CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

---------- X

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

---------- X

June 25, 2026
Start: 10:19 a.m.
Recess: 11:25 a.m.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway - 8th Floor - Hearing Room 1

B E F O R E: Shaun Abreu, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Selvena N. Brooks-Powers
Eric Dinowitz
Shahana K. Hanif
Shekar Krishnan
Farah N. Louis
Christopher Marte
Justin E. Sanchez
Pierina Ana Sanchez
Julie Won
Phil Wong

SERGEANT AT ARMS: This is a microphone check on the Committee of Transportation and Infrastructure recorded by James Marino on June 25th, 2026, in Hearing Room 1. Good morning, welcome to today's New York City Council hearing for the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. At this time, please silence all phones and electronical devices. If you wish to speak in today's hearing, please fill out an appearance card with one of the sergeants moving forward. No one is to approach the dais. Chair, you may begin.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Good morning and welcome to today's hearing of the New York City Council's Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. I'm Councilmember Shaun Abreu, Majority Leader and Chair of this committee. Today the committee will hear testimony on 5 pieces of legislation. Introduction number 845, sponsored by Councilmember Thomas-Henry, in relation to requiring the Department of Transportation to install lighting under elevated train lines. Introduction number 866, sponsored by Council Member Epstein, in relation to requiring the Department of Transportation to post notification signs regarding upcoming disruptive

work. Introduction number 894, sponsored by Council Member Brewer, in relation to seasonal enclosures for sidewalk cafes. Introduction number 917, sponsored by Council Member Justin Sanchez, in relation to sanitation and cleanliness requirements for roadway and sidewalk cafes. And Introduction Number 918, also sponsored by Councilmember Thomas-Henry, in relation to allowing sidewalk and roadway cafe revocable consent fees to be paid in quarterly installments. Because today's hearing is focused solely on legislation, we will use it as an opportunity to examine the purpose, implementation, and potential impact of these bills together. These bills raise important questions about how New York City manages its streets, sidewalks, and public spaces. Whether we are discussing lighting beneath elevated train lines, public notice requirements for work on our streets, or the cleanliness, affordability, or seasonal availability of outdoor dining, the issue at the heart of these bills is how to make our public spaces safer, more accessible, and better maintained for everyone. I look forward to hearing from the administration about their views on these bills, including any operational or fiscal concerns, as, as

well as any recommendations on how these bills could be improved. I also look forward to hearing from restaurant owners, community members, advocates, and other stakeholders about how these proposals would affect them in the neighborhoods they serve. Before I hand it over to my colleagues to speak on their bills, I would like to thank my staff and the committee staff for their hard work in preparing for today's hearing. Jalissa Quigley, my Deputy Chief of Staff, Theodore Miller and Sierra, Sierra Townsend, Counsel to the committee, Kevin Kotowski and John Basile, Senior Policy Analysts of the committee, and Sarah Swain and Nat— Natalie Meltzer, staff to the Committee on Consumer Worker Protection, who have been instrumental in developing the council's outdoor dining legislation. I'd also like to give a special thanks to Adrian DrePaul, who has been the principal financial analyst of the committee for several years, for his commitment, savvy, and unfailing good humor in working to better this committee, the council, and our city. Adrian, thank you for your service and good luck in your next endeavor. We miss your bow ties. I will now pass it over to my colleagues to speak on their bills, starting with Councilmember Gail Brewer.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you, thank you very much. I am here to talk about, as you heard from the chair, 894. It has to do with seasonal enclosures for, uh, cafes that are outdoor, and this did come from the suggestion made by the Hospitality Alliance. I want to thank them, as I always do, for their incredible, uh, support of these kinds of issues. There's a time frame, um, during the, uh, season when it's chilly, as you all know, and the idea would be because of that frigid and wet weather across our city, especially between October 1st and March 31st, during that time period, Intro 894, if enacted into law, would allow restaurants to install high-quality winter vestibules enclosing their licensed sidewalk cafe area. These are spaces for which they already pay the city for the year, actually for the whole year. And so the notion would be to have better access to that space. There are also businesses that are unclear on what is allowed and what is prohibited. This legislation aims to provide clear guidance to help businesses and owner's plan. I think we all see in some cases businesses have these enclosures, sometimes they don't, and they all differ. This bill would make it clear. I do want

to thank Andrew Reggie from the New York City Hospitality Alliance for raising this issue and for his tireless advocacy for restaurants and bars and cafes and owners and people who are crucial to our city's economy and neighborhood life. I want to thank Chair Abreu for including this on the agenda. And legislative staff Rachel Codero, Sarah Swaine, Natalie Meltzer, as well as committee staff Sierra Townsend, Theo Miller, John Basile, and Kevin Kotowski. Thank you very much, and we hope that it will pass. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you, Councilmember Brewer. I will now turn it over to Councilmember Sanchez to speak on Intro 917.

COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Uh, Intro 917. Uh, one, first and foremost, I want to thank the chair and all of the committee staff for having this on the agenda today. We're really excited to hear more about how this bill can help actually improve cleanliness standards across the city as we roll out outdoor dining. And we look forward to, um, hearing a substantive, um, question and answer period. Easy.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you, council member. I'll now read council member Epstein's

remarks on Introduction number 866. Thank you to Chair Abreu and all my colleagues for the opportunity to hear my bill, Intro 866, at today's hearing. My office has already had discussions with DOT and will be moving forward with amending this bill to require the entity obtaining the permit, not a DOT, to put up the signage. We all know the feeling. You wake up to unexpected noise coming from the sidewalk below. You're walking your child to school and suddenly the path you take every day is taped off for construction. You go to open up your deli for the day only to find someone jackhammering outside of your business. You didn't know this was going to happen and you're not sure how long it will last. This type of disruptive work presents additional challenges for individuals who use assistive mobility, mobility devices who may struggle to get around if their typical sidewalk route is changed. While the work being done to improve our streets and sidewalks is necessary, it can be disruptive to our daily life. It is critical that all New Yorkers have access to the information necessary so they can plan ahead for when construction projects arise. My bill, Intro 866, addresses this all-too-common occurrence by providing

New Yorkers with posted signs within a 500-foot radius of the location of planned disruptive work at least 48 hours before the work is scheduled to begin. It would also include contact information, ensuring the public knows who to talk to about the work if there are questions or concerns. Constructions can be disruptive to surrounding residents, schools, and businesses. It is important that neighbors have advanced notice of disruptive construction so they can make necessary plans. This bill is about increasing transparency between city agencies and residents and increasing accessibility in our government system. I look forward to hearing feedback about this bill, about how we can make our streets more accessible for everyone. Thank you. That was a statement by my colleague Councilmember Epstein, and I will— I'd like to recognize the colleagues who have joined us today: Councilmembers Brewer, Wong, Krishnan, Justin Sanchez, Louis, and Thomas-Henry. I will now pass it over to my colleague Councilmember Thomas-Henry to speak on her bill.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: Ooh, thank you, Chair. I just need one second. So good morning, Chair Abreu, and thank you for convening today's

hearing. Thank you to my colleagues on the committee. Transportation is about more than getting people from one place to another. It is about how people feel our neighborhoods— people experience our neighborhoods once they arrive. It's about whether a resident feels safe walking home beneath an elevated train. It's about whether a family chooses to stop by at a neighborhood cafe. It's about whether our streets invite people in or push them away. Today, as a member of this com— as a member of this committee and the chair of Small Business Committee, I am proud to present two pieces of leg— legislation that recognize a simple truth: our transportation system should work for the people who use it every day. Introduction 845 would require the Department of Transportation to assess streets, and sidewalks beneath elevated train infrastructure to determine where additional lighting is needed and install it within a defined timeframe. In my district, the 7 train runs through the heart of our community. For years, residents have shared concerns about darkness, um, dark under the underpasses that feel unsafe and overlooked. No New Yorker should have to question their safety simply because they are walking home beneath our transit

infrastructure. This legislation creates accountability by ensuring those concerns are evaluated, addressed, and reported on. Introduction 918 focuses on another important part of our streetscape: the small businesses that activate our sidewalks and make our commercial corridors vibrant. By allowing roadway cafe operators to pay revocable consent fees in quarterly installments rather than all at once, we can ease unnecessary financial burdens while continuing to support the outdoor dining program that has become such an important part of our city's fabric. These bills may address different issues, but they advance the same goal: creating streets that are safe and more economically vibrant. That is the kind of transportation system we should continue building. One that moves people while also strengthening the communities they call home. Thank you, and I look forward to today's discussion.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you, Councilmember. Like to say— add that we've been joined by Councilman Hanif on Zoom and Councilmember Dinowitz. Thank you. We now turn over to testimony from the administration.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Good morning. Please raise your right hand. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth before this committee, and to respond honestly to council member questions? Thank you. You may begin when you're ready. And if you could just state your name and record for— er, name and title for the record before you begin, that would be great. Thank you.

