

**NYC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TESTIMONY
EXECUTIVE BUDGET HEARING BEFORE THE CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEES ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
AND FINANCE
May 19, 2023**

Good morning, Chair Brooks-Powers, Chair Brannan, and members of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and Committee on Finance. I am Ydanis Rodriguez, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Transportation. With me today are Margaret Forgione, First Deputy Commissioner, Paul Ochoa, Executive Deputy Commissioner, and Rick Rodriguez, Assistant Commissioner for Intergovernmental and Community Affairs. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of Mayor Eric Adams on DOT's Fiscal Year 2024 Executive Budget, and Fiscal Years 2023-2033 Capital Plan.

This budget reflects Mayor Eric Adams's commitment to protect critical programs that support working New Yorkers, while simultaneously preparing for economic headwinds by continuing a strong track record of fiscal responsibility. We appreciate the Mayor's continued investment in DOT during the City's disciplined fiscal approach.

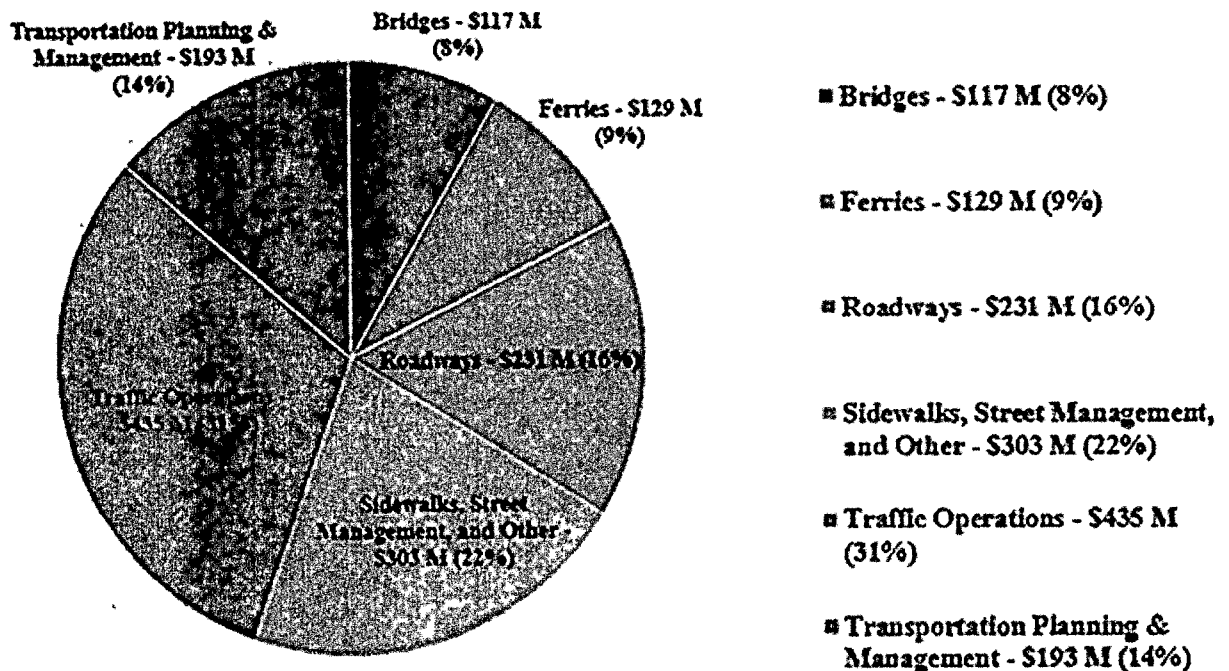
This budget will allow DOT to continue critical safety work: redesigning intersections to make them sacred spaces and making this city the safest city for pedestrians and cyclists in the nation. This budget will also allow us to reimagine the use of public space, invest more in working class and middle class communities and communities of color, make the city more accessible for all New Yorkers including people with disabilities, maintain our infrastructure, including nearly 800 bridges, and continue to operate the Staten Island Ferry.

New York City has the largest transportation system in the nation, with the largest network of bike lanes, bus lanes, pedestrian plazas, Open Streets, and outdoor dining. All of this is possible thanks to the partnership between the Administration and the Council.

