Okay.

13 KIM ROYSTER: Okay. So, uhm, it's uhm about
14 64,000.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: For parking in bike lanes?

16 KIM ROYSTER: Yes.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: There's 64,000 tickets
18 issued for parking in bike lanes.

19 KIM ROYSTER: Yes.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Uhm, on the year. Uhm, so
21 going back to just this question of - So, TEA's are
22 the primary officers of the city that are responsible
23 for - if someone calls the 311 on an illegally parked
24 car, who's responsibility then is it to go out and
25 ticket the vehicle?

3 ISA ABBASSI: Council Member, parking enforcement
4 is a shared responsibility amongst NYPD Bureau's and
5 units. To your point, traffic enforcement agents do
6 a tremendous job and they, you know they are a
7 primary parking summons writers. 311 calls for an
8 instance like this where a car is blocking a bike
9 lane would be routed to the precinct concerned and
10 then the precinct - uhm, a sworn police officer from
11 the precinct assigned to patrol would likely handle
12 that service request.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Now, what I hear a lot
14 anecdotally is that uhm, complaints are closed out
15 without any enforcement action there.

16 ISA ABBASSI: So, the officers have many
17 resolution options available to them. Everything
18 from requesting the motorist to move the vehicle,
19 which wouldn't result in enforcement, to summons
20 enforcement, to uh, you know sometimes the vehicle
21 leaves the scene beforehand. There are you know,
22 there's a menu of items that the officer can select
23 from to resolve the issue. And obviously if the
24 vehicle moves before they get there than that
25 decision has been made for them.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Okay, I mean, you can
4 understand. I mean, if you just look at say my
5 Twitter feed of people tweeting at me. All day long,
6 I get people tweet pictures, I'm sure you get the
7 same tweets of pictures in downtown Brooklyn of cars
8 illegally parked. I never see a ticket on those
9 cars, ever.

10 And again, you can't walk down - you couldn't
11 throw a tennis ball in downtown Brooklyn without
12 hitting an illegally parked car. It is, it's
13 impossible. They're everywhere, everywhere. I did a
14 tour a couple weeks ago with the 84th Precinct in
15 Transit District 30. We walked over to Bon Street
16 between Schermerhorn and State Street and on the uhm,
17 west side of the street, which is all no parking like
18 eight to seven I think. And the entire block was
19 filled with cars with like phony placards. Vests,
20 reflective vests, uhm, PBA cards, I mean it is a free
21 for all, a free for all and nothing ever gets done
22 about it. And it's just this low level corruption.
23 It's low level corruption but it infects, it infects
24 kind of a mindset that - and because it is allowed
25 and I'm sorry but there's no answer other than,
somebody decides that there's a professional curtesy

3 involved and one and if it's a uniformed officer or
4 if it's uhm, somebody that is affiliated with a
5 uniformed officer or a family member of a uniformed
6 officer, that ticket will not be written. And it is
7 so flagrant. I just, I cannot emphasize enough how
8 flagrant it is.

9 I mean, I could spend an afternoon - I'll spend
10 an afternoon and I could find 30 instances I could
11 send you in single afternoon.

12 ISA ABBASSI: Council Member, I would never
13 presume to tell you what you see and what you don't
14 see. But what I could tell you is that you know we
15 write many, many summonses but what I will do because
16 I know what you're saying is fact. I've driven
17 through the area; I've seen the cars double parked
18 and parked -

19 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: I mean, look at the ones
20 that are parked on the sidewalk over by the BQE exit
21 that are all FDNY.

22 ISA ABBASSI: Well you know that's Council Member
23 Holden's point earlier and I hear it and you know
24 what I'm going to do is I'm going to speak to
25 Commander Rona after this call today. We're going to
get some of our you know investigations people who

3 are of quality assurance people out there and we're
4 going to see - we're going to take a look at it
5 independently and see what we could do. The other
6 side of that is -

7 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Look at Adams Street going
8 towards the bridge from Jiroemon(SP?) Street.

9 ISA ABBASSI: Council Member, I believe you. I
10 know where to look and you know I don't want you to
11 think that this is a police only issue. To your
12 point earlier the members of the judiciary, there are
13 courts there, there are schools there. There are a
14 lot of factors here that we need to address and we're
15 going to do it with -

16 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: But those are official
17 placards. I don't, I don't mind if somebody has an
18 official placard and they're parking in a you know
19 and it's a legal thing. But there's so many illegal.
20 There's just these phony ones. There ones that
21 people print them up and they get them laminated.
22 It's like - and there's no distinction made between
23 the two.

24 ISA ABBASSI: We'll take a look at it Council
25 Member.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: I appreciate it because
4 it's you know, it's kind of gotten to the point where
5 it's really gotten too far. So, okay, thank you very
6 much. I appreciate it.

7 ISA ABBASSI: Sure.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Next we'll hear
9 from Council Member Miller. Council Member Miller.

10 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: [INAUDIBLE 2:54:27]

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: You're coming in a little low
13 Council Member.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Address some of the
15 infrastructure issues to the Commissioner [INAUDIBLE
16 2:54:42-2:54:47]. Obviously want to reduce vehicles
17 off the street and [INAUDIBLE 2:54:51-2:54:59].

18 HANK GUTMAN: I'm sorry, I'm having a hard time
19 hearing the Council Member. Is it possible to get
20 more volume?

21 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Uh, can you hear me now.

22 HANK GUTMAN: Now I can hear you, yes sir.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Okay, so let's go with
24 that. So, uhm, could you explain the DOT's camera
25 enforcement of bus lanes? My understanding is that
the state at the city's request authorized DOT's to

3 place cameras along bus lanes to catch violators on
4 the corridors. But it requires two cameras to catch
5 the violators. Is this correct?

6 HANK GUTMAN: Uh, I'm not certain about the two
7 camera part but I know that we're working with the
8 MTA to do that and the cameras are on the buses.

9 JOSHUA BENSON: Council Member if I could add to
10 the Commissioners response that there's two ways in
11 which we do the camera enforcement on bus lanes. On
12 fixed poles next to the bus lanes DOT operated
13 cameras and that is a single camera that captures
14 traffic moving through the bus lane and then there is
15 another piece of the program with cameras mounted on
16 the MTA buses and that program, that's really
17 targeting double parked or parked vehicles, not the
18 moving traffic. So, if they observe the same vehicle
19 on two separate buses five minutes or more apart,
20 that triggers a violation. So, it's a variation on
21 the same type of coverage but we have the mobile
22 units on buses and the fixed units on poles.

23 HANK GUTMAN: And the five minute requirements
24 meant to exclude somebody just dropping and running.

25 JOSHUA BENSON: Yes.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Right, so, so, so that
4 kind of addresses uh, some of the issues and as we
5 follow, as I finish up, you'll see where we're going
6 with this. So, uhm, it's been noted that there's an
7 obviously Commissioner we've taken a tour to Merrick
8 Boulevard Corridor and the bus lane that is there.
9 And that bus lane had essentially been rendered
10 ineffective taking moving lanes and now making it
11 completely dedicated to auto body shops that remained
12 there to store their vehicles along the sidewalks,
13 the streets and even the medians.

14 Is this where those cameras would be effective?
15 Often times there are no place that cannot be
16 recognized when they sit on the street. Is there a
17 way that we have enforcement of these vehicles? It
18 was last year, this time last year when we had the
19 first conversation about that bus lane and bus lane
20 and enforcement mechanisms had been uh placed
21 everywhere except for in front of the problem spots
22 which was the body shops, auto bodies and other auto
23 shops.

24 Uhm, and subsequently, DOT said that they would
25 be having regular conversation with those business
owners to bring them up to speed. To date, uhm, that

3 problem still persists and it has rendered basically
4 the bus lane ineffective. How do we address that
5 now? You did, I had some camera questions about the
6 cameras that are mounted on the MTA buses but I think
7 those had been answered. But as we move forward,
8 certainly we want to be able to have a conversation
9 about whether how effective and impactful the work
10 that has been done at The Merrick Boulevard has been
11 considering those problem areas that my office
12 brought to the attention of DOT continues to persist.

13 And the other part would be that uh, nearly two
14 months into actual implementation where cameras are
15 up and running, there is no signage indicating hours
16 of operation. After 7:00 p.m., people were still
17 riding in the single lane. On the weekends, people
18 were piled into a lane and the impact has been
19 catastrophic. It has been that people avoid
20 Boulevard Business District like the pandemic. Also,
21 diverting traffic into already overburdened
22 residential streets.

23 So, if you know that is certainly an issue. And
24 then finally, first of all, Chair Rodriguez and -

25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: And Chair Gibson, thank
3 you for hosting this important conversation. But in
4 CB12 and 13, we are home of the most dangerous and
5 deadly roads in the entire borough.

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Council Member Miller, you're
7 cutting out.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: The cruel irony is that
9 we are also home to more speed cameras to anywhere in
10 the borough.

11 SEREANT AT ARMS: Council Member Miller, this is
12 the Chief Sergeant at Arms. You are cutting out.
13 Your audio is cutting off.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Is it cutting off because
15 my times is up?

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your times is up and we missed
17 your last 30 seconds of what you just said.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: So, yeah but everybody's
19 had far more than five minutes and this is really
20 important, so if you can hear me, I'd really
21 appreciate because I'm really getting to the nuts and
22 bolts of -

23 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Council Member, you can
24 finished. Thank you Sergeant. Thank you.

25

3 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Okay, so there is, we are
4 home to the most speed cameras which we had to foil
5 to get this information to Community Board 12 or 13.
6 Commissioner, you said that speed cameras work. I
7 don't know which came first, whether it was the
8 chicken or the egg, because while we had the most
9 speed cameras, we also had by far the most accidents.
10 585 and 12, 534 in 13 and that is just since January.

11 And so, what we have seen is uhm, that in my
12 opinion speed cameras don't necessarily work when
13 they are not coupled with the type of infrastructure
14 investment that other communities have seen
15 throughout the city.

16 Last year in 2021 Budget Hearing, we asked about
17 equity investment in the Street Safety program. What
18 I was told was that it was being done based on uhm
19 poverty levels and the fact of the matter is medium
20 to low poverty levels have 62 percent or nearly two-
21 thirds of all of the 6th Street safety investment in
22 the city while low to very high poverty levels have
23 the remaining 32 percent. Could you explain that?

24 HANK GUTMAN: Sure, let me take your questions
25 and I think there were a number of questions here.
First, in terms of the auto body shops, I remember

3 that I remember that vividly and I will follow up
4 with our Queens Borough team to find out what success
5 they had. As I remember, as I remember it was a
6 stubborn problem because the body shops would take
7 the plates off the cars. So, even if you had a
8 camera, you were getting a camera recording nothing
9 that was usable and the issue was, how do you get
10 them towed? Is that a job for the sheriff? Is that
11 a job for the Police Department? Is that a job for
12 Sanitation? And where do you tow them and who wants
13 to tow them and there's if there's no plate and you
14 aren't sure somebody is going to come back.

15 I do recall the commitment that we would reach
16 out, that the borough team would reach out to the
17 shop operators and I will find out what happened
18 there and get back to you. As to traffic signs
19 indicating hours on merit, we can certainly address
20 that. As you'll recall, your office raised an issue
21 about the hours on merit. We responded and I realize
22 our response wasn't entirely to your satisfaction but
23 we reduced the hours to be commensurate with the
24 ridership volumes. We can always change it further
25 is the facts warranted but you're right. There
should be signs indicating the hours and if that's

3 not there, I will absolutely raise that with the
4 borough folks.

5 And in terms of speed cameras, uhm, the
6 statistics show that they do work. I mean, they're
7 not full prove and as I said earlier in my testimony,
8 one of the big problem we have is that we aren't
9 allowed to run them overnight and on weekends when a
10 very substantial percentage of the dangerous conduct
11 occurs. So, I'm happy to look at the specific
12 numbers from within your district and I'm happy to
13 review those with you or your staff, however you want
14 to do it. I'm happy to come out and take another
15 visit. In fact, I think I'm going to be out there
16 with you on Friday for the launch of the busways on
17 Archer and Jamaica. We can take a look at what you
18 and I can do another tour when I'm out there then.

19 The final question you had was about the equity
20 of where we place or where we do the street
21 improvements. Again, I can show you the numbers for
22 your district as opposed to other districts. And,
23 and, and happy to discuss all of that with you. I
24 mean we tend to be data driven sir. I mean, we do it
25 based on the data is what we do and if we're missing
something, we're happy to be educated.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Okay, I have them here
4 and they said that it was based on poverty and in
5 this case is not. And then finally Chief Royster,
6 enforcement people are riding through red lights,
7 stop signs, riding on the wrong side of the street
8 and there is absolutely no enforcement. There is no
9 presence here in Southeast Queens. Where clearly we
10 outpace the city in the number of accidents that we
11 see and there is absolutely no enforcement happening
12 here at all. And uhm, I don't know what we do at
13 this point but even with the red light cameras and
14 the rest of it, I believe that some of the main cause
15 of the accidents as you said, it is the behavior of
16 the driver's that are on the street now. But there
17 are no consequences for those actions because there's
18 no one on the streets issuing summonses or addressing
19 that.

20 KIM ROYSTER: So, Council Member Miller, you're
21 absolutely right about the behavior and the choices
22 that motorists make. Let me just say that uhm,
23 cameras are a tool that we use. And they are a great
24 tool, however, they are not a panacea. You know,
25 people are making these bad choices and running red
lights which are very risky. As far as the

3 enforcement in your area, I would like to speak with
4 you offline as well as have a patrol speak with you
5 and find out where specifically are you finding these
6 violations that are occurring. Because it's very
7 important, important for the community to know that
8 they are safe everywhere. And especially in the
9 community at 113th Precinct over there and also other
10 South Jamaica areas that we could probably look at
11 and come together with a plan with enforcement and
12 maybe just to also as I spoke about earlier is to
13 look at that as one of our corridors that we could
14 address.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Thank you. Thank you
16 Chairs for indulging me and thank everyone for the
17 work that we are collectively doing. And as Vanessa
18 said, we can all do more.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Next we'll hear
20 from Council Member Dinowitz. Council Member
21 Dinowitz.

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Thank you Chairs Gibson
24 and Rodriguez. For my first questions are for the
25 NYPD. First of all, good afternoon. I hope you're
all vaccinated. I hope everyone watching is

3 vaccinated. If you're not, get vaccinated please.

4 Uhm, can you remind me, you said you have an average
5 response time for these 311 parking complaints?

6 ISA ABBASSI: That's correct Council Member.
7 2021 illegal parking service requests, we had
8 243,000. Average response time was one hour 21
9 minutes.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Okay, so I, I, I don't
11 know if this has been said. What I'm about to say
12 seems rather obvious to me. I think you're hearing
13 from all of the Council Members who spoke, I don't
14 need to go into it as well but you're hearing about
15 311 complaints that are closed without being
16 addressed. I'm hearing over and over again; cars
17 parked on the sidewalk and not being addressed. The
18 reason I say that is because I think it speaks to the
19 data. Right the purpose of the data shouldn't be to
20 look like you're doing a good job. It should be to
21 do a good job. And if the data's bad, it means that
22 we can't properly address the needs in our
23 communities.

24 So, I had to call to question data, you're just
25 getting numbers here in the spreadsheet but I do want
to lend my voice as well to tell you that the data,

3 that one hour and 21 minutes is artificially low.

4 So, I'd like for you to take that into consideration
5 as you're dealing with the different precincts.

6 Excuse me and talking about enforcement. And I know
7 we've been talking a lot about parking. It seem
8 mundane but you know especially for people with
9 disabilities, this means that they are unable to go
10 on their own to trust their own sidewalks in their
11 own communities.

12 So, this is you know a very important thing that
13 you're hearing from all of us. So, it's a systemic
14 problem. Uhm, I know my time is limited, so I want
15 to move to the DOT. Commissioner, how many cameras,
16 speed cameras do we have right now in our school
17 zones in New York City?