MONTE DEAN: Good morning. Good morning, Chair Abreu, members of the Transportation Committee on— of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. My name is Monte Dean, Deputy Commissioner of Traffic Operations, and I am joined by Michelle Craven, Associate Deputy Commissioner of Cityscape and Franchises, Jeff Malamy, Director of Street Improvement Projects, and Rick Rodriguez, Assistant Commissioner for Intergovernmental and Community Affairs. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of Mayor Mondani and Commissioner Flynn about Intro 845, 866, 894, 917, and 918. First, Intro 845, sponsored by Councilmember Thomas-Henry. This bill would require DOT to install distinctive lighting under elevated train lines. With nearly

400,000 streetlights citywide under our responsibility, We recognize the importance of street lighting in enhancing both street safety and quality of life. We are committed to ensuring streets are well lit for vehicle traffic as well as pedestrians in both the roadway and the sidewalk. As a national leader in sustainable street lighting, our lighting studies are based on DOT standards. These standards include recommended practices and guidelines published by the Illuminating Engineering Society, the internationally recognized entity that sets recommended practices for lighting levels in various applications to ensure lighting standards are sufficiently addressed citywide. We are happy to provide a quick breakdown of how lighting is installed to provide more background. Based on study evaluations, we routinely make upgrades in any street reconstruction project. For installation, there are 3 ways we can add lighting depending on where the lower lighting levels are located. We can reduce the distance between streetlights, add secondary lighting on the back of existing poles over the sidewalk at a lower height, or install new standalone poles. DOT must consider various factors when installing

lighting, including extensive coordination with contractors and utilities when working around obstructions caused by trees or hydrants and existing below-ground infrastructure like gas mains and electric ducts. These factors require further extensive survey and design work. Installations can also require time-consuming and disruptive street excavations to lay new conduits and cables as well as con— Con Ed Construction for new feeds. Our team works every day to make sure our streets and roadways are well lit. In 2025 alone, we enhanced lighting at nearly 2,500 locations across the city. Despite these efforts around the city, we hear from New Yorkers that they feel safer and more secure when streets and sidewalks under elevated train lines are more brightly lit. Lighting under elevated trains is uniquely challenging because the support columns create shadows and the elevated structures limit the height of the streetlight poles, and the elevated structures are not engineered to support additional loads. Further, high vibration levels can prevent the installation of DOT equipment. Along with the installation process, DOT has two categories of lighting we typically install: standard and

distinctive. Any streetlight pole other than the standard steel octagonal and davit designs for city streets— for city streets is considered distinctive. There are seven types of distinctive streetlights. Which are installed as part of streetscape projects and other elected-funded initiatives requiring Public Design Commission approval. Due to the different funding streams and additional approval processes, distinctive lighting is generally more expensive and slower to implement. While DOT strives to be responsive in addressing community concerns regarding sufficient lighting, we have concerns with the bill as written. We are worried that this bill would have the unintended consequences of slowing down our ability to address lighting conditions by limiting us to distinctive lighting, We would be happy to discuss with the council how we can enhance lighting in your districts and welcome feedback if there are particular locations of concern. Next, Intro 866, sponsored by Council Member Epstein. This bill would require DOT to post signs in advance within a 500-foot radius of a location of disruptive work. Disruptive work, as defined in the legislation, means work that is performed by DOT or pursuant to a permit

issued by DOT that is expected to create street sidewalk or parking space closures, reroute traffic, relocation of bus stops or bike share stations, or work between 8 p.m. and 8 a.m. that includes noise, vibrations, or bright lighting. DOT already posts informational signs for long-term construction projects pursuant to existing requirements. We understand the need to communicate effectively to New Yorkers when there will be disruptive construction work. We believe that existing rules and current practices accomplish the goals of this bill while balancing operational needs. In addition to the informational construction signs, we have other tools in our toolkit to, to appropriately notify and involve communities within project areas. For example, our Street Ambassadors meet people where they are by discussing project impacts in communities on the street. We also deploy variable message signs when needed. Of course, we also are proud of the ongoing partnerships we have with the Council and the Community Boards to utilize your networks to spread the word with residents about critical projects in your neighborhoods. Although we support the goal of the bill as described with our existing toolkit of

communication efforts, we have a number of concerns with the current scope of the bill and would prefer to utilize existing requirements on construction signage to meet the intended goals. With affordability, affordability and project delivery a top priority in this administration, we would be wary of creating additional requirements which would slow construction and raise costs. We'd be happy to continue conversations with the council to identify identify the best way to implement notice requirements. Next, Intro 894, sponsored by Councilmember Brewer. This bill would allow sidewalk cafes to include removable vertical screenings and overhead coverings from October 1st to March 31st. We are thrilled with the significant interest in expanding the Dining Out NYC program, and we support the goals of this bill, as sidewalk cafes are already allowed to operate with overhead coverings and awnings pursuant to our rules, along with our sister agencies' requirements in specific instances. We have suggestions for how to include other winterization methods like vertical screenings and may want to modify the timeline so the requirements are in alignment with existing discussions on winterization

for roadway cafes. We are happy to have more conversations with the council on how best to enhance the sidewalk cafe experience. Next, Intro 917, sponsored by Councilmember Sanchez. This bill would codify existing DOT rules pertaining to cleanliness standards for businesses operating sidewalk and roadway cafes. The bill would also raise maximum civil penalties to $300 for the first violation and $600 for second and subsequent violations at the same place of business. Prioritizing quality of life concerns is critical to the success of our Dining Out NYC program. We have been working to be incredibly responsive to complaints and carry out enforcement when necessary. The Dining Out NYC program requires durable, modular, and easy-to-clean materials for outdoor dining setups, establishes weekly cleaning requirements, and prohibits messy sand-filled barriers, which result in a dramatic improvement to the outdoor dining experience. Regarding the fine structure, we understand the desire to raise the fees, but believe it is important that all program violations related to non-compliance be treated uniformly. We look forward to working with the council to determine appropriate violation amounts.