DOT's \$1.4 billion FY24 Expense Budget includes the following:

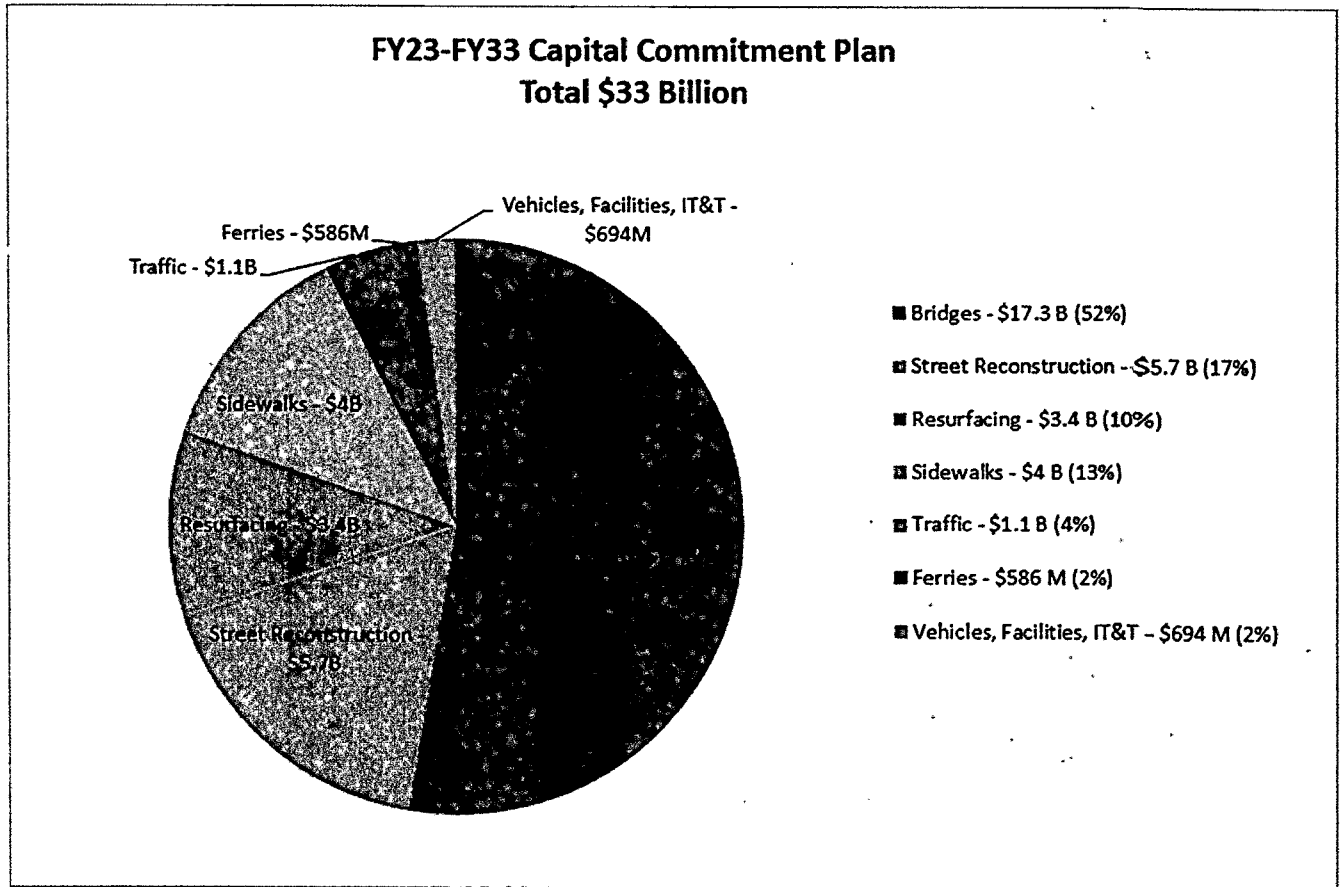
- \$117 million for bridge maintenance and inspections;
- \$129 million for ferry operations and maintenance;
- \$231 million for roadway maintenance;
- \$303 million for other DOT operations and administration, including sidewalk management and inspection;
- \$435 million for traffic operations, including signals, streetlights, automated enforcement, and parking; and
- \$193 million for transportation planning and management, including installation of street signs and roadway markings.