18 HANK GUTMAN: Well, let me find the number. We
19 have quite a few speed cameras and all of them -
20 okay, we have a total of 2,229 speed cameras. 1,607
21 are fixed, 40 are mobile. I'm sorry, I'm sorry 2,229
22 was all cameras. That counts buses and red lights if
23 you're checking my math. Sorry, it's 1,607 fixes
24 speed cameras plus 40 mobile ones for a total of
25 1,647 and the fixed ones are all within a quarter of

3 a mile of the school. That's the only place the
4 state will let us put them.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Right and so, are you
6 at the maximum? I mean the state did cap, at least a
7 few years ago, there was cap of the number of speed
8 cameras. Is there still a cap to the number of speed
9 cameras and if so, what is that cap? I know, in
10 school zones, yes.

11 HANK GUTMAN: No, no, no, there is a cap, Deputy
12 Commissioner Benson may remember what it is. My
13 understanding is that we still have some room. Is
14 that right Josh?

15 JOSHUA BENSON: That's right Commissioner and
16 thank you Council Member for the question. So, the
17 cap is on the number of zones that we can have. We
18 can have 750 zones. It used to be until 2019, the
19 cap was on the number of cameras and now it is based
20 on the number of zones and within those zones, which
21 is a quarter mile radius around the schools that have
22 cameras. We can and do have multiple cameras that
23 you know are oriented to different streets, in some
24 cases, the same street. If it's a two street, you
25 need two per direction and things of that nature.

3 So, you know theoretically, we can continue you
4 know in filling those zones. Uhm, but I think -

5 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: So, you just haven't -
6 750 zones is certainly better than 750 cameras but
7 you haven't filled all of that whole quota? You
8 still have room for other zones, is that correct?

9 JOSHUA BENSON: That's right, yeah.

10 HANK GUTMAN: And we're still installing
11 additional cameras. I mean we just have to keep
12 installing.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Okay and this is
14 information I got from you. In order to be a school
15 zone, the school needs to have it be a K-12 and have
16 more than 250 students in the school? I just want to
17 confirm that, is that right?

18 HANK GUTMAN: Again, I defer to the Deputy
19 Commissioner on that detail.

20 JOSHUA BENSON: Yeah, that's an excellent
21 question. I'm not sure on the number of students
22 point or what it is. We can absolutely get back to
23 you and confirm that but yes, there are some, there
24 is a definition in the state law for you know
25 officially uh, counts as a school, so.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Well, I'd be interested
4 to know how much is state law and how much is either
5 city law or department policy. Because my
6 understanding is that from the information that I
7 got, and I'd love for you to follow up, is
8 essentially that excludes pre-K programs. And
9 that's, I don't need to explain why that's
10 problematic but certainly expanding speed cameras and
11 I know, Commissioner Gutman, you mentioned before,
12 the problems were 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. That's only when
13 some of the crashes occur. When half of them occur,
14 about half outside those times and of course, on
15 weekends and I believe they should be 24 hour and on
16 weekends. So, you'll certainly have a partner on
17 that but if you could please get back with what would
18 qualify for those zones. Because I think it's
19 important we expand them and we do fill that quota.
20 I think there is no reason not to fill them if we
21 have the ability, it's giving us the ability to do
22 that, we should do that.

23 And just in terms of infrastructure and traffic
24 calming devices. It seems to take a very long time
25 for speed humps uhm and any traffic calming measures
in our intersections, raised crosswalks. It seems to

3 take a significant amount of time to install those
4 and even just to study them and I'm just curious as
5 to why it takes so darn long to even study it let
6 alone install them?

7 HANK GUTMAN: Sure, so uhm, finishing up on the
8 speed cameras. Our current plan is to have 2,220 by
9 the end of 2022. That's the current trajectory.
10 Your point about pre-K is obviously a good one. The
11 one saving point I would just add is one of the happy
12 discoveries in what's otherwise a ridiculously
13 limited program. Is the fact that New York City has
14 so many schools, meaning the definition of the state
15 that we've managed to be able to put them pretty much
16 where we needed them, even if you wouldn't think of
17 it as necessarily a school zone. Because it was
18 within a quarter of a mile of a school. But
19 obviously, if there are any pre-K's that don't
20 qualify, those should obviously be there and
21 expanding the laws. You've noted is something I'd
22 very much like to do.

23 As to the timing of speed humps, speed bumps,
24 stop signs, stop signals, all of those devices, it is
25 a function of in many of the instances having to go
through this regulatory process with the federal

3 government. Where we get I think Deputy
4 Commissioner, correct me if I'm wrong, we get about
5 2,000 requests a year for things that require us to
6 do the federally mandated review. Then we have to
7 get the engineers to say yes, you meet the standards
8 or you get the Commissioner to overrule the engineers
9 and force them on pain of loss of employment to
10 certify something they don't want to certify. I mean
11 that's my problem not yours but we have to - so the
12 process is longer and more involved than one would
13 hope and there's a lot demand but again, I would say
14 to you or to anybody else who's listening. If there
15 is an area where there is a grave condition that you
16 don't believe is being addressed quickly enough, you
17 know we take calls and recommendations not just from
18 elected officials but from people who call into the
19 Layer Show and get the Mayor on a Friday morning or
20 people that any of us encounter on the street when
21 we're wearing identifying garb. I mean, this is a
22 service business and we're trying to serve the people
23 of New York.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Right, it's just my
25 sense that uhm, it takes a long time. You know I
understand there are federal guidelines at the end of

1 the day. You know my constituents and I, frankly,
2 wonder why we say we need a speed bump and we have
3 constituents calling in over and over again about
4 spots. And I'm happy to share those spots with you.
5 I think I've already shared them with your department
6 but does the DOT not have capacity to study more than
7 one street or more than two streets in a given day or
8 given week? Is that an issue?

10 HANK GUTMAN: No, I mean, there are certainly
11 capacity issues in terms of person power and dollars.
12 But again, when we talk about and I'm sorry to get
13 technical on this stuff but they had to educate me.
14 Uhm, you know in terms of where you can put a speed
15 bump, the rules on that. It can't be too close to a
16 driveway. I mean, there are things that can't be too
17 close to this or too close to -

18 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Like side streets.

19 HANK GUTMAN: Yeah, exactly. There are bunch of
20 regulations.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: I went over this with
22 you Deputy - but no, so I guess the point is, it's
23 not, it just takes a very long time. And I know my
24 time is up, so I just have two other things.

25 HANK GUTMAN: Sure.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: It's uhm, that I've
4 seen a number of times in my district a street gets
5 paved. Thank you for paving but then it takes weeks
6 and in some cases months for speed bumps to be
7 reinstalled. And then weeks, in some cases months,
8 for it to be painted again to inform drivers that
9 there is a speed hump there. And I say speed humps
10 but I really many any traffic calming measures that
11 slow people down right? That don't require the
12 enforcement of the NYPD. It's just behavior but also
13 it does not require the removal of parking, which is
14 at a premium in our district.

15 Uhm, and I'll ask one more question. Is that you
16 have senior pedestrian focus areas. In my district
17 for example, you have one in Kings Bridge but within
18 that area, there are no senior centers, No NORC and
19 in fact, I have five other senior centers in my
20 district. I have a NORC in my district and I'm
21 interested to know what leads to the decision of a
22 senior pedestrian focus area, if not NORC, if not
23 senior center and then what benefits that area gets
24 in terms of traffic and pedestrian safety
25 improvements?

3 HANK GUTMAN: Yeah, so I will, I will as the
4 Deputy Commissioner to speak to the qualifications to
5 be a senior center. But I will end by offering the
6 invitation. If there are places that we are treating
7 incorrectly or not giving it appropriate priority to,
8 happy, happy to come visit and address those issues.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Thank you and I know
10 you've done other - you or your deputies have done
11 other site visits and your Borough Commissioner has
12 been very responsive at least to our questions. The
13 answers, we don't always love but I do want to thank
14 you for the response of this of you and your deputies
15 before I miss that. So, I'll now with senior -

16 HANK GUTMAN: We try, yeah, Josh can you?

17 JOSHUA BENSON: Sure, and Julia, if you want to
18 add.

19 HANK GUTMAN: Or Julia, I'm sorry.

20 JOSHUA BENSON: But you know I think generally
21 speaking the senior focus areas are based on uhm,
22 census data and then the presence of facilities that
23 really, you know that seniors attend to. So, I think
24 those are the primary criteria. But Julia please and
25 if I missed anything.

3 JULIA KITE-LAIDLAW: Yes, we base them off
4 neighborhood tabulation geographies that reflect the
5 highest 20 percent of neighborhoods ranked by senior
6 pedestrian injuries per senior residents. So, we
7 normalize it based on the number of seniors being
8 injured over the population of seniors there. So,
9 it's really a very you now precise look at where the
10 seniors live and where the seniors are getting
11 injured.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Okay, I uh, my second
13 question, my second part of that was of course the
14 benefits of these seniors safety, the safety zones
15 but I would just like to point out, yes it's a very
16 data driven decision but some of us want to prevent
17 that you know those numbers from increasing. We
18 don't want to wait till injuries or deaths occur
19 before addressing it. And Commissioner, I know you
20 feel the same way, you just mentioned that when you
21 answered my last question.

22 So, I just, I feel like I have to say that. That
23 you know preventing these injuries in the first place
24 is vital. But the benefits of these senior
25 pedestrian areas, can you just run through those
quickly?

3 HANK GUTMAN: Julia, you want to?

4 JULIA KITE-LAIDLAW: Sure, well first of all, I'd
5 like to say that even outside our senior pedestrian
6 zones, we're definitely not forgetting anybody.
7 We're unfortunately now that the pandemic has waned,
8 we can get back to doing a lot of our education and
9 outreach to senior centers, which we do all over the
10 city regardless of whether the senior center is in an
11 area that also has a lot of seniors in it.

12 And then we've also found just by you know, we've
13 done a really big data driven look into this and I'm
14 hoping that within the next month or next couple
15 months, we'll be able to share in more details. But
16 we found that a lot of our Vision Zero street
17 engineering interventions actually have
18 disproportionate benefits for seniors. And it could
19 be things that uhm, you know make a lot of sense on
20 the face of it, like the leading pedestrian
21 intervals, which give the walk signal before parallel
22 traffic gets a green by about you know, six or seven
23 seconds. That's a boon for people who might walk a
24 little bit slower because it gives them more time to
25 cross and makes them more visible to other drivers.

3 Also, just in general, anything we do that calms
4 traffic, when we ran the numbers, it was improving
5 the number for deaths and serious injuries for
6 seniors. In many cases it was improving it for
7 everybody but for seniors it was doing it to a
8 greater extent.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: You know I think
10 traffic related deaths are the number one cause of
11 injury related deaths for older adults and a
12 disproportionate number of the injuries that we find
13 are inflicted upon older adults. So they would of
14 course have the most to gain.

15 I'm going to leave it there. I know there are
16 other Council Members who have questions but I would
17 like to continue this conversation offline because
18 some of its very basic like repainting crosswalks,
19 audible signals near our older adult centers and in
20 our NORC's. So, I would love to continue this
21 conversation offline and thank you all and thank you
22 to the NYPD for your answers and for listening and
23 for your concern for our community. Thank you
24 everyone.

25 JULIA KITE-LAIDLAW: Sure we can follow up.

3 HANK GUTMAN: Absolutely and the one thing I
4 would add is my crack team got me an answer to one of
5 your earlier questions.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Oh, good job.

7 HANK GUTMAN: This is a great, this is a great
8 group. There's no minimum number of students for
9 schools to qualify for speed cameras. Nor is there
10 an age thing, so a pre-K could count too. So, that's
11 what I'm informed by the team but again, happy to
12 follow up.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Yes, thank you very
14 much and thank you for that answer.

15 HANK GUTMAN: And as a Senior Citizen, I share
16 your concern for those who are more likely to have
17 horrible consequences from collisions.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Thank you.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Next, we'll hear
20 from Council Member Rosenthal followed by Council
21 Member Yeger. Council Member Rosenthal.

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you so much.
24 Thanks Chairs for this incredibly important hearing.
25 Thanks to the Commissioners and your teams both. I'd
like to start with a follow up to Council Member

3 Dinowitz's point about seniors. Uhm, there's no
4 question that I have seniors who write, email, come
5 in and talk to us on a regular basis about near
6 misses with a bicycle and uhm, I too have my AARP
7 card. So, you know this notion of a sudden movement
8 happening near you and you know as seniors have left
9 less of an ability to immediately respond to
10 something, you know their concerns are high.

11 Uhm, where my concern lays is with from what I
12 hear that when there are crashes, uhm, the NYPD
13 doesn't really want to take a report. So, we're not
14 getting a full data picture for that reason. And I
15 think it leads me to believe that we're undercounting
16 the number of crashes and the locations. Uhm, I put
17 that out there just for it to be on the record. I'm
18 not really expecting a response. I'm sure NYPD is
19 doing the best that it can but it leads to the really
20 essential theme of my question which is a public
21 education campaign. Asking what DOT's campaign is.
22 You mentioned it a little bit at the beginning of
23 your testimony Commissioner and I'm wondering about
24 the coordination on these campaigns with the NYPD. I
25 have joined my local precincts when we've handed out
information to bicyclists and pedestrians and those

3 have been great but I think that happened just once
4 or twice.

5 So, uhm, my emphasis would be back on what is the
6 public education campaign for all three stakeholders,
7 pedestrians, bicyclists and of course drivers of
8 cars.

9 HANK GUTMAN: Sure, uhm, thank you. Thank you
10 for the question Council Member. I mean you've hit
11 on a number of key topics. First beginning with
12 senior citizens and interactions with bicycles and I
13 would add to that you know the various new forms of
14 motorized vehicles that they encounter. Including in
15 place where they have absolutely no legal business
16 being like sidewalks. I've had those issues near
17 misses. I've had you know when I'm stopped on the
18 streets, uhm it is often by - we may be dedicating
19 bike lanes and the people who stop are less likely to
20 be cyclists thanking us for the bike lane. Then
21 older residents of the neighborhood asking what we're
22 going to do about -

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: And I appreciate. I
24 just want to modify my comment with a very important
25 point. I'm not looking to the police to go out and
ticket people. That that is not the solution I'm

1 looking for. I am pointing out the sort of
2 challenges with data accuracy if NYPD is not taking a
3 report. But I'm not looking for them to ticket
4 somebody. I am full on in public education campaign
5 you know, when four people were killed by cars in
6 crashes in my district at the beginning of my term.
7 Then within three months, it turned into seven people
8 who were killed.
9

10 What I was asking, begging for was that the city
11 come up with a jingle of some sorts like the one that
12 for anyone who's a New Yorkers and lived here in the
13 '60's and '70's, don't cross, you know cross at the
14 green not in between. That was incredibly successful
15 public education campaign and I haven't seen anything
16 out of the city like that. Something that would
17 really stick in the minds of pedestrians, drivers,
18 and bicyclist. And it's not impossible. Uhm, but I
19 want to throw down that challenge again.

20 HANK GUTMAN: Sure, no and I wasn't going in the
21 direction of ticketing. This is the critical, the
22 critical importance of education. So, I'm happy to
23 share a few things that we are doing and we can
24 follow up with you afterwards if you want more
25 specifics.

3 Uhm, we have the Dusk and Darkness Program. They
4 have awareness about unique conditions during the
5 early darkness hours when it's harder to see. We
6 have programs at schools. We have programs at senior
7 centers. We have programs at which we hand out
8 helmets and bike lights. Car seat fittings, micro
9 mobility safety.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Yeah.