We are always striving to make the Dining Out NYC program the best it can be for New Yorkers and visitors, and we are happy to work with the council on this bill to strengthen cleanliness and sanitation standards. Finally, Intro 918, sponsored by Council Member Thomas-Henry. This bill would give businesses the option to pay revocable consent fees in quarterly installments. Along with addressing quality of life concerns, we are also working every day to help small businesses thrive through outdoor dining, a program that New Yorkers love and that restaurants depend on. We strive to make participation as accessible and streamlined as possible. Currently, restaurants must pay an initial revocable consent fee once their application is approved. Across the board for DOT programs, we require a one-time upfront payment for all revocable consents. Additionally, it has been DOT's experience that restaurants have a harder time meeting program requirements once they have been authorized to commence operations. We worry that if this new payment method was authorized, DOT would struggle to collect after the initial payment. This would not only leave DOT with a program deficit, but would result in new costs for the department and

delays in application approval for the restaurants due to already limited staff capacity being shifted to chase down payments 4 times a year. While quarterly payments perhaps were necessary in the DCWP program when fees were notably higher, DOT charges far less for the Reboca, for the revocable consent, making a quarterly payment less relevant. We share council's goal to improve the application process and are happy to have more discussions with council and stakeholders about adapting our program processes. In conclusion, I'd like to thank the council for the opportunity to testify before you today. We would now be happy to answer any questions.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you. I'd like to acknowledge we've been joined by Council Member Pirina Sanchez on Zoom. And I will turn it over to Councilmember Thomas-Henry for the first set of questions.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: Okay, thank you, Chair. Um, so first I'll start with Intro 845. Um, what are DOT's current practices for improving street lighting, lighting? Or more specifically, what criteria do you use to decide if a particular

corridor will get standard versus distinctive lighting upgrades?

MONTE DEAN: Uh, distinctive lighting typically comes, uh, when we get funded through RESO or multimodal funding from an elected official. Um, and that is what is used to, to purchase and install the, the distinctive types of lighting, whereas our standard lighting is, uh, funded through the normal city-funded process.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: And what are your current practices regarding lighting conditions on streets and sidewalks located underneath elevated subway lines?

MONTE DEAN: Uh, when we are, uh, get a request or a complaint, we will go and evaluate conditions at that, uh, at that area, and we'll do data collection, we'll do an assessment of the lighting levels, um, and then if we determine that there is, uh, additional lighting necessary, we will evaluate what the right approach is, whether it means adding arms onto existing poles or whether we need to install new, uh, new poles to achieve the right lighting level.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: So currently it's not a practice to elevate, um, the lighting levels under elevated subways. It's only on an as-complaint basis.

MONTE DEAN: It's mostly driven by— yeah, when we get requests or complaints about, uh, conditions there.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: Okay. Do you have any complaints— and I'll just take a step back, um, the Nexus Um, this bill really comes specifically from conditions, particularly in my district where the 7 train lies in Roosevelt Avenue. We've had a number— a series of things. I've heard you've heard on the news of illicit activity that happens, and a lot of it is, um, attributed because it's a very dark and desolate area. I know DOT has attempted some type of lighting. It hasn't been consistent. Um, do you know in particular about this corridor what that assessment —was?

MONTE DEAN: Uh, I know there is one section, as you said, where we did come in and we added, uh, arms on the back of existing, uh, poles. Um, if there are additional areas, we can certainly look, uh, look at adding in other places. Uh, we can

check where we've evaluated and what, what our determination was. We'd be happy to follow up on that.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: And my concern is, I mean, often our communities suffer in silence. I mean, the advocating usually comes from one or two people, but meanwhile you have an entire community that's affected. So part of this bill too is really to assess those areas where you may have individuals who are not as vocal in advocating for themselves to make sure that they are safe in our city. Um, next question as it pertains to 845, um, what interagency coordination would be required to implement this bill?

MONTE DEAN: Uh, we— it again will depend in each location what Uh, what we find, if we find there's a need, uh, for additional lighting, uh, if we can't, for instance, add to existing, uh, onto existing poles, we might need to work with Con Ed if there needs to be more power provided. Um, and then we would have to coordinate on construction if there's additional trenching required. We'd have to go through the normal process to make sure we know what else is under, under the street there. Um, and

also we would have to, uh, if, if any of the trenching or other work was near any of the transit infrastructure, the columns for the overhead infrastructure. We would have to coordinate closely with MTA on that as well.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: Okay. Now, at the committee's executive budget hearing on May 29th of this year, DOT testified to its $331 million commitment to rep— replace every first-generation LED streetlight fixture across the city. Does that commitment include sufficient light— sufficient funds to replace the lighting fixtures targeted by this bill?