FY24 Expense Budget in Millions - Total \$1.4 B



DOT's proposed \$33 billion FY23-FY33 Capital Plan includes the following:

- \$17.3 billion for bridge reconstruction and rehabilitation;
- \$5.7 billion for street reconstruction;
- \$3.4 billion for resurfacing;
- \$4 billion for sidewalk and pedestrian ramp repair and reconstruction;
- \$1.1 billion for streetlights, signals, and automated enforcement;
- \$586 million for the Staten Island Ferry; and
- \$694 million for the facilities and equipment needed to support DOT's operations.



Vision Zero

This Administration is committed to Vision Zero and the safety of all New Yorkers is a top priority for Mayor Eric Adams and DOT. This is reflected by significant investments: DOT's current Ten Year Capital Plan (FY23-33) invests approximately \$4 billion in Vision Zero, and our expense budget invests an average of about \$260 million each year in Vision Zero.

This commitment is working. As I testified earlier this year, traffic fatalities in New York City dropped in 2022 for the first time since 2018. New York City is defying national trends for pedestrian deaths, which are at a four-decade high across the country. These local trends are encouraging and show that the steps we are taking to make streets safer are working. But as Mayor Adams has made clear, the only acceptable number of traffic fatalities is zero. We are committed to doing more.

DOT also remains focused on creating a more equitable city, where the transportation network meets the needs of all New Yorkers regardless of race, ability, or economic status. DOT is prioritizing street design investments in higher-need neighborhoods based on the Priority Investment Areas laid out in the NYC Streets Plan—while still being guided by data such as crash histories and slow bus speeds. We are also committed to robust community engagement and learning from community members, Council Members, and other elected officials about conditions on the ground.



Visit to Council Member Farias's District



Visit to Council Member Caban's District



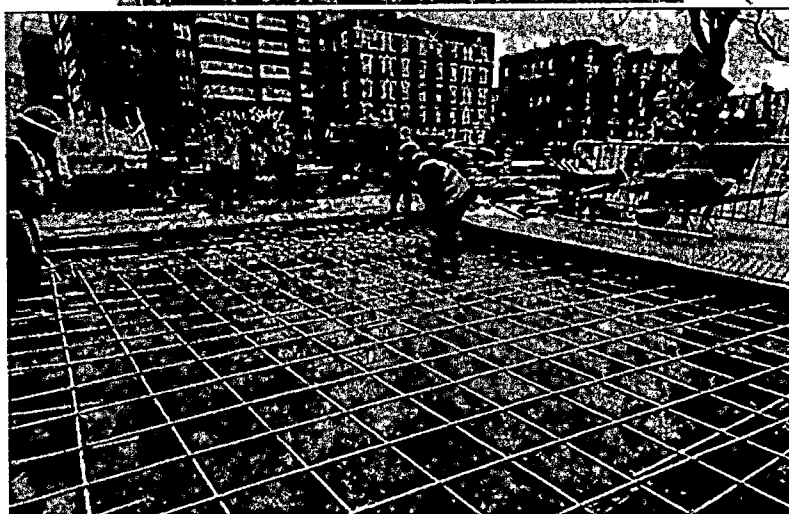
Visit to Council Member Gutierrez's District



Visit to Council Member Bottcher's District

This budget reflects these values and invests \$150 million for projects in the Bronx, which will fund major safety and streetscape projects including protected bike lanes on 3rd Avenue and Soundview Avenue and new neighborhood safety improvements in Bronxdale, Co-op City, Melrose, and Mott Haven.

The agency continues to transform the Grand Concourse. With our partners at DDC and DEP, we will be completing the most recent phase of our Grand Concourse transformation, from East 175th to East Fordham Road. This budget also includes \$32 million for the next phase of this project, below East 161st Street.