11 HANK GUTMAN: And you know your point that we
12 need a catchy slogan like, cross at the green not in
13 between or I remember, it wasn't so catchy is a
14 marketing thing but drive defensively was the way I
15 was raised.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Same, same and I walk
17 as a defensive pedestrian. I bicycle as a defensive
18 bicyclist and same with driving. But uhm, all the
19 things you mentioned, I think, are uhm, you know are
20 not hitting eight million New Yorkers, right? You're
21 not in every school and you know the bicycle - I
22 participate in the helmet giveaway. You know, it's
23 [INAUDIBLE 3:31:22] but it's not even close to being
24 enough and what's so beautiful about a jingle is the
25 impact is much bigger and you're not spending all the
resources that you're doing now that isn't coming

3 close to having the effect we want given the fact
4 that so many seniors are still petrified to cross the
5 street. Everyone I know talks about looking left,
6 looking right and looking left again before crossing
7 a bike lane. So, I would urge you to work smarter,
8 not more but smarter.

9 HANK GUTMAN: No, your point is very well taken.
10 We accept the challenge. I mean, we do have all the
11 social media stuff and all but that doesn't help the
12 seniors.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: You know for five
14 minutes you had the campaign where you had the look
15 stencil on the ground and that went away. I thought
16 that was great for texting. And part of the problem
17 I find with the DOT education campaigns is that
18 they're so limited. You know, you have a contract
19 with one advertising firm and so, you have bus adds
20 for three months and it costs a ton of money.

21 Sure it's a good bus campaign, it's not there
22 now, right? And this is something that doesn't end.
23 So, you can't stop your education campaign. You
24 know, I'm going to stop because I know we want to get
25 to public testimony. If you want to make -

3 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. Thank you
4 Council Member.

5 HANK GUTMAN: The only thing I would add was I
6 believe you asked early on about working closely with
7 the police department. I can tell you that when it
8 comes to education, we have an absolutely seamless
9 partnership. Our people spend quality time with
10 Chief Royster and her folks every week. Uhm, we work
11 on campaigns together. We came up with this to help
12 identify what's supposed to be where in term of the
13 new forms of motor- of electric vehicles. Because it
14 was such a mindboggling mix trying to help everybody
15 to understand, so that we can be better at educating.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I mean that brilliant.
17 I don't know about other Council Members; my office
18 has not been contacted to get this information out.
19 And we would have it on, you know we have a
20 storefront. We would have it in our window. You know
21 again, communication is everything.

22 HANK GUTMAN: Yeah, and we will make sure that
23 all of you get this. And the Chief, to her credit
24 has distributed to the patrolman, the patrol persons,
25 sorry. So, they know what's what and can deal with
it better. So, uhm, we will do better and I'd love

1
2 to continue this offline and get your ideas about the
3 marketing because we need the help. Thanks.

4 JULIA KITE-LAIDLAW: Council Member, if I could
5 just quickly add uhm, starting last year, our safety
6 education and outreach team was actually able to
7 pivot to completely remote learning for all of our
8 K12 education and outreach programs. So, even though
9 we could not physically go into the school, we made
10 sure that the children at really all age levels were
11 still receiving our programming.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: How many schools?

13 JULIA KITE-LAIDLAW: Uhm, over 600.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Yeah, there are 3,000
15 and some total, right? I mean, I think you need -
16 I'm going to move on. The Chair is asking me to move
17 on.

18 HANK GUTMAN: We get your point.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you very much.
20 Appreciate you.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Next, we'll hear
22 from Council Member Yeger. Council Member Yeger.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Thank you very much.
24 Thank you Mr. Chair. Thank you Madam Chair. Because
25 of the clock, I'm going to do my questions as a

3 speech and I hope that the agencies can take notes
4 and then answer after my clock expires because the
5 clock is unforgiving.

6 So, take your time after that but I'm going to
7 start with PD and then we'll go to DOT. First Chief,
8 you had mentioned that uh, the loss of the tow pound
9 in Manhattan is contributing to the lack of the
10 ability of the Department to tow. And my reflection
11 on that when I heard that at the beginning of your
12 testimony is that that really shouldn't effect the
13 ability to tow unless you fire people and I don't
14 think you did.

15 And I'm going to pause for a moment just to note
16 that I believe that I've said this publicly that the
17 cancellation of the police training classes whereas
18 probably one of the biggest mistakes that this
19 Council, this Mayor has made with regard to staffing
20 the Police Department. And I think it's a mistake
21 that we'll actually see the repercussions of for many
22 years because it's not sufficiently dealt with or
23 dealing with the attrition. But notwithstanding,
24 Police Officers don't tow cars. They are not
25 officers, they're not police officers, so I'm not
sure I understood why there's a connection and you

3 could hold that thought because I'm just going to go
4 through these.

5 My experience has been that the constant and this
6 ties into the 311 issues, the constant complaints
7 from constituents regarding commercial vehicles and
8 big tractor trailer trucks parking overnight in
9 residential neighborhoods. Not just that have been
10 phoned into 311 but that have been reported to the
11 precincts directly. That have been you know flagged
12 on Twitter with the Precincts tag. They do
13 frequently come back with you know a combinations of
14 answers, either police went there. No such thing
15 there. Never happened, you're nuts or uhm, not
16 police department jurisdiction.

17 So, the first one, to the extent that those are
18 untruthful and they frequently are, that's something
19 that needs to be dealt with. I recognize at the
20 precinct level but it is an issue. Officers are
21 being told, there's no question, they're being told
22 to close out complaint without even going there and
23 that's a problem and it's a structural problem.

24 And then the second part is, if the department as
25 a matter of determination has inspected a complaint
and says, well this is not police department

3 jurisdiction it shouldn't close out the complaint, it
4 should send it back into the hopper for assignment to
5 the place where it does have jurisdiction.

6 We're a \$100 billion corporation. Somewhere in
7 this corporation is somebody who has jurisdiction
8 over every complaint sent over 311 somewhere. And
9 so, it shouldn't be that the police department closes
10 out and says go away and leaves it to the constituent
11 to go back onto 311 and hopefully find out the you
12 know how that complaint went, resolved itself.

13 Uhm, a number of my colleagues, mentioned I
14 believe most recently Council Member Rosenthal, the
15 issue of the NYPD not responding to vehicle crashes
16 if there are no injuries. Which I understand the
17 point behind that. You know why take up precious
18 police department resources. But that does two
19 things. Number one is, the police department not
20 responding to a reported crash, leaves the cars in
21 the middle of the street because people don't pull
22 them over. That's one issue.

23 The second issue is the police department
24 responding to the crash gives the police officer on
25 the site the ability to take down license information
from the people who were involved in this crash.

3 Frequently that can result in discovering that a
4 license is not valid. A car is being operated
5 unregistered. A car doesn't have valid tags or the
6 car is not being operated with insurance. Those are
7 important public policy goals of the city to get
8 people like off the street.

9 So, the idea that the police department doesn't
10 respond to crashes as a matter of course, is I
11 believe a great error and it's something that the
12 policy should be changed. If a call comes into 911
13 that there was a crash, the police department should
14 respond. And it shouldn't take six hours to do so.
15 It should respond immediately because that's what the
16 city is paying - that's what the taxpayers are paying
17 for. They are paying for that service. And that's
18 what the police are there for. It shouldn't be left
19 to self-serve and do it yourself, which is
20 essentially what the policy has resulted in.

21 Uhm, there was a comment made Chief about you
22 know stopping the culture of you know dangerous
23 driving and we should stop the culture of dangerous
24 driving but I do believe that it's not so much the
25 cameras that do that because when somebody is driving
at 40 miles an hour let's say in a 25 mile an hour

3 zone, uhm, and then a month later receives a bill in
4 the mail for \$50. That didn't slow that person down.

5 But if there's a live cop with a radar gun,
6 pulling this person over, running the tags, running
7 the license, running the vehicle inspection and
8 checking for insurance, we have the ability to get
9 legitimate scofflaws off the streets.

10 What I have frequently found and certainly in the
11 last two years I think is that the police cars that
12 are out there writing these kinds of summonses are
13 parked in a relatively safe location looking for
14 somebody not wearing a seatbelt. And full disclosure

15 -

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: I'm not one of those
18 people who got that summons for not wearing a
19 seatbelt but that's what they're there for. They're
20 there to write the easy summons to stand at a red
21 light, look at what car stopped. Oh, you're not
22 wearing a seatbelt, let me go get you - write you a
23 summons and it's a revenue generator. But they're
24 not actually out on the street looking for dangerous
25 cars, looking for the people who are driving along

3 Ocean Parkway at 60 miles an hour in the middle of
4 the night doing wheelies.

5 And that's something that can easily be resolvable
6 by putting motorcycle cops out in strategic

7 locations, using highway patrol to work with the
8 local precincts and do that and the idea that there
9 aren't resources to do it is simply not truthful.

10 There could be more resources I believe but there are
11 resources to do so.

12 So, that's for PD. I'll just hold because my
13 time is up, so I'm going to keep on going just to get
14 these in and then you could take whatever you want.

15 This is for DOT now. Commissioner, it's good to see
16 you. You know I know my colleagues have mentioned

17 this and I'm going to mention this as well. And I
18 recognize that there are issues with timings of

19 things that you're required to when it comes to

20 traffic calming devices such as speed bumps, such as
21 a stop sign, such as lights, and there are things you

22 have to do but I think that we're conflating somehow
23 the things that you have to do and then artificially

24 inflating the amount of time that those things that
25 have to be done take.

3 So, in my estimation, a speed bump you know look,
4 if I was the guy, a Council Member asks for a speed
5 bump, the asphalt is there the next day. It's very
6 simple. I'm not that - a complicated person. I
7 recognize that that's not realistic but I also think
8 that a year is unrealistic and unfair. And this has
9 to be a happy medium between the next day and a year.
10 And the story that another member spoke of, of a
11 street where it was repaved and then uh, you know the
12 speed bumps were not replaced. I have a story like
13 that, which I believe you are aware of or your
14 department's aware of, that the speed bumps were
15 disappeared for two years and they just recently came
16 back. For which we praise the department and we were
17 gratified that it happened. But it shouldn't take
18 two years.

19 While at the same time, the signs are up there,
20 slow down there's a speed bump. The same thing with
21 stop signs. The same thing look, you know I get
22 complaints from a constituent that we want a stop
23 sign. We put it in 311, we put it in ourselves
24 internally and then we wait a month, two, three,
25 four, five, six, seven and the constituents on the

3 blocks are calling us and I always give them the same
4 answer.

5 If I had a stash of speedbumps – stop signs in my
6 office, I'd come out and put one up. But I can't, so
7 we rely on you to do it and it shouldn't take a year
8 to get a stop sign. A stop sign shouldn't take a
9 year. Traffic lights I get that this is a review
10 process and you have to put the tape down but stop
11 signs are simple fixes and when a neighborhood says –

12 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Sorry, Council Member,
13 can you please wrap it up. Sorry, I need to go to
14 the public now.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Chair, what we could do is
16 we can go after this hearing is over and look at the
17 time that each member had. I'm keeping an eye on the
18 clock. I'm almost done but I'm keeping an eye on the
19 clock.

20 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: No, you can – you've been
21 getting even extra more than Council Member Miller.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: But I'm almost done

23 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: If you can summarize, I
24 appreciate it, yeah.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Chair, I'm almost done and
it's almost December 31st. So, let's get there.

3 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you Council Member.
4 Summarize please.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Thank you very much.
6 Commissioner, I also point you to an introduction
7 that's not being heard today but it's been pending
8 for quite the while. It's introduction 80 from
9 Council Member Brannan. It's Co-Sponsored by Council
10 Member Adams and myself. 80- I'm not going to ask
11 for your answer now by the way I'm not an unfair
12 person at all. But it would require a traffic study
13 determination to take place within 60 days of request
14 by Council Member or Community Board.

15 I think that's the goal. It's a Vision Zero like
16 goal. Let's put a clock on how quickly traffic
17 studies can be done, so we can get these things done.
18 So, in summary and I'm very grateful for you allowing
19 me to do it this speedy way. Kind of like speed
20 contests, speed dating, if you will. I am not going
21 to ask you to answer any of these now or any that you
22 choose, that's up to you.

23 I just wanted to put these in front of you and
24 the public domain, so that you have an idea that it's
25 not just a Council Member Miller issue in his
district that's unique to his district but this is

3 really citywide and it's in every borough. So, with
4 that, thank you very much Chair Gibson. I appreciate
5 the opportunity and thank you Commissioner for being
6 here and the Chief. Thank you for being here.

7 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you Council Member.

8 HANK GUTMAN: I can be very quick. I understand
9 your frustration about the speed at which these
10 things happen and I fully recognize that this is not
11 unique to one district but it's a challenge we face
12 all across the city. We're working on it but we
13 obviously need to do better and we can follow up as
14 to things we might do you know offline. Not on the
15 clock and as to the Introduction you referenced, I'm
16 happy to take a look at it. Again, it's a question
17 of meeting the regulatory requirements and having the
18 resources and the fact that there are thousands of
19 these requests but if we can figure out a way to do
20 it better and faster and we can get the resources,
21 nothing would make me happier.

22 As you may imagine, I'm not a real fan of having
23 to listen to everybody complain about why we don't do
24 things faster. I wish I could wave a magic wand and
25 solve it and I'm happy to keep working on that. So,
thank you.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Thank you.

4 KIM ROYSTER: Council Member Yeger, I'd like to
5 respond to three points that you made and I'll start
6 with the tow pound. And I'd like to clarify my
7 statement about the tow pound being removed from
8 Manhattan.

9 Tow operators that assigned to the Transportation
10 Bureau are responsible for towing vehicles that are
11 in violation and they have continued to do so. What
12 I meant was that the tow pound that was removed was
13 requiring us now to tow vehicles from Manhattan to
14 other boroughs. And that's what I wanted to clarify.

15 So, it's not the lack of ability to tow, is that
16 it slows down the process and it populates other tow
17 pounds that are outside of Manhattan.

18 The second one -

19 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: If I can just, Chief if I
20 can just for a quick second, if I might. I just want
21 to let you know, obviously I'm sure you're aware I
22 don't represent any part of Manhattan. Others do but
23 in Brooklyn, when we have an issue with these
24 overnight commercial vehicles and etc., we can call
25 and beg and beg and beg and the precinct is having,

3 the precincts are having trouble getting resources in
4 Brooklyn for them to just simply do a tow operation.

5 My experience has been that if they hit a block
6 or an area, one, two, three, four, five, six, nights
7 in a row, the trucks will find their way to not
8 parking illegally in that area because they'll have
9 learned the hard way.

10 So, I recognize Manhattan and I appreciate your
11 clarification but I just want to point out that
12 problem is that the tow trucks themselves are not
13 available to the neighborhoods that we represent in
14 the outer boroughs. There just not there. Those
15 resources are not there to the precincts.

16 KIM ROYSTER: Council Member Yeger, I think what
17 we should do is have a conversation offline to find
18 out where those areas are and make sure that we can
19 supply the resources and the space to get that done.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay, thank you.

21 KIM ROYSTER: The second one would be vehicle
22 crashes. I'm not sure you're aware but in April of
23 last year, there was a policy that went forth that
24 dealt with the response times of critical cases or
25 critical crimes in progress and what we looked at as
a department and determined that collisions with

3 property damage only, unless there were other
4 circumstances, such as someone injured. Such as a
5 crime being committed, we're not going to be police
6 officers are not going to be responding to those
7 crashes that were only property damage.

8 However, if the person called 911, they would get
9 instructions on what to do to move that vehicle out
10 of the way of the road and make sure that they
11 exchange information. Now, if there is an injury and
12 a collision, the police is going to respond. That
13 resident precinct officer will respond. They will
14 take a report and depending on the criteria of the
15 injury, whether it's a person that left the scene,
16 those cases will go the Detective Bureau. If the
17 person is critical or if there's a fatality, then
18 that would warrant the response of the Collision
19 Investigation Squad.

20 So, I just wanted to tell you that if we see that
21 there's an injury and a collision and that
22 information is not being reported or that officer is
23 actually indicating that they won't take a report.
24 That is something for us to look at and conduct an
25 investigation because that is unacceptable.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

3 KIM ROYSTER: And third.

4 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Sorry.