MONTE DEAN: It would include the, the infra— the lighting that we have in these areas, yes. So we would, uh, we would replace all the existing, uh, LED lights, uh, including under transit infrastructure.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: How long do you anticipate that taking?

MONTE DEAN: Uh, we're working on the timeline now, uh, in— we have to— we typically have gone by borough, so we'll have to figure out the scheduling of the contract, but it, it will take a

few years, um, But the benefit of, of this program, in addition to replacing existing LEDs, is that we also include installing sensors in the lights so that we will know right away when there are issues with outages or anything like that. That will help us identify what the underlying issue is when there are, when there are problems like that. So we will be able to be more responsive in the future when there are issues with lighting.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: In addition to replacing those LEDs on existing fixtures, would you also look to assess if additional fixtures are needed? In those areas?

MONTE DEAN: Uh, we, we wouldn't necessarily as part of this. We would have to do separate surveys for areas where, where there were concerns about the lighting level.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: Okay. How often does DOT hear concerns regarding lighting conditions under elevated train lines?

MONTE DEAN: Uh, I don't know if we have a specific number. We can check on that and get back to you on how frequently we get those requests.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: Okay. Um, I'm gonna go to Intro 918 for now. Um, I can come back.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Yeah, I'll come back to you. I think Councilmember Sanchez wants to add commentary on Intro 845.

COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Um, yes, I do. Um, so if you look around the world, um, if you go to Santiago, uh, Santo Domingo, if you go to Puerto Rico, uh, Chicago, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Miami, um, the list goes up— Seoul, Dubai, um, all of these places around the world have lights specifically on their trail— their train rail system. Um, I'm curious to know if there is an opportunity that doesn't include lighting on actual the street light poles but on the elevated rail itself, and what is preventing, uh, anyone from adding lights to that elevated rail itself.

MONTE DEAN: Uh, we typically don't because, uh, there are vibration issues. There's also— they have their own power on the, the train lines that we'd have to, uh, uh, contend with. So, um, there may be instances where we've done it, but it's not the typical practice. Um, so it, it can be

challenging. It's, you know, for us, it's typically easier because we own and operate the streets, and we have— usually have some form of existing light poles there that we can add on to. So if If, for instance, adding a pole on the back of an existing, uh, light pole is an— adding an arm on an existing light pole is an option, that, that's typically easier to do.

COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: So, um, is it accurate to say that, uh, the street lighting on rails would be more of a state issue than it is a city issue because of the control of the elevated subways, or—

MONTE DEAN: We would certainly have to work with them in those instances. Um, to— because they do own the infrastructure. So it's in those scenarios we'd have to coordinate definitely with, with New York City Transit.

COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Has there been any assessment of using the power that already exists on the, uh, trains to illuminate the underneath? I mean, the way that I envision, um, Councilmember Henry's, uh, Thomas-Henry's bill is, I mean, we have lights that you can literally just stick onto a wall with batteries. Um, then that was when I was a kid.

Um, and so, uh, seeing the way that technology has, um, vastly improved now, I'm curious to know if there are, um, green ways, um, and, you know, green infrastructure ways that we can be adding light that uses the renewable electricity that already exists on these train tracks, um, to help illuminate underneath. Is there been any, um, ability to study that or um, any discussions with either state partners or other city partners about doing something, um, in that way? Have you been able to envision this legislation in that way at all thus far?

MONTE DEAN: I'm not aware that that has been studied, so we'd have to check and see if that's something that's been looked at before.

COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Okay, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: All right, I'm now going to, uh, Councilmember Sanchez, if you could just ask your 917 questions now.

COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Sure, um, Hold on 2 seconds. Um, in terms of 917, um, so the DOT rule currently have the outdoor cafe operators keeping their area— I think it's 1.5, uh, the area with a 1.5-foot radius. Um, how is that radius actually

working? Does that work? And how was that, uh, 1.5-foot radius come to?

MICHELLE CRAVEN: So I believe the 1.5 radius is sanitation's jurisdiction, so they actually enforce that piece of it and we enforce the rest of of it. I will say we've gotten very few complaints about cleanliness in this new permanent outdoor dining program. In the emergency program, we had many, many, many complaints about cleanliness. Um, it's something we've taken very seriously in setting this program up and, um, setting up our rules. And it's been— we've hardly heard about it at all. And our inspectors do go out and enforce for cleanliness. We look for waste and debris and graffiti and food scraps and whatever else. Um, that's mostly inside the setups, but, um, we've had very few issues.

COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Uh, and how would DOT's approach to enforcement change at all, if at all, um, with this new, uh, legislation?

MICHELLE CRAVEN: I think it would be substantially the same. I mean, we have these rules already, so it wouldn't actually change the requirement. It would just kind of duplicate it in

the ad code, I think. So we would still, um, We would still enforce it the same way.

COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Uh, and generally, what is the most common cleanliness issue, uh, that is reported when you do get the few reports?

MICHELLE CRAVEN: Sorry. Oh, okay. If someone dumps garbage or debris or something outside of the setup is the most common complaint.

COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Uh, and, uh, how much does DOT anticipate, uh, it would cost to implement, uh, 917?

MICHELLE CRAVEN: I don't think it would really change things because again, we already have these in the rules, so it would be the same, um, the same requirements.

COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Great. Sounds like a great bill. My time here is done.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you. I could have— yeah. Councilmember Phil Wong.

COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: Um, yes. Hi. Um, thank you, Chair. Um, I would like to, uh, ask about the lighting specifically under trestles. Yes, I totally, uh, support Councilmember Thomas-Henry's issue on these dim areas on the 7 train on Roosevelt

Avenue, but I'm also concerned about the, the trestles, like, under the CSX or the Long Island Railroad tracks, where clearly, uh, there's some inadequate illumination in my district and other places. My question is, are those areas— can the DOT work on it to approve the illumination, or, or that's not, you know, city property and there's not much you could do about it. Can please talk about it?

MONTE DEAN: Yeah, uh, no, we— as long as if it's going over our right-of-way, we would have the ability to go take a look and see if we need to add lighting there, see if it's sufficient. So if you have locations, we can certainly evaluate those.

COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: Yeah, um, because specifically, as the lifespan of these fixtures, uh, as they, as they approach the end of life They get dimmer, and then when there's so many fixtures, or they all get dim, uh, either time to replace them or upgrade them, because, uh, that's an issue. And, uh, quite often that leads to a lot of, uh, that attracts, uh, graffiti or crime and other issues. So I'll work with your office on that, but I, I support this bill. Thank you. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Councilmember Thomas-Henry, you may ask questions on 918.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: Thank you. On average, what is the range of the annual consent fee for businesses?

MICHELLE CRAVEN: So off the top of my head, I'd say they'd range from a few hundred dollars. On average, it's probably $2,000, $2,500, something like that. And then there are some in the central parts of the city and what's called Sector 4 in the legislation that would be in the thousands of, like, more thousands of dollars.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: Okay, and as mentioned, this is just one of fees— one of the fees that businesses have to pay when they're doing an outdoor dining?

MICHELLE CRAVEN: This is the only annual fee that they have to pay. There are several fees when you're setting up the program, when you first apply, and then from year to year there is one annual fee.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: Okay, so, and it was mentioned that, um, if, uh, application is not, um, does not go through— just correct me if I'm

wrong— does not go through, then the owner basically does not receive any of that, a couple of hundred to $2,500 back. Is that correct?

MICHELLE CRAVEN: That is not correct, actually. This fee is what you pay. It's the sort of the final fee before you get your license, and then it's the annual one. So if it doesn't go through, you do not pay this fee.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: So what was the concern around if the entity doesn't get the license, you guys will never see the fee? What's that concern?

MICHELLE CRAVEN: The concern is actually we have found various programs that once someone has the authority to operate, and so you would pay the first fee, you would get your license.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: Mhm.

MICHELLE CRAVEN: Sometimes it is difficult. We find that sometimes people are less interested in paying once they're kind of already out there. They have their license, they're like ready to go, and then people don't always pay on time or they might be late and then we have to chase after people to get them to pay.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: So as the structure is now, you, you pay the fee before you get your license?

MICHELLE CRAVEN: Yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: Upfront?

MICHELLE CRAVEN: It's the last thing before you get your license when you sign your revocable consent agreement.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: But if you do pay the fee and don't get your license, you get that back?

MICHELLE CRAVEN: You would, yeah, but that wouldn't happen.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: What do you mean that wouldn't happen?

MICHELLE CRAVEN: If once you've gone through the entire review process, the review and approval process before you would pay this fee. So like, if you're paying this fee, we're good to go.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: Okay, okay. How much does DOT anticipate it would cost to implement Introduction 918?

MICHELLE CRAVEN: So I don't know if we've done a specific estimate, but we do believe it would

add to our sort of staffing responsibilities because it would be the same people who currently issue the invoices and also do things like register contracts, um, who are currently very busy full-time getting restaurants set up with their licenses. So either we would have to add additional staff or or it would have the effect of slowing down the approval process for other restaurants.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: Have you considered an automatic payment process? So once the person signs up, they can automatically quarterly, um, pay that fee?