Grand Concourse Phase 4, currently under construction

In addition, this budget funds nearly a dozen safety and quality of life capital projects citywide, including:

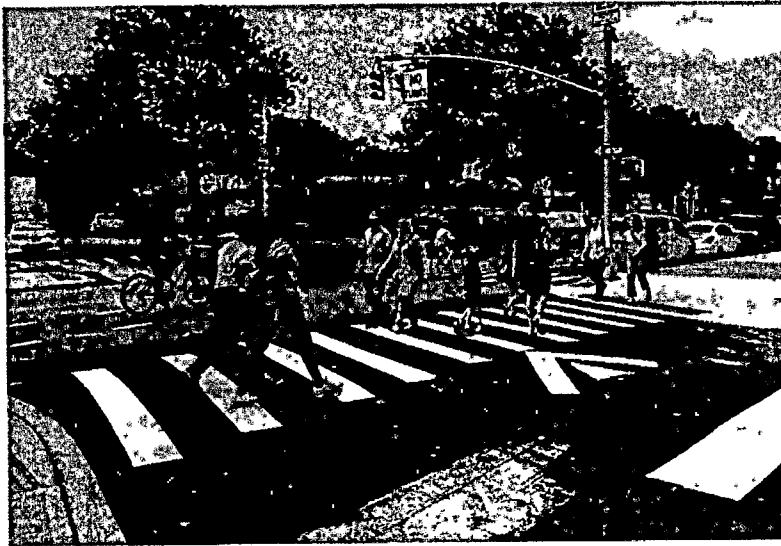
- Nearly \$70 million to fix street flooding and raise grades in Somerville, Queens;
- \$10 million to fix flooding and make safety improvements along Avenue J in Brooklyn;
- \$26 million to expand our greenway network and add safety improvements on Travis Avenue in Staten Island; and
- \$31 million to make important bike, transit, and pedestrian safety improvements in the Inwood section of the Manhattan Waterfront Greenway, extending our protected greenway network from Harlem River Drive to the Broadway and University Heights bridges.

Enhancing safety for students is also a top priority for this Administration. DOT and DDC will begin construction this year on several contracts for school safety improvements in Brooklyn and Staten Island. Other school safety projects in the Bronx, Manhattan, and Queens are in Final Design and will begin construction as soon as next year.



Amsterdam Av & W 190 St, Manhattan

Next year, we will begin design and construction for our upcoming Citywide Raised Crosswalks Design-Build contract. This project will build more than 100 raised crosswalks at high-priority intersections across the five boroughs.



Raised Crosswalk at East 5th Street and Fort Hamilton Parkway, Brooklyn

On bike lanes, DOT continues to grow our 1,500 miles of bike lanes citywide—the largest network in the nation, which includes 645 miles of protected lanes. We are on track to install a record number of protected bike lanes in 2023 and to harden more than 10 miles of existing bike lanes. These projects include corridors with high ridership, bridges, and projects in Priority Investment Areas laid out in the New York City Streets Plan. Some highlights include:

- 3rd Avenue in Manhattan;
- Soundview Avenue in the Bronx;
- Ashland Place and Navy Street in Brooklyn;
- Goethals Road North in Staten Island; and
- Addabbo Bridge in Queens.