5 KIM ROYSTER: I'll be very quick Chair. The
6 third would be yes, the culture. If you heard me say
7 uh previously, cameras are a tool and not a panacea.
8 It's not going to stop the reckless behavior of
9 drivers but I will tell you what will continue to
10 stop people from driving recklessly. One is that we
11 constantly talk about checkpoints throughout the
12 city. We want equitable enforcement but we need
13 enforcement. Outreach is not the only thing that's
14 going not stop someone from driving recklessly. And
15 we focus on not just seatbelts which is one of the
16 hazardous violations but we focus on speeding,
17 failing to yield to pedestrians and other hazardous
18 violations.

19 So, I just want to tell you that we go where the
20 data is and we do that because we want to make sure
21 that we are protecting the people in this city.
22 Whether it's an injury, fatality or critical injury.
23 I cannot say that we will every do enough because we
24 don't ever want to see a fatality. And so, we will
25 keep doing what we have to do to make sure the city
is safe.

3 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you Council Member
4 and thank you also Chief and of course, keep it in
5 mind you know its one more hearing as the Councilman
6 said, we have up to December but I too appreciate the
7 members of the public. Because after Council Member
8 Holden have a second round if he has a question and
9 the Chairman in the second round. Council Member
10 Holden if you have one, you will have like to two
11 minutes and then the Chairman can ask the questions
12 that she wants to. From there we'll move into the
13 members of the public. But I got to say to DOT and
14 the Chief of Transportation, like you know what we
15 have done is not enough. And it's not, it's not you
16 know it's an epidemic, we need to take it as a level.

17 Like that going back to see the numbers of New
18 Yorkers dying because of crashes, as the same number
19 that we have in 2015. It's not a good look. It's a
20 failure of a policy where all of us are part of. So,
21 you know and I am clear, it will take for us to get
22 Albany to allow, to allow a DA to have the power.
23 You know to prosecute with more tools. When and so,
24 when criminal leave the scene as a result of hit and
25 run. You know we need to do different things. We
need to take more police officers from doing some

3 billion jobs you know in the prison to be outside
4 patrolling. To be inside enforce.

5 So, and I think that I appreciate everything that
6 we have done but you know I don't want to take just
7 one more hearing that we leave the job. You know,
8 yes, we're doing the job but it's about the numbers
9 of people dying as a result of crashes is the same as
10 the worst number that we have after we had started
11 Vision Zero in 2014.

12 And when we know that the places where those
13 crashes happen, more than 46 percent happened at
14 intersections and still we're waiting for data to
15 follow what we will do is unacceptable. So, we need
16 to act on and be sure that as we push back COVID-19,
17 we need to push back this epidemic.

18 So, with that, now we go to Council Member Holden
19 and then we go to members of the public.

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Thank you Chair, I just
22 want to do a follow up regarding my question about
23 the towing stats, obstructing a sidewalk, crosswalk,
24 fire hydrant, bicycle lane or bus lane. The police
25 precincts would respond and tow the vehicles. So, I
looked at the Chief directed me to the stats and it's

3 an XL file. 15,633 total cars towed from 76
4 precincts in all of 2020. So, you know that averages
5 about 206 cars per precinct if you break it down and
6 divide it by 76.

7 Yet, and this is the reason. This is the reason
8 that I'm complaining. The three precincts that cover
9 my district a total, and this is not an average, a
10 total of 177 cars were towed in 2020. And that
11 explains while a neighboring precinct can tow 555
12 cars in one year. Three of my precincts towed a
13 total of 177. So, not all precincts are equal. Not
14 all priorities are equal in all the precincts. I
15 still got problems to the point where my fire
16 fighters can't find fire hydrants because when they
17 go to fire, a car is blocking it.

18 So, the resolve of each precinct differs. So,
19 that's why we need to get to the commanding officers,
20 start towing cars that are blocking crosswalks or
21 sidewalks or bus and bike lanes and let's do it
22 equally or at least somewhat equally. But when
23 certain precincts like the 40th Precinct in the Bronx
24 gets 1,409 cars towed in one year and my precinct
25 gets 49, there's a problem here Chiefs. So, I think
you need to look at that and make sure that we're not

3 getting any excuses from the police precinct
4 commanders. Thank you. Thank you Chair for the
5 second round.

6 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Chairman Gibson, if you
7 have any questions, it's on you and then we go to the
8 public. And thank you to the members of the public
9 for being so patient waiting for your turn.

10 I don't see Chairman Gibson. Elliott if the
11 Chairman stepped out, then we move to the members of
12 the public.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Chair, we'll now
14 turn to public testimony. If your testimony is
15 longer than the allotted time, please summarize. You
16 may submit written testimony for the record by
17 sending it to testimony@council.nyc.gov.

18 For panelists, once your name is called, a member
19 of our staff will unmute you. Please wait for the
20 Sergeant to announce that you may begin before
21 delivering your testimony. Our first panelist will
22 be Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer.

23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts.

24 GALE BREWER: Thank you very much. I appreciate
25 it. Thank you very much Council Member Rodriguez and
Gibson and I think we're all trying to make sure that

3 people are safe and that we are trying to reduce
4 vehicle dependency.

5 I just want to say about this tow pound issue
6 this is major. Long story short, Pier 76 was to his
7 credit, cleared of absolutely everything. So, it's
8 now available to the public. That was former
9 Governor Cuomo.

10 I personally went looking for tow pounds in the
11 borough of Manhattan and could not find them. So,
12 we've got to find a tow pound in Manhattan and I
13 think NYPD's been trying but it would be good to know
14 where you've been trying and then everybody needs to
15 participate in that effort.

16 Number two, I just want to update and suggest
17 absolutely correct with Council Member Rosenthal. I
18 think the issues is it's a jingle but it's also what
19 is the law for rules of the road? Who is supposed to
20 have registration? Who is supposed to have a helmet
21 etc. Just a constant mirage of information. We see
22 motorcycles on paths in you know even in parks. So,
23 I don't need to say it's a big problem because you
24 know it but it needs a lot of attention.

25 What I want to talk about is twofold. First of
all, I think you know the numbers are really, really

3 challenging as Council Member Rodrigues stated. So,
4 2014-18, it went to the credit, dropped from 261 to
5 202 in terms of deaths. However, 2019-2020 or 2019
6 and 2020 the numbers went up to 220 and 246 deaths
7 respectively. That should not be happening. So,
8 what are we going to do about it.

9 I know that the good news is, with state
10 permission, 750 speed zones exist in terms of the
11 cameras. I want to say we need them in more places
12 and we really need - I know this is now a school and
13 only certain hours but the red light. I have a car
14 driver, everybody knows that. I see people going
15 through red lights all the time. It is outrageous.

16 So, red lights and speed cameras need to be
17 everywhere. I also want to mention thank you City of
18 New York for the zip cars. I know that they
19 disappeared but I have to say the concept of having
20 another car, car share. Anything but your own. If
21 you're going to take cars away, which I think we
22 should as much as possible, you got to have an
23 alternative.

24 I'm also very supportive of course of the busways
25 on 14th Street and with Council Member Rodriguez we
did 181st Street and I think that's a good thing.

3 So, what are we going to do? Congestion pricing,
4 controversial is hell, I know but it is what we
5 should be doing so we can fund the transit.

6 I want to make sure there is a Manhattan
7 representative on the Traffic Mobility Review Board,
8 that the governor is going to be appointing. But if
9 we can get to 30 percent or more reduction in total
10 traffic, that would be a fantastic thing. I know
11 London and Stockholm I believe, it's not quite clear,
12 that they have been successful. And then I talked
13 about the speed cameras, the red light cameras, for
14 goodness sake, I know that some folks Genaris(SP?)
15 and Glick have been trying but we've got to be able
16 to get to that.

17 Third, we need to as I said, talk about this car
18 sharing program. I don't own a car. When I want to
19 go someplace, I rent but it's hard to find a rental
20 car. It's kind of like the tow pound. No place to
21 put the tow pound. No place to put a rental car
22 because the developers have taken over the spots.
23 So, all of these items as you want to call it or
24 venues used to exist. We've got to find a way that
25 people can get a car that's somewhat affordable once

3 they are in need of a car because they need to go
4 someplace.

5 I want to just talk you know I'm not getting into
6 all of the issues of cars. Congestion pricing needs
7 a lot of attention. Somebody has to be able to deal
8 with the questions that are going to be myriad for
9 those living in Manhattan, not to mention everywhere
10 else. And I also want to just make it really, really
11 clear that one way to do this of course is to expand
12 bike lanes. I know that there are in the City of New
13 York 546 bike, protected bike lanes miles and 112 in
14 Manhattan. We haven't made the connection though for
15 the public. I support bike lanes. But the public
16 sees the number going up of fatalities and they see
17 the bike lanes going up and they don't see how can we
18 protect both, the bicyclists and the pedestrians.

19 I believe one way to do it is to improve the bike
20 lanes protected but it's not clear to the public
21 because I have to listen to this all the time.

22 Very supportive of open streets but when you do
23 it you got to put a traffic agent or a sign that
24 says, there is an open street, do not take Amsterdam
25 or Columbus. Take a different street because the
minute you put that open street in, the horns start

3 honking, people start complaining to Gale and
4 everybody else. So, when you do these innovative
5 aspect of improving pedestrian and all of those, you
6 got to have parts that go with it.

7 So, I'm here also to say, all the all door
8 boarding on buses makes a huge difference. Buses
9 move faster. So, I'm here to say lots of issues.
10 Congratulations on this really important hearing Mr.
11 Chair and Madam Chair and I look forward to
12 continuing to work with you. There is no end to the
13 challenges. The NYPD and DOT, I know you're working
14 together but the public doesn't know that. Every
15 single, now I understand, property only no NYPD will
16 show up. The public doesn't know that. So, the
17 minute that the public, that the NYPD does not show
18 up, we all get calls. So, we got to figure out if
19 that's the right thing to do, I'm not sure it is but
20 then how do you communicate this to the public.
21 Thank you very much.

22 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you, thank you Gale
23 you know, we've been planning this and many other
24 good causes and I know that you know you always will
25 be a great partner to work together to improve safety
for pedestrian cyclists. Thank you.

3 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair, I believe Council
4 Member Yeger may have a question for this panelist.

5 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay.

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

7 COMMITTEE CUNSEL: Council Member Yeger.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Thank you. Madam
9 President, good to see you. I'll just be very brief
10 and I look forward to seeing you together on January
11 1st when you join this body again and help lead us.
12 But you last comment really was right on target on
13 the issue of the police not responding to vehicle
14 crashes and uhm, I just want to highlight again, that
15 this is something that is a citywide problem. When
16 police don't respond to vehicle crashes, they're
17 first of all leaving opportunities to remove
18 dangerous drivers from the street and they're
19 requiring New Yorkers to resort to do it yourself
20 tasks that have been in the past typically handled by
21 the police well.

22 And they ought to be handled by the police. And
23 this is something that I think merits more than just
24 education about it. I think we actually have to have
25 that policy changed. I think the police department
needs to go back to responding to vehicle crashes and

3 if there's a question of timing and resources,
4 obviously prioritize the bad – the complicated ones
5 and the dangerous ones but they have to be out there
6 responding to vehicle crashes because that's how a.
7 we get the data of where these things are happening
8 and whose doing it. And b. we use the police to do
9 their ultimate job to provide for public safety by
10 taking bad drivers off the street.

11 So, Madam President, I know that you picked up on
12 that at the end and you know I don't want to take
13 away from everything else that you said but that was
14 the part that I just wanted to respond to.

15 GALE BREWER: Thank you very much. I agree
16 because I get so many calls about it.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, if no other questions
18 for this panelist, uhm, our next witness will be
19 Danny Harris. Danny.

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

21 DANNY HARRIS: Thank you very much. My name is
22 Danny Harris, I'm honored to be Executive Director at
23 Transportation Alternatives. First of all, I want to
24 acknowledge and thank the City Council for its
25 leadership on street safety and giving streets back
to people. Under your tenure, New York City has and

3 continues to be the nation on everything from Open
4 Streets to the Streets Master Plan. And I want to
5 stress, that for a period, we were actually bucking
6 the national trend when our streets were getting
7 safer, even as nationally they were getting worse.

8 So, on behalf of TA and Families for Safe
9 Streets, and all New Yorkers, we want to thank you
10 for the work that you are doing on the frontlines.
11 But I am coming to share with you that despite all of
12 the incredible work you are doing that your success
13 and the live of all New Yorkers are at risk amid
14 rising levels of traffic violence, hit and runs, car
15 registrations, and car traffic.

16 1,800 people are dead under this mayor's
17 leadership. And, as things are getting worse in his
18 final year, we and Families for Safe Streets members
19 are traveling from vigils to vigils instead of
20 groundbreakings to groundbreaking. We've heard too
21 much blaming and obstruction, and false promises,
22 and long-term plans, and we need action now. And
23 that's why I urge you to vote in favor of Intro.'s 9,
24 2073, 2417, and 2422 that are on today's agenda, as
25 well as important bills not heard, specifically

3 Intro. 708, Intro. 1763, Intro. 2282 and Intro.
4 2159.

5 Additionally, I urge you to consider advancing
6 new legislation to streamline the community board
7 notification requirement for DOT safe street
8 projects, which is going to be critical for the
9 implementation of the Streets Master Plan.

10 New York City is now facing the deadliest year on
11 our streets since Mayor de Blasio took office. And,
12 let me be clear, this is not a COVID problem. This
13 has been rising numbers for three straight years and
14 New York City has the proven tools to deliver safety
15 to every single corner of our streets and we have an
16 administration that has failed to deliver that.
17 Whether you're a baby in a stroller, a police officer
18 on the beat and essential worker taking a bike,
19 everyone is susceptible to traffic violence.

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

21 DANNY HARRIS: So, I urge your advancement of the
22 issues that I've raised. Thank you so much for your
23 time.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony.
25 Are there any questions for this witness?

3 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: And one thing in regard
4 to you know the position of TA, which I agree is that
5 we also understand that you know we have to you know
6 push ourself the different role that we play to give
7 the city back to the people. But that also will
8 require that the city also create good paying jobs in
9 the underserved community so that people doesn't have
10 to travel like an hour and a half or drive from the
11 place of where they live.

12 So, you now one other thing that we also will be
13 looking at it to see how much attention is also the
14 city giving to the underserved community. As you
15 know, it's something that we share that concern.
16 That a lot of those crashes – we don't want again, no
17 one. And there's one experience that I have lived in
18 my role to see the faces of people. The faces of the
19 grandma with the photo. You know who is a loved one
20 that he or she loved and that she loved. And you go
21 from family members, friends, colleagues, but so, you
22 know I can say that being Chairman of this Committee,
23 one of the more top moments have been to see the
24 images of those loved ones that we have lost in their
25 way or how. You know in many cases they ended their
life.

3 So, but there's one thing that also we got to
4 understand. Like when city bike was in place, was
5 not thinking about expanding bicycle to the brown
6 community. It was basically thinking about adding
7 another mode of transportation to people who live in
8 Midtown. And so, I think that you know we hope that
9 in the time that we have been in this administration
10 and the new one to come and the new administration
11 and the new friends that we have with Polly
12 Trottenberg in DC, we met [INAUDIBLE 4:08:30] in
13 District 2 and Schumer in the leadership position
14 that we look at transportation in a more
15 comprehensive way on how also to advocate for
16 resources at the federal and state and city level to
17 invest also so that people who live in the poorest
18 neighborhood, they should be able to send investment
19 to make intersections safer as we have seen in the C
20 code in New York City. So, thank you for the level
21 advocate and let's continue working together.

22 DANNY HARRIS: Thank you. Thank you Chair
23 Rodriguez. Just to sort of speak to that, we did
24 polling and 30 percent of New Yorkers have been the
25 victim of a traffic crash. And these numbers are
higher if you are Black, if you are over the age of

3 50, if you are in a household that makes under
4 \$50,000 and 48 percent of Staten Island residents.

5 We also asked if you know somebody killed or
6 injured in traffic crashes and those numbers jump up
7 to 70 percent and then go up even from there.