MICHELLE CRAVEN: We have considered— we have automated billing for the annual fees currently. We would have to change it in our portal to get it to be a quarterly automated invoice process. Um, and that is something that is kind of a slow process to implement, unfortunately. So definitely considered it. It sounds great.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: Um, do— can we agree that oftentimes, especially for our small businesses, different fees can be cumbersome and burdensome, and this would alleviate some of that financial additional stress and obligation if we

allow them to pay over a period of time versus upfront?

MICHELLE CRAVEN: So I'll— on top of other costs. I agree with you. Obviously fees can definitely be burdensome for small businesses. I think in this case we actually haven't heard from any restaurants specifically requesting quarterly payments. Heard from some of the, ah, from the advocates, but not from any restaurants. And we've, have found that restaurants are not very shy about asking us for things. Um, so if you were familiar with specific restaurants, we would certainly be interested in talking to you and, and getting more information.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: So for the past 2 months, I've been doing tours of small businesses, predominantly restaurants across the city of New York. And when we— and one of the main things they mentioned are the fees, specifically with outdoor dining cafes. A couple of restaurants have actually, actually, um, said that they've paid fees in the past. I'm not going to say it's this same fee, but they've paid fees in the past, have not been able to opened their sidewalk cafe and had never received

those fees back. So this really derives from, again, just common sense that it, it helps to pay overtime versus one time, and also actually speaking to businesses to see what would be helpful. And when I discussed this with those businesses, they smile ear to ear and are super excited with— but when I discuss it with businesses as well as community boards, because individuals who own businesses and individuals who know business owners recognize that we are in an affordable crisis— affordability crisis, not just in housing but across the board. And our small businesses are getting hit very hard, and this is just one measure we see as being able to take some of that financial burden off of them.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you, Councilmember. You have any more questions? You good for now? Council Member Martí, you have questions? All right, uh, regarding intro— Council Member Wong, go ahead.

COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: Thank you, Chair. Um, regarding, um, replace it— replacement of, um, fixtures, uh, in my district, because I work for my predecessor Robert Holden and I, I handle constituent services. When we make a request to, to either, uh,

repair or replace a, a burned-out, uh, a street lamp or like a fixture that's on a trestle, it takes a very long time just to get a reply. Uh, it is like, like I myself follow up on the case. It took 3 months for me to get a reply that, okay, we'll work on it, you know, um, Can you talk about it? Why does it take so long? Because, uh, um, constituents are concerned when you have, say, you live in a residential block and one street light out, you know, it, it's, they feel very unsafe when that happens. Please talk about it.

MONTE DEAN: Certainly we can, uh, make sure we're getting a reply back sooner than that. It shouldn't take so long, certainly, to let you know that something's being worked on. As far as the repair itself, it can vary. Typically, uh, our contractors have 10 days to, to sort of evaluate and make— either make the repair or determine if something more substantial is necessary. So sometimes it's a, a fairly simple matter, like you said, sometimes it's just a burnt out, um, fixture that needs to be replaced. Other times there might be more extensive issues with the wiring or maybe with the Con Ed feed. So tho— in those instances, it can take

longer to make the actual repair, but we can certainly make sure that we're at least keeping you informed on when those issues arise.

COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: Okay, thank you. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you, Councilmember. Regarding Intro 894, uh, what— I know that you're mostly supportive, but wanted to ask, how much does DOT anticipate it would cost to implement Intro 894?

MICHELLE CRAVEN: I don't know that there are any anticipated costs. I think we just say, you know, as I'm sure you know, We're having larger negotiations with the council about other outdoor dining bills, including winterization of roadway. And something that we're doing right now is, like, we're taking a hard look at our rules to figure out what restaurants would need to do on the roadway to be able to winterize their setups without going into, like, a full-scale shed situation like we had in the pandemic. And I think we want to take a look at this for sidewalks as well and maybe treat the two similarly, so we can have consistent standards for both.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you. Now I want to just pivot to my last set of questions on Intro 866 regarding Epstein's bill requiring DOT to post notification signs regarding upcoming disruptive work. This bill would require signage for work that would cause a disruption for at least 7 days. What public notice does DOT currently provide for work that will cause disruption for at least 7 days? Are there issues in the process that could be fixed?