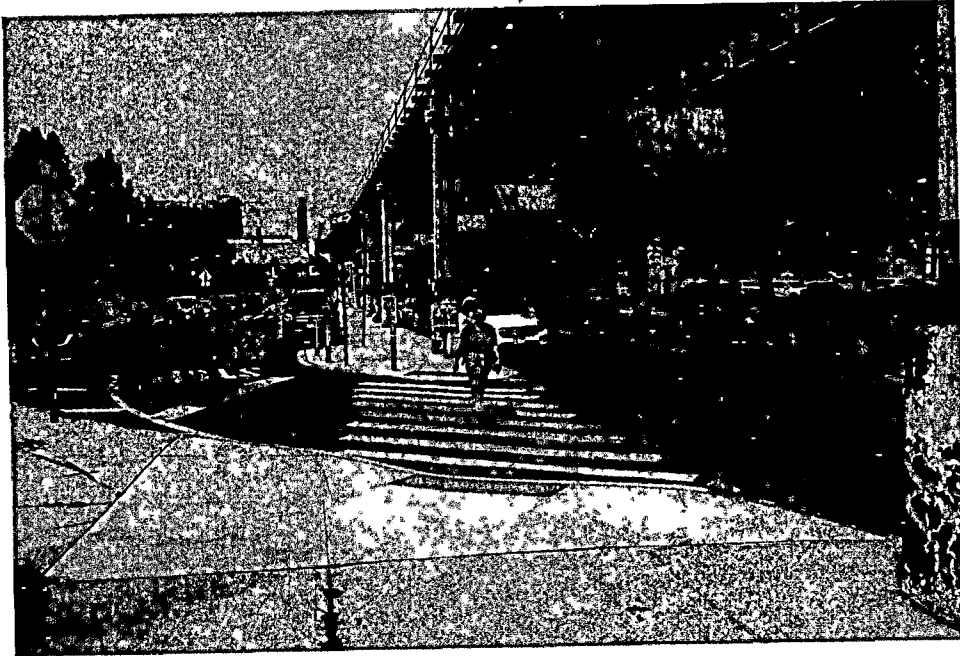
39th Avenue, Queens

And on automated enforcement, this budget provides \$7 million in FY24 ramping up to nearly \$10 million in FY27 and in the baseline for the operation and maintenance of 24/7 speed cameras. Since the launch of 24-hour operations in August, DOT has experienced a 31 percent reduction in violations during the new overnight and weekend hours, meaning less speeding and enhanced safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers.

Mobility and Accessibility

DOT also continues our work to make it easier and faster to travel around the city for all New Yorkers regardless of race, ability, or economic status. In 2022, DOT installed Accessible Pedestrian Signals at a record 494 intersections citywide to help New Yorkers who are blind or low vision navigate the city. This budget also includes over \$3 billion in capital funding over the next 10 years to continue pedestrian ramp installation and upgrades citywide.

DOT will also be doing more for curb maintenance as this is something that we hear a lot about from New Yorkers and elected officials. This budget includes \$21 million to replace approximately 150,000 feet of new curb citywide.



Livonia Avenue Brooklyn

Turning to buses, DOT has a number of important bus projects coming up this year that will speed up buses and get New Yorkers where they need to go faster. These include projects on University Avenue, Gun Hill Road, and Fordham Road in the Bronx, Northern Boulevard in Queens, Livingston Street in Brooklyn, and 3rd Avenue in Manhattan, and the Washington Bridge.

Construction is scheduled to begin by the end of this year for our largest capital investment in bus priority to date, along Kings Highway, Flatlands Avenue, and Pennsylvania Avenue in Brooklyn. In addition to the accessibility and transit priority improvements to stops along the B82 Select Bus Service Route, we will restore the Kings Highway medians with new plantings, and add critical pedestrian safety improvements on all three corridors.