8 Traffic violence is a near universal experience and
9 whether it's not only the victims but just even as a
10 parent of being terrified of crossing the street with
11 a stroller, this is something that you and the city
12 have clear opportunity to make movements on. We
13 grateful for your support and again urge immediate
14 action. So, thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Next, we'll hear
17 from Eric McClure. Eric.

18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

19 ERIC MCCLURE: Thank you Chair Rodriguez, Chair
20 Gibson and members of the Council. Let me echo
21 Danny's gratitude to you for your work on these
22 issues. Vision Zero, again, I'm Eric McClure, I am
23 the Executive Director of Streets PAC.

24 Vision Zero doesn't so much need to be rethought
25 as it needs to be properly implemented with a much
greater emphasis on street design. Mayor de Blasio's

3 version of Vision Zero has relied far too much on
4 enforcement, especially enforcement by police
5 officers. Rather than on designing streets in such a
6 way to markedly reduce the frequency and severity of
7 crashes. That's what real Vision Zero is all about.

8 Of course redesigning streets to make human error
9 less costly requires a heavy dose of political will.
10 A will that's been lacking in New York City's version
11 of Vision Zero. The will to physically force drivers
12 to slow down and accept that their convenience can
13 not come at the cost of life, limb and quality of
14 life for New York's non driving majority.

15 The will to invest in concrete curb extensions
16 for people on foot and concrete barriers for people
17 on bikes. The will to restrike crosswalks and bike
18 lanes on repaved streets in days rather than months.
19 The will to tell people that a daylighted
20 intersection and the life it may save is more
21 important than a couple of free parking spaces.

22 We know what it takes. The examples are out
23 there in other countries and street design manuals.
24 What's missing is backbone. How many street safety
25 projects have been delayed, watered down or scraped
because some community board or special interest has

gripped about parking or some mythical war on cars.

3 It's hardly worth those who dare to cross the street
4 or ride a bike in New York City or taking all the
5 casualties.

6 Just last week the redesign of Manhattans 5th
7 Avenue was delayed. The proposed safety project on
8 7th and 8th Avenue in Sunset Park is stalled. In the
9 past two weeks alone, two New Yorkers have been
10 killed on Atlantic Avenue, which remains a traffic
11 sewer and which vehicular throughput seems to matter
12 more than human safety. We can't get to Vision Zero
13 with zero action to fix dangerous streets.

14 And it's if the administration's attempt to
15 enforce our way to Vison Zero isn't bad enough, it's
16 obvious to anyone who cares to look that the NYPD has
17 checked out. Dangerous aggressive driving is
18 noticeably worse. Illegal dirt bikes and mopeds are
19 everywhere and parking enforcement is non-existent.

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

21 ERIC MCCLURE: Does not fall under NYPD's
22 jurisdiction are eights words familiar to anyone
23 whose made a 311 complaint about illegal parking in
24 the past year. The NYPD's braising application of
25 enforcing laws they are sworn to uphold and too often

3 break themselves as a glaring reminder that the
4 police should be removed from routine traffic and
5 parking enforcement to the greatest extent possible.

6 Council Member Levin's Intro. 2159, which would
7 allow civilian reporting and documenting of the
8 illegal parking was heard more than nine months ago
9 and still hasn't moved. It's well past time to bring
10 it to a vote, pass it and send it to the Mayor.

11 Let me close by saying we strongly support Intro.
12 2417, Council Member Holden's bill that would
13 prohibit the sale of distribution of license plate
14 covers or materials intended to distort camera
15 images. This is an enormous problem that will get
16 exponentially worse once congestion pricing is
17 implemented. We also strongly support Intro. 2073
18 Council Member Kallos's bill, which would
19 decriminalize jaywalking, a crime that was promoted
20 by the automobile industry more than 100 years ago.

21 As with many alleged crimes in New York City,
22 enforcement is inequitable and clearly bias.
23 According to a Streets Blog analysis of data from
24 2019 and 2020, some 90 percent of jaywalking
25 summonses were issued to Black and Latino New
Yorkers.

3 Given that there is also data that shows that
4 pedestrians are most often struck by drivers while
5 they're in the crosswalk with right of way, crossing
6 midblock is a choice for self-preservation and should
7 be made legal asap. Please pass these bills now and
8 thank you.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony.
10 Uhm, are there any questions for this witness? Okay,
11 seeing none, next we will hear from Sara Lind. Sara.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

13 SARA LIND: Great, thank you. Thank you so much
14 for your time and for holding this important hearing.
15 My name is Sara Lind, I'm the Director of Policy at
16 Open Plans. Reckless drivers are literally killing
17 babies on our streets and the worst part is, we know
18 who these drivers are, they have countless
19 infractions, and the city seems incapable of getting
20 them off the streets. Of the 94 pedestrians fatally
21 struck by drivers so far this year, 59 percent were
22 killed by "major violators." Tyrik Mott, who killed
23 baby Apolline on a Brooklyn sidewalk last month, had
24 completed the Driver Accountability Program in May.
25 Yet he still drove recklessly and he still killed a
three-month-old baby.

3 We support the Dangerous Vehicle Abatement
4 Program. But we believe it needs to be stronger.
5 There must be consequences for drivers who take the
6 course and yet continue to drive recklessly. And
7 what those consequences are is critically important.
8 While suspending licenses is one tool, we know that
9 people drive with suspended licenses all the time.
10 For the worst offenders, we need to go beyond just
11 suspending their licenses and impound their cars.
12 Driving is a privilege, not a right. Lives are at
13 stake.

14 This Council should amend Intro. 971 to mandate
15 impounding vehicles if drivers continue to break the
16 law after taking the course. In the meantime, we urge
17 the Sheriff's office to boot and tow more of these
18 cars. The Council should use its oversight capacity
19 to ensure that the Sheriff is doing so to the best of
20 its ability.

21 While sting operations get media coverage, the
22 Sheriff should focus on these worst offenders all the
23 time. And fundamentally as Eric just mentioned,
24 Vision Zero is about designing our streets so that
25 even reckless driving isn't as dangerous. DOT has
moved slowly and incrementally on implementing

3 necessary safety changes. We encourage the Council
4 to hold an oversight hearing on the traffic engineers
5 at DOT and whether they are fulfilling DOT's stated
6 mission of prioritizing safety.

7 As it now stands, engineers prioritize the
8 movement of vehicles over the safety of humans.
9 Engineers must be held to account for the unsafe
10 conditions they create.

11 I've also submitted written testimony with more
12 details of our position, including pieces of pending
13 legislation that we urge this Council to pass before
14 the end of term to make our streets safer. Thank you
15 for your time.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony.
17 Are there any questions for this witness? Okay,
18 seeing none, our next panelist will be Lisa Orman.
19 Lisa.

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time start now.

21 LISA ORMAN: Hello, my name is Lisa Orman, I'm
22 the Chief of Strategy at Open Plans. Vision Zero is
23 not a simple task but rather a complex multiagency
24 commitment to reaching a singular goal. It requires
25 agencies that might not consider themselves integral
to these efforts to start putting them front and

3 center. For instance the DOE and its Chancellor
4 should be thinking hard about how students, families
5 and staff can safely get to and from school.

6 Contrary to what many parents believe, driving
7 children to school makes the roads more dangerous for
8 others and for their own children.

9 Similarly, the 50,000 teachers in the city who
10 drive and park near school might not think they are
11 effecting any one else but their mode choice makes
12 the streets more dangerous for everyone.

13 Only about 100 schools out of the nearly 2,000
14 schools in the city have some sort of open street.
15 We applaud the DOT and DOE for eliminating the need
16 for schools to get community board approval but we
17 need to implement these at every single school.
18 Starting with the schools with the most dangerous
19 streets around them.

20 If we can completely change the streets to
21 accommodate restaurants, how can we not do the same
22 for our kids? By changing the culture around how
23 students get to and from school, we get that much
24 closer to Vision Zero. We get cars off the streets
25 at a time when we know one million students and their
families are commuting.

3 Along 34th Avenue in Queens, there has been an 85
4 percent reduction in crashes during the open street
5 hours. This is along a corridor with seven school
6 servicing 8,800 students. Imagine if we had an open
7 street in front of every school in the city. We also
8 strongly support Intro. 9. Clearly there are many
9 ways to reduce driving and increase safety. Starting
10 with eliminating parking privileges given to the
11 municipal workforce. City Council Members could
12 return their placards and parking privileges and
13 choose not to join – to be in cars and join Zoom
14 meetings at the same time. HOV lanes that are
15 enforced 365 days a year, pricing and relocating the
16 curb but protecting our students.

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

17 LISA ORMAN: And reducing the dangers they face
18 from driving, is very low hanging fruit and should
19 come first. With resources allocated first to the
20 neediest schools. Thank you.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony.
22 Are there any questions for this panelist? Okay,
23 uhm, our next panelist will be Christine Berthet.
24 Christine.

25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

3 CHRISTINE BERTHET: Yes, good morning, Council
4 member and chair Rodriguez. My name is Christine
5 Berthet, I'm the founder of CHEKPEDS, which focuses
6 on pedestrian safety and rights.

7 Vision Zero is about unspeakable pain and
8 suffering, but the solutions relies principally on
9 engineering and on numbers. One first step is for
10 DOT each year to identify the top 25 most dangerous
11 intersections and make them as safe as possible,
12 during that same year. It is a mystery to me why
13 this protocol is not in place.

14 The key word is as safe as possible, ASAP. While
15 the planners are pushing for more safety, DOT
16 engineers decide whether a safety feature is taking
17 too much space or too much time away from cars. This
18 is why currently at intersections traffic signals
19 provide six times more protection to cars than to
20 cyclists or pedestrians. When we ask for protection,
21 we are given five seconds of safe crossing. They
22 are rationing our safety. I'd like to challenge DOT
23 Commissioner on his deference to the engineers and
24 their use of the uniform federal guidelines, which
25 are only that, guidelines that do not differentiate

3 between highways in Wako Texas and New York city
4 Streets.

5 This manual says that you should wait until five
6 people have been injured to fix an intersection.
7 There is no legal or moral basis for following such
8 highway centric guidelines. The council members
9 should pass a very simple law that requires every DOT
10 employee to put safety at the top of their priorities
11 in all decisions and design. Safety should be a
12 higher priority than giving another five seconds to a
13 vehicle. Each engineer should receive a training
14 system where they meet with Families of Safe Streets.
15 And the same should be true of NYPD.

16 The second keyword is as soon as possible. DOT
17 installs one mile of poorly protected bike lanes, and
18 then need to return once or twice after a crash
19 happens.

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

21 CHRISTINE BERTHET: Other countries install ten
22 miles without having to go back. We need to change
23 that mode. You need to pass the Mayor and the
24 Council must pass as safe as possible mode to make
25 Vision Zero successful and safe in your lives. Thank
you.

3 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony.

4 Uhm, next we will hear from Rene Luciano. Rene.

5 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

6 RENE LUCIANO: Hi, Good Afternoon. My name is
7 Rene Luciano and I serve as the Metro Region
8 Operations Manager for the Trucking Association of
9 New York, TANY. I would like to thank Chairman
10 Rodriguez and the members of the Committee for the
11 opportunity to testify before you today. I also want
12 to introduce myself by saying I am a lifelong New
13 Yorker, born and raised in the city. I was formerly
14 a DOT analyst and prior to that I worked in the
15 private sector as a supervisor and truck driver in
16 the area. Therefore, I can personally attest to the
17 challenges facing the industry while also giving
18 insight into how we can improve transportation and
19 trucking to better serve our city.

20 I'd like to begin by reiterating TANY's
21 commitment to safety and Vision Zero. In fact, we
22 have worked in partnership with DOT and the Council
23 in various capacities to help further these goals and
24 improve safety on the streets of New York City. And
25 we're also beginning to see the fruits of our labor.
As outlined in the Smart Truck Management Plan, the

3 trucking industry accounts for only 6 percent of all
4 vehicle crashes and 5 percent of all killed or
5 seriously injured collisions.

6 Of course one crash is too many. Everyone must
7 do their part to make sure not a single additional
8 life is lost due to a crash, including the trucking
9 industry. Now, for this reason, TANY launched an
10 educational initiative to raise awareness and
11 encourage changes in behavior among pedestrians,
12 bicyclists, truck and vehicle drivers and other road
13 users in New York. The Street Smart Campaign offers
14 critical information and guidance with the goal of
15 helping saving lives and improving safety on New York
16 City streets.

17 Now our initiative Street Smart provides helpful
18 tips, resources, best practices, ongoing education
19 and partnerships and other helpful resources to
20 improve the safety of all road users. The campaign
21 can be found online at nytrucks.org/street-smart.
22 And we are in the process of reaching out to
23 stakeholders and elected officials in an effort to
24 build partnerships to spread the message of Street
25 Smart far and wide to all New Yorkers with the goal
of achieving zero fatalities.

3 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

4 RENE LUCIANO: I would also like to take a moment
5 to express THE concern we have with Intro. 2073,
6 which would ease the burden of pedestrians who do not
7 cross at designated locations. We understand the
8 intent is to not penalize people for essentially
9 jaywalking, but we think it's incumbent upon the
10 city, in keeping with the spirit of Vision Zero, to
11 make sure the message is clear that it is not
12 acceptable and puts everyone in danger.

13 So, we'd like to continue to have important
14 conversations with the City Council and conduct
15 outreach and education of the members and we'd like
16 to thank you for your time and I'm happy to answer
17 any questions you may have.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony.
19 Are there any questions for this panelist? Okay,
20 seeing none our next panelist will be Carlos Castell
21 Croke. Carlos.

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

23 CARLOS CASTELL CROKE: Good afternoon, my name is
24 Carlos Castell Croke, I am the Associate for New York
25 City Programs at the New York League of Conservation

3 Voters. I would like to thank Chair Rodriguez for
4 the opportunity to testify today.

5 The recent cycling in the city report confirmed
6 that there was a significant bike boom during the
7 height of the pandemic last year. This in itself a
8 victory for the environment and for our city. Cars
9 are the leading source of pollution from the
10 transportation sector and create unsafe street
11 conditions for pedestrians, cyclists, and micro-
12 mobility users alike. Reducing transportation
13 pollution and congestion by encouraging drivers to
14 take public transit and micro-mobility forms of
15 transportation is a top priority for NYLCV. Vision
16 Zero, as intended, is a program that New York City
17 desperately needs to make our streets safer, thereby
18 giving more New Yorkers the confidence to transition
19 away from automobiles and into forms of cleaner
20 transportation like bikes and scooters.

21 However, the program has been failing over the
22 last two years, with 2021 slated to set a new record
23 for fatalities during Mayor de Blasio's term in
24 office. As we close in on the end of this calendar
25 year, it is incumbent upon our elected leaders to
expand and improve upon Vision Zero, and accompanying

3 safe streets programs, so that New Yorkers are
4 encouraged to get out of their cars and feel safe
5 doing so.

6 First and foremost, we must be rapidly
7 implementing the Streets Master Plan. Sustainable
8 forms of transportation deserve priority over cars,
9 especially on the busiest streets. The city also
10 needs to be implementing a comprehensive street
11 transformation plan, such as the Transportation
12 Alternatives 25x25, to reclaim street space from
13 cars. Obvious improvements such as implementing more
14 speed cameras on dangerous roads can drastically
15 reduce reckless driving and protect pedestrians.
16 Simple infrastructure improvements, like bike parking
17 on street corners to improve visibility and also
18 provide convenient bike storage, can also go a long
19 way to improve safety.

20 We currently have no goal set to reduce car use.
21 If the city adopted a plan like 25x25 it would allow
22 us to implement a concrete goal for reducing car use
23 while also working towards other climate and
24 resiliency goals including green infrastructure,
25 street safety, and reduced emissions.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

3 CARLOS CASTELL CROKE: Mayor de Blasio has made
4 street safety a priority with Vision Zero, and this
5 Council has advanced it through major transportation
6 legislation including the Streets Master Plan, but
7 our streets are at an inflection point. We have
8 already fallen behind peer cities in making streets
9 safer and greener, and we are in danger of losing all
10 of the progress we have made over the last decade if
11 the Mayor and the Council, including the new Mayor
12 and Council members next year, we will have to do
13 this now and follow through on - a major commitment
14 to street safety and congestion reduction. Thank
15 you.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony.
17 Are there any questions for this panelist? Okay,
18 seeing none, our next panelist will Jaqi Cohen.
19 Jaqi.

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

21 JAQI COHEN: Hi, thank you for the opportunity to
22 testify before you today. Thank you to Chairs Gibson
23 and Rodriguez. My name is Jaqi Cohen, I'm the
24 Director of Climate and Equity Policy for Tri State
25 Transportation Campaign.

3 As one of the most climate and vulnerable and
4 diverse coastal cities New York must lead the way on
5 climate. In recent weeks, our city government has
6 made a commitment to fighting climate change through
7 the transportation sector by announcing its goal of
8 electrifying the cities municipal vehicle fleet.
9 Electrification is a very important step towards
10 decarbonizing New York's Transportation Sector which
11 contributes to over one third of the states overall
12 greenhouse gas emissions. The vehicle
13 electrification is not a silver bullet solution to
14 fighting climate change while making New York a more
15 equitable city.

16 Electrification doesn't speed up New York City's
17 buses which are the slowest in the country. It
18 doesn't reduce the threat of traffic violence which
19 has claimed 1,800 lives at the course of this current
20 administration alone. Electrification itself will
21 not achieve New York's climate goals without
22 complimentary policies that seek to reduce vehicle
23 miles traveled VMT, on the city streets.

24 While electrification can be a vital piece of a
25 larger puzzle towards an equitable transportation
future. We must also work towards a more

3 comprehensive view of our mobility needs and address
4 how a lack of access to alternative modes of
5 transportation will continue to perpetuate a system
6 of inequity if not addressed. This includes
7 diversifying mobility options for communities beyond
8 the use of cars with options that prioritize public
9 transit for Access A Ride and bus riders and active
10 transportation for cyclists and pedestrians. We know
11 that those that are most directly impacted by the
12 negative health outcomes associated with greenhouse
13 gas emissions and other pollutants from the
14 transportation sector are predominantly low income
15 people of color who are disproportionately reliant on
16 public transit.

17 Simply put, New York City cannot call itself a
18 leader on climate while simultaneously ignoring
19 increasing numbers of traffic fatalities and
20 congestion. The plague of traffic violence, like
21 climate change is only exacerbated by inaction. The
22 goal of decarbonizing our transportation sector must
23 go hand and hand with the commitment to reducing our
24 city's reliance on cars and reducing overall VMT on
25 our streets.

3 We urge the city to prioritize people over
4 private vehicles and proceed with swift
5 implementation of additional bus lanes, bike lanes
6 and improve pedestrian infrastructure as laid out in
7 the New York City Streets Master Plan. Which will
8 help pave the way for a safer, more accessible and
9 greener New York. Thank you.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony.
11 Are there any questions for this panelist. Okay,
12 seeing none, our next panelist will be David Achelis.
13 David.

14 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

15 DAVID ACHELIS: Yes, thank you. My name is David
16 Achelis, I am President of the West 50's Neighborhood
17 Association and a Member of Community Board Five. My
18 membership is over 600 people and they've asked me,
19 really they've begged me to talk about bicycles. And
20 when I talk about bicycles, I don't mean just regular
21 bikes with the whole bang shebang on them. E-bikes,
22 scooters, motorized skateboards, unicycles, all the
23 craziness that's out there. They are asking, begging
24 please, for some sort of help. It's absolutely crazy
25 out there.

3 The Department of Transportation in the city who
4 have spent hundreds of millions of dollars on bike
5 infrastructure and promotion but it appears not one
6 penny has been spent on enforcement or education.
7 Nobody out there on bikes seem to know what the laws
8 are. Laws are, you can't ride a bicycle on the
9 sidewalk and by bike, I mean everything else. You
10 have to go in the direction of traffic. Bikes cannot
11 be going two ways. Who should use bike lanes? None
12 of this is clear and the education that's been talked
13 about is not working. I've given suggestions in
14 Community Board Five to the Department of
15 Transportation, how they can help educate the city
16 and the bikers out there what the laws are.

17 And I also want to point out that of all the town
18 hall meetings I've attended and all the local
19 precinct meetings I attend, the most discussed topic
20 is bike safety. People aren't talking about cars
21 jumping up on the sidewalks. I know cars are
22 dangerous, we all know that but right now, bikes are
23 out of control and please, please, help my
24 constituents and do something about it. Thank you.

25 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony.
Are there any questions for this panelist? Okay,

2 seeing none, our next panelist will be Chris Hayward.

3 Chris.

4 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

5 CHRIS HAYWARD: Hello, can you hear me?

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes.

7 CHRIS HAYWARD: Thank you for this opportunity to
8 speak. My name is Chris Hayward. I live in Park
9 Slope and work in Flatiron. A question for you all,
10 when you start your daily commute, how many of you
11 think, "well, I might be killed on my way home"? As
12 a bike commuter, that thought occurs to me much too
13 frequently, and with good reason. As an example,
14 just last week, a driver got mad at me for legally
15 taking a full lane on 4th Ave in Brooklyn due to the
16 bike lane being obscured. He recklessly sped past me
17 so closely that I could feel the rush of wind from
18 his car, and the driver in the adjacent lane yelled
19 out.

20 I commute daily via bike and every single trip,
21 even though I travel on streets for only a few miles,
22 I encounter many instances of bike lanes being
23 blocked, often causing me to merge into fast-moving
24 traffic. I use 311 to report TLC drivers and those
25 drivers only because unlike the NYPD, the TLC

3 actually takes action in response. Reporting other
4 drivers is generally a waste of time. Another
5 chronic issue is cars parked on sidewalks and in
6 crosswalks, which are of course are extremely
7 dangerous to young children and people with
8 disabilities in particular.

9 Many of the vehicles illegally parked in bike
10 lanes and on sidewalks are protected by placards,
11 which are often not even legitimate ones, as has
12 already been discussed. Drivers with placards break
13 the law with impunity, as they know that they will
14 not be ticketed or towed. As a single example, last
15 month, Engine 239 firefighters parked personal cars
16 with placards on the sidewalk along 4th Ave in
17 Brooklyn. This is a major route for families taking
18 their kids to school. A firefighter confronted me
19 when he saw me documenting the violation by taking a
20 picture with my smart phone. I asked whether he knew
21 that sidewalk parking is illegal. His response was,
22 "Yeah. What are you gonna do about it?" because he
23 knows, the NYPD will not do anything. No one will
24 stop a placard class from endangering children. I
25 regularly report all of the above issues to 311,

3 except for complaints about TLC drivers, this is in
4 vain. As you know from your investigation and
5 Streets Blog's independent one. This is unsurprising
6 for me since the 78th precinct, my local one, is one
7 of the worst in the city.

8 How can we address all of these problems? First,
9 I urge you to support and actively advocate for
10 Intro. 2159, introduced by Council Member Levin –

11 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

12 CHRIS HAYWARD: And uh, we need a network of real
13 protected bike lanes, paint and flex posts are not
14 protection. We need more DOT loading zones
15 throughout the city, that are enforced. And then
16 finally, the city should better educate drivers about
17 the hazards of stopping in the bike lane and the
18 relevant laws. Thank you for your time.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony.
20 Are there any questions for this panelist? Okay,
21 seeing none, our next panelist will be Jackson
22 Chabot. Jackson.

23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

24 JACKSON CHABOT: Good afternoon, my name is
25 Jackson Chabot, and I am the Director of Public Space
Advocacy at Open Plans. Open Streets are a tool to

3 improve safety. Now, we need a framework to manage
4 public space and implement critical safety
5 improvements equitably.

6 First, some context. The recent Transportation
7 Alternatives report found that a mere 24 miles of the
8 Mayor's 100 promised miles are active. I highlight
9 this because the fastest way to reduce reliance on
10 vehicles and improve pedestrian and cyclist safety is
11 to provide safe infrastructure. Open Streets are a
12 tool we now have and should be implementing more of.
13 Over the past year and a half, I've seen: Seniors
14 walking safely on 34th Avenue in Jackson Heights.
15 Children learning to ride their bicycles on
16 Vanderbilt. And people with mobility devices safely
17 rolling down Avenue B. You get the point. The list
18 goes on though.

19 Open Streets are safe zones, they have shorter
20 crossing, and fewer or no vehicles. But let's be
21 clear, they are made possible because of volunteer
22 coalitions and Business Improvement Districts. Moving
23 forward, we need a framework to manage public space
24 equitably. This will help us provide safe, healthy,
25 and joyful public spaces in all communities.

3 Right now, the DOT requires maintenance partners
4 for critical safety infrastructure. Therefore, if
5 there isn't a partner, there isn't likely to be the
6 safety improvements. This leads to inequitably
7 distributed infrastructure across the city. At the
8 moment, BIDs are our primary mechanisms for public
9 space management. But they cover just two percent of
10 the city.

11 Coincidentally, they are also presenting the most
12 ambitious pedestrian safety plans in New York. In
13 the last three months alone, Meatpacking, SOHO
14 Broadway, Union Square Partnership, and others have
15 announced plans to transform their districts into
16 areas that prioritize pedestrian safety.

17 So, why is it that wealthy BIDs are leading the
18 way on pedestrian safety? I wish that New York City
19 Department of Transportation had the same
20 transformative vision for our streets and sidewalks.
21 They would be that much safer. Thank you.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony.
23 Are there any questions for this panelist? Okay, our
24 next panelist will be Doug Gordon. Doug.

25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

3 DOUG GORDON: Uhm, I actually want to yield my
4 time to my eight year old son, who is thankfully home
5 from school and has a few words. Go ahead.

6 ZEB GORDON: I am Zeb Gordon and I am eight years
7 old. Grownups get to make all the decisions about
8 our streets. Kids never get to say what they would
9 like. I know that cars aren't always bad. Like
10 taxis they help people with getting to places, or
11 people with disabilities. Dangerous drivers
12 sometimes just look at their phones and that is
13 dangerous because drivers just zoom across a red
14 light and some people might be walking.

15 So if there were fewer cars it would be safer. If
16 cars were limited, I could bike to school more often
17 and there wouldn't be so much climate change. I want
18 more bike lanes and I really like open streets.
19 Every kid in every neighborhood should be able to
20 make decisions about how their streets work. To the
21 City Council, please don't forget kids. Thank you.

22 DOUG GORDON: Good job.

23 ZEB GORDON: Thank you.

24 DOUG GORDON: That's it. Thank you.

25 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Could you repeat your name
one more time.

3 ZEB GORDON: ZEB GORDON:

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Zeb. Are there any
5 questions for this panelist? Okay, seeing none,
6 we'll move on to our next panelist, which will be
7 Michael Streeter. Michael.

8 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Do we have Michael? Okay,
10 uh, we'll move on. Our next panelist will be Samir
11 Lavingia. Samir.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

13 SAMIR LAVINGIA: Hi, thank you so much for
14 letting me speak. My name is Samir Lavingia, I am a
15 resident of Manhattan, a Member of CD5 speaking in my
16 individual capacity and an advocate for safe streets
17 who lives near Union Square Park.

18 I am here to talk about how Vision Zero has been
19 a total disappointment. Uhm, the DOT has plenty of
20 tools in their toolbox with street redesigns and they
21 need to take responsibility and use them. They need
22 to stop victim blaming cyclists and deflecting the
23 state and other enforcement agencies tht they can't
24 control.

25 They have the tools; they just need to use them.
It's pretty embarrassing to just bunting to other

3 agencies and be like, oh, we can't do anything. They
4 just don't want to do their job and keep our streets
5 save.

6 This has been shown time and time again that they
7 don't want to do anything until the City Council
8 forces their hand and will testify saying it's not
9 possible. I'm just going to go through some
10 experience that the average New Yorker will see just
11 by walking around the city. Our intersections are a
12 mess where people in cars constantly running red
13 lights and blocking crosswalks. Drivers and parking
14 on the sidewalks and in the bus lanes so frequently
15 that the busses don't even bother to use them. You
16 can hear the busses honk and honk at these cars
17 parking in the bus stops, but they just don't care.
18 They aren't moving.

19 There is no accountability for this horrible
20 behavior that puts pedestrian and bus riders at risk.
21 You can see ambulances stuck with their sirens on
22 because they can't go anywhere. Cars are the problem
23 and we have way too many of them in our city and we
24 need to get rid of as many of them as we possibly
25 can. This isn't just private citizens who are
breaking these rules. It's also government employees

3 and the NYPD. I can remember the last time I went to
4 Union Square Park and didn't see cops parked on the
5 sidewalk, especially on the east side and in that
6 bike lane near the subway entrance. In other parts
7 of the city, there are police cars constantly parked
8 on the sidewalk as well. No stroller or wheelchair
9 would possibly be able to fit through them, so they
10 have to go into the street and risk their lives.

11 Last, I just want to talk about experience of
12 biking in the city. Our bike infrastructure just
13 isn't safe. I don't even own a bike, but I Citi bike
14 occasionally and I wish I could do it more. Right
15 now I don't because I just don't feel safe,
16 especially at the intersections and turning lanes.

17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

18 SAMIR LARINGIA: We are in a climate emergency
19 and we should be making zero emission transportation
20 a more attractive option. Here are some things that
21 we can do. We can designate large swaths of land
22 where we pedestrianize the space, similar to what
23 they want to do in Berlin and Paris. SoHo would be
24 the most obvious area. We can install actual
25 bollards that protect pedestrians and bicyclists. We
use them for things like fire hydrants and parking

3 meters, but those aren't people. We should be using
4 them for people. We should ask
5 civilian enforcement of parking rules. We should add
6 speed bumps everywhere we can. The DOT could easily
7 do this, instead of just blaming other agencies. And
8 we should get rid of our overnight parking where we
9 have street cleaning so drives can't just sit there
10 and idol polluting our atmosphere while waiting for
11 the cleaning trucks to come and they don't even move
12 for them anyways.

13 Anyways, thank you for the time, especially to
14 those who are still actively listening and present.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony.
16 Are there any questions for this panelist? Okay,
17 now, we'll go back and see we have Michael Streeter.
18 Michael.

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

20 MICHAEL STREETER: Hi, good afternoon. I've made
21 many report to 311 about cars parked on sidewalks and
22 in bike lanes over the years and also illegal trucks
23 and I've never had one ticket properly addressed or
24 resolved. So, I was not surprised to read Jessie
25 Coburns explosive reporting on the extensive fraud by
the NYPD in their 311 responses over the years.

3 And I wanted to thank the Council for their own
4 equally damning but not surprising investigation.
5 And I think we need to put a different label on this.
6 It's 311 response fraud. 311 response fraud by the
7 NYPD. Let's call it what it is. Equally disgusting
8 is that the NYPD has refused to cooperate with the
9 investigation and barely even responded.

10 Uhm, so there's five proposed bills that are
11 being covered here today and that's great but really
12 to the Council, you've got to do a lot more than
13 this. It's great that there's a proposal to make it
14 illegal to distribute license plate covers. I saw
15 lots of Council Members jump on this and co-sponsor,
16 which is great but how about we address the people
17 who are actually using these? Why is there such a
18 lax response to vehicles that have these things
19 mounted.

20 The NYPD refuses to do anything. If you point
21 out to them when you see them and they're right
22 there. They won't do anything and I really don't see
23 what this is going to do for the people who are
24 selling these things on eBay. They're in Texas or
25 Arizona or whatever. I really hope - with that said,
I do support the proposed bill. I really hope there

3 are some incoming Council Members on here or paying
4 attention to this. To you I say, please help and in
5 the meantime there actually is a proposed law that
6 will actually make a difference and save lives,
7 reduce congestion, give us our sidewalks back and
8 address police corruption. Please pass Intro. 2159.
9 Most of the issues being brought up today could be
10 solved with Intro. 2159. Stop going back to the
11 drawing board.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

13 MICHAEL STREETER: Please pass Intro. 2159.
14 Thank you.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony.
16 Are there any questions for this panelist? Okay, our
17 next panelist will be Paul Krikler. Paul.