University Avenue, Bronx

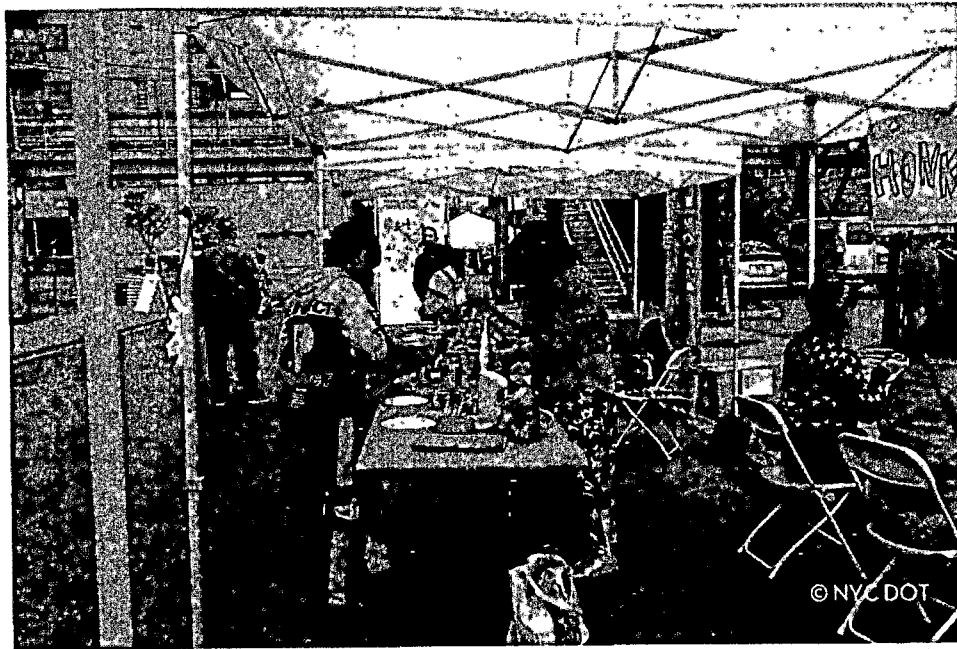
I am also happy to report that in partnership with the MTA, we recently received broader authority from Albany to crack down on drivers who impede bus operations by double parking, blocking bus stops, or blocking bike lanes starting in 2024. Automated enforcement changes driver behavior. Only 19 percent of drivers who receive a bus lane camera violation receive a second ticket, and only eight percent have received three or more tickets. We are excited for this new authority to help buses travel faster.

Reimagining the Use of Public Space

Turning to public space, this Administration continues to reimagine the use of public space. All New Yorkers should have access to safe, welcoming, and attractive public spaces close to where they live, and DOT continues our work towards this goal.

As the Mayor announced in his State of the City Address, this Administration added \$375 million to improve public spaces. This includes funding that will allow us to start design on projects to connect Madison Square to Herald Square between 21st and 33rd Streets as part of the Broadway Vision plan and reconstruct Flatiron Plaza.

New funding will also support the largest Open Streets Program in the nation. Open Streets provide new public space for recreation, wellness, and opportunities to move outside in all parts of the city. Funding will allow us to make permanent upgrades to Open Streets on Willis Avenue between East 147th Street and Bergen Avenue in the Bronx, Minthorne Street on Staten Island, Woodside Avenue in Queens, and Quisqueya Plaza in Washington Heights. Applications are currently open for the 2023 Open Streets program. Please help spread the word to community groups in your districts.



Minthorne Street Open Street at Car Free Earth Day, Staten Island

With are partners at DDC and DEP, DOT will complete new plazas at Parsons Boulevard and Pershing Square East this year. We will also start design on multiple plaza and streetscape projects in Harlem, St. George, and Midwood.

This budget also includes \$62 million in new capital funding to make improvements on Jamaica Avenue from Sutphin Boulevard to Merrick Boulevard. Thanks to the support of Speaker Adams, Council Member Williams, Council Member Gennaro, and Borough President Richards, this project will revitalize this central neighborhood corridor by introducing a number of sidewalk and streetscape improvements, building off changes allowed by the new permanent busway.

We also recently celebrated Car Free Earth Day, an annual car-free event, and are hard at work planning for this year's Summer Streets. We were so happy to expand the Summer Streets Program last year into underserved communities in East Harlem, and will have more to share soon on how this year's program will be even bigger.

Recruitment

As I testified before, DOT faces staffing challenges that are in line with many sectors of the economy and municipal governments across the country. We are aggressively working to hire and creating a pipeline for future transportation professionals. As part of the Mayor's push to fill vacancies, we have gone to eight hiring events and made over 100 offers since February. These positions range from Clerical Associates and Staff Analysts to Engineers. Thank you Speaker Adams and many Council Members for your help in organizing these events in your districts as well as our partners at DC37.



DOT Engineering Job Fair

In addition, at DOT's Preliminary Budget Hearing, I showed an initial design of the bus shelter ad campaign about working at DOT. This campaign is now underway and is at 100 bus shelters throughout the city, with more planned in the coming months.



Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Council for the opportunity to testify before you today. We look forward to continuing to partner with you to make this city safer, more equitable, and accessible for generations to come. We would now be happy to answer any questions.