18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

19 PAUL KRIKLER: Thank you very much. My first
20 comments go to the three people who spoke at the
21 start of this. I'm heartbroken for the people who
22 lost loved ones. Every day I think about my son Ben,
23 who is 16, who rides a Citi bike, he's probably
24 riding it right now, schools out. And I'm terrified
25 for him every day. And I'm a safe streets advocate.
I try and get bike lanes wherever we can but it's not

safe. The city is failing him and it's failing me.

3 So, yes, we got to fix placard abuse and enforcement
4 can be done. Not just improved but done. But none
5 of these things are going to fix what we need to
6 hear. We need a massive change in how we do
7 infrastructure in the city.

8 We should design our infrastructure. Design is
9 the key word for people and not for cars. Flexi
10 posts don't work. We need everything that people
11 talk about. It's the obvious stuff. It's bike
12 lanes, open streets, safe zones for schools, loading
13 zones, everything. There's a list that goes on
14 beyond this but lets be clear what we're talking
15 about. The best example I can give you is 2nd Avenue
16 bike lane in Manhattan which I amongst many people
17 work very hard to get. It's fantastic compared to
18 what's on 3rd Avenue, which is nothing. Which is a
19 deadly place but I won't let my 13 year old son ride
20 15 blocks to school on 2nd Avenue because it's
21 murderous.

22 Only yesterday I was on there. Every two blocks
23 someone heading across you. I had someone turn
24 across me violently and he was texting. You can't
25 fix this without fixing the design. Keep us all

3 separate. I don't want to be with the murderous
4 people anymore.

5 We should rebrand Vision Zero. I'm sorry guys,
6 this may sound like bad humor to Vision 200. We're
7 approaching 200 people dead this year from drivers.
8 Babies in strollers in crosswalks. I think it's
9 appalling that this city, many of you perhaps could
10 do something more but don't. We're failing
11 ourselves.

12 Lastly, very quickly, 5th Avenue is a disgrace.
13 We should not be delaying it and I'd ask anyone on
14 this call who could do something about this to
15 reverse the decision to lay the 5th Avenue -

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

17 PAUL KRIKLER: And extended sidewalk. It's
18 absolutely [INAUDIBLE 4:45:45] to Vision Zero to do
19 things like this. Thank you Council Members.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony.
21 Are there any questions for this panelist? Okay, our
22 next panelist will be David Ganz. David.

23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

24 DAVID GANZ: I appreciate the time. Thank you
25 for giving me the opportunity. I just want to be
able to first thank Chairman Rodriguez, the DOT

3 Commissioner Gutman. So, far over the years you've
4 done a terrific job and thank you Chair Rodriguez for
5 all the support you've given Vision Zero over the
6 past eight years.

7 I just want to introduce some quick level
8 setting. If you take a look at the world health
9 organizations, pedestrian death count. New York City
10 believe it or not is the safest city on a 100,000
11 population of any city in North American. Europe is
12 obviously significantly better but let's just put
13 things in context. And also, I would caution us when
14 we compare October 20th to October 21. January
15 through October 2020 was basically the pandemic.
16 Particularly from March through October. It's not
17 really - I don't think it's necessarily fair to
18 combine or compare all the information. Perhaps look
19 at January and February first and then look at March
20 through October 2nd. Uhm, I also want to take some
21 issue with the comment from representative Rosenthal
22 who said we need a catchy advertising line or a
23 jingle.

24 I think this is more than a jingle, this is
25 changing people's behavior, particularly drivers.
And when she raised the issue of who sees the add in

3 the back of a bus. Well, you know who sees the add
4 in the back of the bus? Drivers see the add in the
5 back of the bus. That's why. Uhm, I think a lot of
6 this information such as intersections. 47 percent
7 of crashes have occurred intersections, however, 25
8 percent overall was a result of turning - uh, cars
9 turning left and right. People die in crosswalks.

10 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

11 DAVID GANZ: Thank you.

12 COMMMITTE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony.

13 Are there any questions -

14 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: I just want to highlight
15 you know before we continue hear from the other
16 members of the public, as all of you know me and
17 we've been in the frontline in this battle and I also
18 want for you to also keep thought about the part
19 related about social class when it comes to this
20 issue that is effecting us.

21 Like, you know and again, I represent the area of
22 Inwood and I supported the bike lane at Dykeman even
23 though I didn't have many members of the
24 transportation who live here. They went to community
25 board to support it. Most people they came against
it. But I thought it was the right thing to do. I

3 believe it's important to have the bike lane you know
4 in that area, thinking about you know our family, our
5 children but I want for you to think about deeply
6 when it come to the issue related to the underserved
7 community and the community of middle class and upper
8 class. Like there's a real type of segregation that
9 we live in. And I think that when you hear from the
10 NYPD and DOT and the again like you know I don't want
11 to you know like anytime when I pass through 97 you
12 know in west end and you know I've been spending a
13 lot of time in the west side too walking around,
14 taking my daughter to programs at schools. I know
15 how important it is.

16 So, I don't want no one regardless of the
17 socioeconomic or [INAUDIBLE 4:49:45]. But that's the
18 opportunity that we have. Because I think that if we
19 think let's say about the issue, intersection that
20 they you know around any place you know 5th Avenue,
21 west end, west side. Think about it walk a little
22 through the south Bronx and walk a little bit to the
23 underserved community, so that we can also hope to
24 extend our voices. Saying, we as a city have to put
25 together comprehensive plan to also redesign our
intersection you now citywide, across the line.

3 Because what happened is like now, we have seen more
4 expansion of bike you know. But it was after like 20
5 years we have Citi bike in Midtown Manhattan. The
6 fighting day after day, we got some expansion of Citi
7 bike and bike share to the south Bronx or to northern
8 Manhattan.

9 So, I just want you know to support my colleagues
10 to you know to think about it that as we advocate,
11 always think about that you know this is an epidemic
12 but it will also take for us to leave those
13 underserved community. Like why wouldn't have a
14 great waterfront bike lane you know in the front of
15 the Hudson River above 126. Why wouldn't have it you
16 know in the upper west side?

17 So, you know I will always be a partner but I
18 will always be the voice challenging you guys to say,
19 let's look at the five borough community. Because if
20 we think that things are bad in our middle class and
21 upper class neighborhood, just go to the poorest
22 neighborhood and think they are worse.

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair, Council Member Holden
24 would like to say something. Council Member Holden.

25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Yeah, so thank you to -
4 obviously the uh, I think we have to - with so many
5 people getting struck by vehicles in crosswalks, uhm,
6 I think at one point it was 78 percent of the people
7 in New York City were struck in the crosswalk.

8 So, that's the most dangerous place to be is the
9 crosswalk. So, I think we have to rethink and I
10 think it was mentioned a number of times but I think
11 we cannot allow at least on many of the more
12 congested corners, cars turning into pedestrians
13 crossing. That means they have to have - the car
14 should have a - let's say it's a right turn, they
15 have to red arrow and then let the pedestrians cross.

16 In New York City, you get double lanes or
17 sometimes triple lanes of traffic cutting into a
18 crosswalk. And by the way, I'm going to have the
19 hearing tomorrow on 311, there's no way that you
20 could make a complaint that somebody is parking in a
21 crosswalk on the 311 app. So, we're going to change
22 that. Because there are issues that we cannot make
23 complaints on the 311 app for crosswalks. There's a
24 lot of issues but we have to rethink the way we you
25 know allow the cars. And motorists in New York City
are very aggressive Chair. We know that. More than

3 other cities. If you travel around the United
4 States, New York City motorists are the most
5 aggressive and we need to actually rethink the way
6 we're planning our streets. Especially in the more
7 congested areas. Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you Council Member
9 and we will do it.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, our next panelist will
11 be Jehiah Czebotar. Jehiah.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

13 JEHIAH CZSEBOTAR: Thank you. Can you hear me?

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes.

15 JEHIAH CZEBOTAR: Thank you Chair. I'm going to
16 quickly suggest ten ways the City Council can
17 legislate immediately to reduce car use and car
18 dependency. A topic which I think has unfortunately
19 been overlooked by a lot of the Council Members
20 today. So, how do you reduce car reliance on
21 vehicles? One, Legislate. Require DOT to reduce on-
22 street parking by 10 percent every year until the
23 number of vehicles crossing bridges drops 50 percent.
24 Legislate. Require DOT to expand the number of
25 metered parking spaces by 10 percent each year until
the city is no longer subsidizing car storage.

3 Legislate. Require DOT to adopt a dynamic pricing
4 scheme for parking meter rates block by block
5 targeting a curbside availability of 50 percent.
6 Legislate. End the outdated practice of requiring
7 developers to build parking for car storage. Ban
8 parking minimums citywide like many other progressive
9 cities already have. Legislate. Require DOT to have
10 HOV lanes on bridges and major routes. It's past
11 time. Legislate. Create an e-bike and e-scooter
12 rebate program tied to ID NYC. Stop tolerating the
13 practice of discounting fines to curb bad driver
14 behavior. Legislate. Pass Intro. 1141, as promised
15 by Speaker Johnson require a ruling from a judge
16 before a fine is discounted. Stop tolerating
17 vehicles on sidewalks. Legislate. Pass Intro. 2159
18 for an honest civilian complaint program run by DOT,
19 like many people have mentioned today. Stop
20 tolerating vehicles on sidewalks. Legislate. Make
21 it forfeiture of employment when a city employee
22 parks on a sidewalk in violation of Administrative
23 Code 19-162.5. Stop tolerating NYPD placard abuse.
24 Legislate. Repeal Administrative Code 25-183 require
25 DOT be the only city agency that issues permits for
restricted on street parking. Thank you.

3 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony.

4 Are there any questions for this panelist? Okay, our
5 next panelist will be Avery Decker. Avery.

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

7 AVERY DECKER: I'm sorry, I just submitted it
8 online. I don't have something to say right now.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, thank you. Uhm,
10 alright our next panelist will be Ricardo Pacheco.
11 Ricardo.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Do we have Ricardo? Okay,
14 we'll come back. Our next panelist will be Catherine
15 Montesi. Catherine.

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

17 CATHERINE MONTESI: Hi everyone. I'm Catherine
18 Montesi. I am an Engagement Journalist studying at
19 the CUNY graduate school of journalism. I'm a former
20 museum educator, an actor who makes theater for young
21 audience and I'm the creator of Dike Cycle, a queer
22 centered community bike ride for a community that I
23 refer to as emergent cyclists. People who are new to
24 cycling in New York City and people who want to rid
25 their bike in the city and they would do it if they
could do it safely.

3 So, I'm new to this conversation but I've been
4 doing a lot of listening and uhm, there's spotty
5 cycling infrastructure of course but I really think
6 and it's been alluded to a lot in this conversation
7 today equally as urgent, is this normalize culture of
8 aggressive, angry driving in New York City and it has
9 gotten worse since the pandemic right. Like and it
10 makes sense. People are frustrated and upset about
11 the state of the world and they take all of this
12 emotion and they get behind the wheel of a one to two
13 ton vehicle, often while they are doing something
14 else like texting or eating.

15 And asking human beings who we know are
16 irrational and who are the most angry and distracted
17 they've ever been in our history to just sort of be
18 better cannot be a traffic policy. We can control
19 driver behavior. We need to daylight every
20 intersection starting with every intersection around
21 a school. We need speed bumps on every street to stop
22 drag racing and force drivers to slow down and we
23 need a permanent physical barrier between every bike
24 lane and every vehicle. Paint is not a barrier and a
25 Tweet is not a barrier. A physical permanent barrier
will prevent drivers from blocking bike lanes which

3 would eliminate the need for bike lane enforcement
4 which would free up the NYPD to do the other
5 important work that they need to do.

6 Also, the city does need a large scale PR
7 Campaign that teaches people how to share the road
8 and be good commuters. You know Council Member
9 Rosenthal brought up a jingle and like, I saw people
10 kind of laugh but honestly, it's one of the smartest
11 things anyone has said today. It demonstrates an
12 understanding of how we can use engagement, education
13 and public art.

14 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

15 CATHERINE MONTESI: I've said to my classmates, I
16 wish someone would hire me and my friends to make the
17 Sesame Street style songs. You know to work and I
18 know I'm over time but I've waited a lot of hours and
19 so, I'm going to say this one last thing. I'm
20 surprised that in this conversation about traffic and
21 cars that there hasn't been more talk about climate
22 change and I want to say, getting cars off the road
23 is important, not only because we want to prevent
24 senseless traffic violence, but because emissions
25 from cars are killing our planet and contributing to
the climate crisis. My class tonight is going remote

3 in anticipation of rain. Because it's assumed the
4 subways will flood and people won't be able to get to
5 class. And I just want to remind everyone that
6 recently 11 people in our city drowned in their
7 apartment. So, there's been a lot of talk about how
8 we have to jump through certain hoops and there's
9 procedures and these things take time but if 11
10 people drowning in their apartment isn't an alarm
11 bell, I don't know what is.

12 Like, we don't have time. We are out of time.
13 Let us work together. Let's make big, bold moves and
14 let's get a vision beyond Vision Zero. Thanks.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony.
16 Are there any questions for this panelist? Okay, our
17 next panelist will be Richard Robbins. Richard.

18 RICHARD ROBBINS: Hi, thank you very much and
19 thank you for holding this hearing. Richard Robbins,
20 I'm a member of Manhattan CB7, speaking in my
21 personal capacity.

22 To date this year, there have been 382 murders in
23 New York City and there have been 199 traffic
24 fatalities. Despite there being over half as many
25 traffic fatalities as murders, traffic fatalities are
an afterthought. The Clear goal of Vision Zero is to

3 save lives. A few things we need. Number one, We
4 need a culture of safety. I think of Long Beach
5 Island, New Jersey where the main road feels like a
6 two lane highway each way, but everyone knows that if
7 you drive over the 35 MPH speed limit you get a
8 ticket. We have the opposite.

9 When I drive into New York City to the upper west
10 side, coming down the West Side Highway there are
11 always cars racing and weaving in and out of traffic.
12 This sets a tone of lawlessness. On Riverside Drive,
13 I drive the 25 MPH speed limit, invariably cars cross
14 the double yellow line to pass me and go faster.
15 Everywhere, cars speed, run red lights, and fail to
16 yield.

17 To date this year in CB7's district, there have
18 been eight traffic fatalities. If we had eight
19 murders, the community would be up in arms. But
20 nobody is even aware of the eight fatalities, seven
21 of which were caused by cars and one by an illegal
22 scooter that killed actress Lisa Banes.

23 Number two, NYPD has an extraordinarily difficult
24 job. But traffic fatalities are not a priority. I
25 recognize that Chief Royster and the NYPD leadership
in this meeting are the exception, but I have been to

3 countless meetings with everyone from the former
4 commissioner to our local precincts. Never do the
5 police even mention traffic. The focus is always on
6 murders and other non-traffic related violent crimes.
7 Earlier in this hearing, Chief Royster said, "when
8 shootings went up, we had to reallocate staff." This
9 shows the NYPD priority.

10 Very few officers are trained to use radar. In a
11 recent month, one of the precincts on the upper west
12 side gave out Zero traffic tickets, speeding tickets.
13 Automatic enforcement with cameras can be part of the
14 solution, but especially while we remain limited by
15 Albany, we need an actual enforcement presence so
16 drivers know that if they break laws, they will get
17 caught. We have the opposite of that now, a general
18 sense of lawlessness.

19 Plus, not only does NYPD not enforce traffic
20 laws, they don't respect traffic safety measures
21 implemented by DOT. As one example, DOT installed
22 left turn lanes on Columbus Ave to keep

23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

24 RICHARD ROBBINS: Turning - that can't be two
25 minutes. Did you speed up. Uhm, I'm going to keep

3 going because I've waited four and a half hours to
4 talk.

5 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: I'm sorry summarize
6 please.

7 RICHARD ROBBINS: Okay, so the police are
8 actually using the turning lane that DOT created as
9 their own parking lot. We need them enforcing laws
10 not breaking the laws.

11 Number three, it's crazy that completely
12 untrained people like me on community boards who
13 don't even have access to data have influence on
14 traffic safety issues. The Fire Department would
15 never go to community boards for permission to
16 implement life or death fire safety measures. Yet we
17 force DOT to go to community boards, which are
18 dominated by car owners, myself included, for
19 approval of life or death issues.

20 Community boards are anti bike and you know it's
21 cars killing people not bikes. As if Community
22 boards were anti knife, we'd have the police going
23 after knives and not guns because they don't like
24 knives. WE need to rethink parking and loading
25 zones, but at the same time there has to be serious
consequences to parking traffic. One of many example

3 is the fresh direct truck that's on Amsterdam Avenue
4 West 133rd that's been blocking a lane of traffic for
5 years. And any tickets they get are the cost of
6 doing business. They've effectively made a traffic
7 lane on Amsterdam Avenue, they're a distribution
8 center for the neighborhood.

9 As many have stated in this meeting, NYPD
10 frequently dismisses 311 complaints. I filed
11 complaints about a car that frequently parks
12 overnight on the sidewalk near my home and repeatedly
13 NYPD just dismissed it one minute after I filed it.
14 It's a false report. There are laws against violent
15 false reports. I don't know why NYPD is allowed to
16 get away with filing false reports.

17 The last thing is deliver cyclists need to be
18 held accountable. Third party apps like door dash
19 take advantage by making delivery cyclists
20 independent contractors. I tried delivering for door
21 dash just to see the experience. Within an hour and
22 a half I made exactly \$22.50 minimum wage by
23 following the traffic laws.

24 They are basically forcing the riders to break
25 the law and uh, by doing that, these riders are
completely unaccountable. They are not adhering to

3 New York City laws that they have to have ID and they
4 have to have helmets and lights because they're
5 independent contractors. Door dash is not
6 responsible for them. Uhm, so there's a lot that the
7 Council needs to be doing right away and you know
8 with everything. We need to make saving lives a real
9 priority and it hasn't been done right now.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony.
11 Are there any questions for this panelist? Okay, our
12 next panelist will be Gretchen Connelie. Gretchen.

13 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts.

14 GRETCHEN CONNELIE: Hi, my name is Gretchen and I
15 am a pedestrian cycle driver and somebody mentioned
16 unicycles. I happen to be unicyclist as well. The
17 statistics for Vision Zero are bad and are getting
18 worse and sadly in my experience cannot be taken at
19 face value. In the last eight years I've been
20 involved in three incidents where I felt compelled to
21 report to the police. On the first I was struck by a
22 taxi while crossing with the light in a crosswalk. As
23 responding officers asked, do you really want to file
24 a report and you don't need medical attention. And
25 implied that by filing a report required him to call
an ambulance at my expense. The next two instances

3 involved pedestrians crossing the walk. Both times I
4 was able to avoid collision by taking my bike down.
5 Both times the startled pedestrian. Both times I
6 walked away with scrapes and bruise and both times,
7 the NYPD officers who witnessed the incidence refused
8 to file a report.

9 The reason provided, there's no file for someone
10 who fell off their bike and if a report is so
11 important to you, you should have hit her. So, with
12 that, I encourage you to take these already
13 statistics with a grain assault. They are the tip of
14 the iceberg when it comes to accurately reflecting
15 how dangerous our streets are for anyone not in
16 vehicle. Additionally, if you really want to make
17 our streets safer, I urge the Council to please find
18 out why an illegal 53-foot tractor trailers are not
19 enforced by DOT or NYPD.

20 Please end placard abuse and healthcare ID badges
21 as free paring passes.

22 Pass Intro. 2159 today. Crack down on fake paper
23 plates and insurance fraud. Increase all fines. It
24 costs \$350 dollars a week to store a car in a garage.
25 But I can leave my car on the street for only a \$65
alternate side parking today.

3 Even worse speeding in a school is only \$50 and
4 for the love of everything good on this earth, please
5 get rid of doctors only for [INAUDIBLE 5:06:56].
6 Sick patient need these close spaces more than a
7 surgeon from West Chester and his G Wagon. Thank you
8 for your time.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony.
10 Are there any questions for this panelist? Okay, our
11 next panelist will be Choresh Wald. Choresh.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

13 CHORESH WALD: Hi everybody, I'm going to reread
14 some parts of a testimony I gave in January of 2020
15 because not much has changed since. Placard
16 corruption by the NYPD is prevalent and consistent.
17 Placard holders are abusing their placards. Parking
18 vehicles illegally. The NYPD refuses to enforce the
19 law and the members of the police force are the law
20 breakers. The NYPD sabotages every street safety
21 project by parking their vehicles on it.

22 Uh, parents are endangering their lives and their
23 childrens life riding in the street with motor
24 vehicle traffic, although they choose a clean,
25 sustainable pollution and noise free mode of

3 transportation. The city needs to prioritize these
4 modes yet reject them.

5 The city's Department of Transportation
6 prioritizes private vehicle storage over safety of
7 people using micro mobility and bike lanes. Bike
8 lanes are not designated in order to preserve parking
9 spots. Less than 25 percent of households in
10 Manhattan own cars, yet most curb space is designated
11 car storage. Free parking is an impediment to safe
12 streets. Today, I filed a complaint illegally parked
13 vehicles in front of my childrens school. I do that
14 every day of the school year. Today is the 32nd day
15 of the school year. Five vehicles were illegally
16 parked in front of school building.

17 Some of the complaints were closed under two
18 minutes, some under five minutes. That is
19 irrelevant. It's relevant that police is not
20 enforcing the law today. Two officers called from
21 the location and they told me that they are extending
22 a courtesy and will not take enforcement against
23 school building employees using Department of
24 Education placards. He told me this is not a crime
25 but a violation. He told me that if he's going to
stop me for a moving violation and I tell him that

3 I'm a doctor, then he will not give me a summons. He
4 told me that if I had children in my car -

5 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

6 CHORESH WALD: Stop me for a moving violation, he
7 would have felt bad about it and will not summon me.

8 He told me that - that's me three year old, sorry.

9 He told me that the officers had the courtesy and to
10 judge whether they are going to summons or not.

11 Thank you.

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony.

13 Are there any questions for this panelist? Okay, our
14 next panelist will be Cecil Scheib. Cecil.

15 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay,

17 CECIL SCHEIB: Thank you.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Oh, great.

19 CECIL SCHEIB: My name is Cecil Scheib. I live
20 on the Avenue B Open Street in Manhattan. I bike
21 around New York City, all over the city from going
22 out to Coney Island to going to the North Bronx from
23 lower Manhattan with my four year old. When he was
24 younger, he rode in a bike seat. Now, I have one of
25 the ride along things that attach to my bike seat.

New York City is doing so many great things for

3 cyclists. There are so many more amenities. Every
4 year it gets better and better but I beg the
5 designers, the enforcers to go out – and I know many
6 of you ride a bike. There are Council Members who
7 ride a bike. There's a Council Member with kids but
8 I wonder if anyone who bikes with a kid has ever
9 looked at these things and when I ask the Committee
10 today for us to look at the gaps in the
11 transportation Network, if you have an intersection,
12 for example biking out of the New York Botanical
13 Gardens in the Bronx. Two lanes merging and coming
14 straight at you as you're trying to cross four lanes
15 of traffic. The cars have the light and they're
16 turning and you're supposed to cross with them with
17 your four year old behind them. It's terrifying. A
18 bike route is only as good as its weakest link.

19 The metric is not just how many miles of
20 protected bike lane. It's having every turn
21 protected. And I specifically ask as the safe path
22 along the east River is going to be closed for many
23 years. That the Avenue C be returned to a protected
24 bike lane instead of just paint. As was said, paint
25 is not a barrier. Children cannot bike on Avenue C
and if the goal is for people to get form the lower

3 east side to downtown via protected method by going
4 from Avenue C on to Houston on to Allan, it's not
5 enough to just put them on the streets. You have to
6 look at the turn. Try taking a left turn from
7 Houston Street on to Allen Street with a child. It
8 is absolutely terrifying. We need help out here. If
9 the city wants to encourage these things, this is
10 what needs to be done. Thank you so much for your
11 time.

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony.
13 Are there any questions for this panelist? Okay, our
14 next panelist will Pedro Rodriguez. Pedro.

15 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

16 PEDRO RODRIGUEZ: Hello. My name is Pedro
17 Rodriguez. Thank you for holding this. The NYPD has
18 simply given up on traffic enforcement when it comes
19 to cars. It has become an every day event to see a
20 car parked on a bike lane, parked in a no-standing
21 zone, parked in a sidewalk. I've even seen red
22 lights being run more often nowadays. I see illegal
23 red on red turns. I was actually almost recently hit
24 by someone who was making a right on red turn. Maybe
25 he thought he was in a line or something but that's
what happened and that happened a block away from a

3 school, which is even scarier. I wish it was just
4 lazy drivers but let's be honest here, a lot of them
5 are just police officers with placards or other city
6 agencies. And a lot of them just look fake, we just
7 - other people have talked about and a lot of them
8 don't even have a placard. I actually see very often
9 a car parked and I don't see any placard, which is
10 just weird. I would expect to see one.

11 I live in near Queens Boulevard, where we just
12 got a bike lane and that bike lane is constantly
13 blocked by a truck or a car. I see cops driving by,
14 they don't care. So, it kind of just makes me feel
15 like this is not really illegal. It's just another
16 parking spot.

17 Many people think that parking violations are
18 victimless but let's not forget, Madison Lydon, a
19 tourist from Australia was killed because he was
20 forced to go onto the street because there was a car
21 parked in the bike lane. If that car hadn't been
22 there, she would be alive today. So, this isn't
23 victimless, people do die from this.

24 And I wish the NYPD would do better but let's be
25 honest here, most NYPD officers don't live in the
city, they live in the suburbs. They drive in, they

3 illegally park all around their precincts. I love
4 near a precinct and the precinct is near a school, so
5 all around the school is illegal parking all around
6 it. The block the sidewalks and that makes it hard
7 for pedestrians, people on wheelchairs, etc.

8 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

9 PEDRO RODRIGUEZ: How can we expect them to
10 actually enforce the law when they're the ones
11 breaking it?

12 The Council should instead to try to move the
13 responsibility from the NYPD to another agency, maybe
14 the DOT or someone else and if this is not something
15 that the Council wants to do, then they should pass
16 Intro. 2159 and allow people to enforce this law. If
17 the government doesn't want to do it, they let us do
18 it.

19 And lastly, this isn't just NYPD's fault, every
20 bike lane violation is an NYC DOT street design
21 violation. They design the street; they allow the
22 cars to be able to park on the bike lane. Every bike
23 lane is a physical separation with barriers, those
24 flimsy plastic tubes. Those things don't do
25 anything. They DOT should also stop using the
antiquated level of service metric. That metric

3 makes intersections dangerous. It discourages infill
4 development and encourages driving, which is the last
5 thing we want to be doing now with this. Thank you.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony.
7 Our next panelist will be Michele Koppersmith.
8 Michelle.

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

10 MICHELLE KUPPERSMITH: Thanks. Hi, uhm, my name
11 is Michelle Koppersmith and I live on the Lower East
12 Side. Thank you the Council for holding this
13 hearing, it came in the nick of time. I am a member
14 of the Manhattan Community Board Three Transportation
15 Committee, but I am writing in my personal capacity.

16 I joined my community board because of the
17 dangerous conditions for pedestrians in my
18 neighborhood. Specifically the intersection of Grand
19 Street and Clinton Street which is used as an on-ramp
20 to the Williamsburg Bridge. I mention CB3 because
21 our committee over the years has heard countless
22 presentations from DOT, along with complaints from
23 neighbors about the dangerous traffic in our
24 neighborhood, and nothing has changed. We also
25 recently heard from a local priest whose church is
plagued by drivers with fake clergy placards. Which

3 the precinct has only been partially willing to
4 address.

5 In the past five years, I have observed
6 increasing boldness on the part of drivers in my
7 neighborhood and I am asking the Council, the Mayor's
8 Office especially, and DOT to address our pleas for
9 help. Specifically, please pass Introduction 2159, to
10 allow everyday citizens like me to participate in
11 keeping our streets safe and report traffic
12 violations. I do not trust the NYPD to enforce the
13 laws. I regularly submit 311 complaints, only to
14 observe officers drive past the problem, do nothing,
15 and mark my 311 complaints as addressed. This
16 happens when I report cars parked on sidewalks, in
17 bike lanes, and in crosswalks.

18 Moreover, I frequently observe NYPD officers
19 breaking traffic laws. I would love to show this
20 picture but I can't share my screen. Just last
21 night, I saw a squad car put on its lights, pull into
22 the bike lane on Clinton Street and block the
23 crosswalk. I thought maybe it's for an emergency. I
24 saw the officers go into Rite Aid. I went in myself;
25 I saw the officer at the self-checkout counter buying
a jug of water. I followed them out, and when they

3 left, they put their lights on again. They drove
4 through the bike lane into a cyclist that was coming
5 toward them going south and drove over two flexible
6 bollards. The NYPD does not enforce the laws because
7 it breaks the laws.

8 We also need to require everyone who works for
9 the NYPD to live in the five boroughs so that they
10 don't need to drive to work. Please do not give them
11 alternative parking options.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

13 MICHELLE KUPPERSMITH: Make it so that they don't
14 drive at all. My grandfather was an NYC School
15 Teacher for 30 years. He lived in Brooklyn and he
16 worked in Brooklyn. Why are they any exception? Tow
17 pounds; close Rikers and make it a citywide tow
18 pound. Drivers are operating with impunity. I no
19 longer feel safe walking the streets of New York.

20 I don't have a cute kid, but I do have a cute dog
21 and I don't want to feel like I'm in danger every
22 time I walk her, which I do now. And especially
23 during the pandemic. We need structural changes, as
24 a lot of people said before me. We need more passive
25 enforcement, I'm looking at you state elected
officials, if you're listening. Truly protected bike

3 lanes, solutions to protect pedestrians at
4 intersections, day lighting extra corners and
5 anything else DOT can think of and implement quickly
6 and let me say it again for the cheap seats in the
7 back. The NYPD can not be on the frontlines of
8 enforcement. It just cannot, it does not work.
9 Please, please, please do something to help us.
10 People are dying. It doesn't make any sense, please
11 help us. Thank you.

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony.
13 Our next - we'll circle back, do we have Ricardo
14 Pacheco? Ricardo. Okay, Chair, I think that's the
15 end of public testimony.

16 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. Thank you
17 Michelle, as the last member of the public and
18 everyone who testified today with this important
19 issue. Again, overall, it's about rethinking Vision
20 Zero but it's also about sharing all the experience
21 that we have in our own community but most important,
22 how can we continue working to make all of us from
23 public, private sector to be accountable to do our
24 part to make the city safer for pedestrians and
25 cyclists.

3 As we have said before, we need to share the
4 street and if we put this number in a formula,
5 there's only 1.4 million on vehicles and there's more
6 than seven million New Yorkers that are cyclists,
7 that are pedestrians, they take the ferry, they use
8 the train. They use the buses and they are cyclist
9 and I think that - and even that group, the 1.4
10 million, many of them, I got to say I got to say I'm
11 one of those who runs a car. So, but even that 1.4
12 at some point, you are just a pedestrian. You are
13 just a cyclists, so definitely we have this great
14 opportunity to work all of us with one goal, which is
15 to make New York City the municipality being the best
16 pedestrian and cyclist friendly.

17 With that, this hearing is adjourned. Thank you.
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C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date December 1, 2021