JEFFREY MALAMY: Hi, yes, thanks for that question. Uh, so I'm Jeffrey Malamy, Director of Street Improvement Projects. Uh, happy to give you a response there. Um, so currently there's quite a lot, uh, that the agency does to notify the public, um, of projects, uh, you know, when they're in the, um, uh, er, like, the, the project planning phase, um, through, you know, meetings with elected officials, uh, and their staffs and community boards and, and other stakeholders, uh, that we're aware of. And, uh, you know, those iterative processes— processes, like, lead to, you know, improving the, the performance of the projects that we're designing. Once we get to— closer to implementation, um, there's a lot more notification that we do, um, again through the

elected officials' offices and community boards. We post, uh, What's Happening Here flyers, which are, you know, kind of plain language, very easy to read, non-jargony., um, that, uh, that we put up along the, the corridor in advance, um, of construction. Uh, we also share those electronically and appreciate, uh, the work, um, that you and your colleagues do to amplify those messages to let even more of the community know, um, that work will be, uh, that work will be ongoing. Um, we also have a Street Ambassador program because we know not everyone has the time or the flexibility to be engaged, um, in community board meetings or to attend workshops. So those folks often set up on the street by, um, really, uh, popular pedestrian hubs, like, and around bus stops and subway stations and outside grocery stores, so that New Yorkers just in the regular course of their days can happen by, um, learn about an upcoming project, you know, they can talk, uh, with the Street Ambassadors who can answer their questions, or if they're pressed for time, you know, just pick up a, a pamphlet or a flyer, um, and learn more about the project, uh, on their own time.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: How does DOT define disruptive work generally? Does it pertain to specific work being done, such as utility work, street resurfacing, and street reconstruction?

JEFFREY MALAMY: Um, I think for, uh, how do we define disruptive? Uh, I think, um, I mean, it, it, you know, it, it depends on the, the scope and scale of a project. Uh, all of those, um, all those tools in our toolkit that I mentioned, like, don't get deployed for every single project. Um, but, uh, we have a good gauge, uh, you know, working with your offices and your colleagues' offices and the community boards, understanding, like, what the community, um, would perceive as disruptive and then matching, um, you know, the, the outreach materials, uh, to speak to that need.

COUNCIL MEMBER ABREU: So there's no defined standard per se for disruptive work?

JEFFREY MALAMY: No, no, not really. And I think, I mean, the, the way that it's— the way that, um, that it's defined in the bill is quite broad. Um, and, uh, so kind of requiring, you know, signage to that extent for, um, for, uh, like the minimal, um, interruption as, as described in the bill is, uh,

seems excessive to us and, and, you know, would be in the way of delivery.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: You're open to having conversations on defining that and what would trigger a notice?

JEFFREY MALAMY: Sure. Yeah, definitely. Yeah, I think, I mean, just like our safety projects for an intersection or a corridor, It's not one size fits all, um, so it really depends on, um, you know, the, uh, the, the makeup and the interest of the community, um, and how, how best to, to notify members of, of ongoing work, the scope and scale of it. So we're happy to work, uh, with your offices, um, yeah, to define that.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I'm sure the council members is, is up for working with you guys on that. What role do contractors or utilities play ensuring that these notification signs are put up?

JEFFREY MALAMY: Mhm. Um, yeah, so certainly, uh, you know, we have a number of, of notice requirements, um, in statutes and in rules, um, that, you know, non-DOT partners, um, like, like contractors, um, are, are required to install, uh,

along, um, uh, along the corridor of, of a project or of their work.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: How much does DOT anticipate it would cost to implement Intro 866?

JEFFREY MALAMY: Um, I think— I don't have a, you know, I don't have a budget amount, um, but, uh, we do— we are sensitive to the fact that, um, you know, additional signage work, you know, with printing and installing and maintaining and updating and removing those signs so there isn't, uh, you know, uh, litter on the streets, um, you know, would detract, uh, from the other work that the agency does as far as, you know, contain— um, coordinating, um, with elected officials' offices and holding the meetings and, like, Street Ambassador deployments, as I've mentioned, uh, that we feel are, you know, most effective at getting the word out and informing the, the public and hearing back from the public, uh, on their concerns around a given project. So we're sensitive to those trade-offs.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you, Council Member Amarte.

COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: Uh, thank you for being here. I just wanted to clarify one of the

points that you made. You said that, uh, in regards to Brewers Bill 894 and the winterization of sidewalk cafe, you mentioned that you wanted something that could be replicated on the roadside. Can you talk about that a little bit further? How would that look like? What are some potential options of something that could be replicated from the sidewalk to a roadside cafe?

MICHELLE CRAVEN: Well, I think we're still kind of in early discussions about this, so I don't wanna get— I don't wanna get too specific into anything, but I think, you know, both roadway and sidewalk currently are required to be open air, right?

COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: Mhm.

MICHELLE CRAVEN: And so you can have some sort of coverings on both, but you're not really supposed to have anything on the side.

COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: Correct.

MICHELLE CRAVEN: So we're trying to figure out what kind of siding could be put up on a temporary basis through the winter, um, Ideally with the dates to match on both, which they currently don't quite do with this bill. Um, but to have

something that could provide some kind of, you know, wind protection and snow protection and whatever else on the sides of the setups for the comfort of everyone sitting inside. Um, but I think we would want some kind of similar materials, similar requirements, you know, protection from the snow. Um, there might be standards to make sure that, you know, the roof doesn't collapse if there's too much snow, something like that. So those kinds of things are what we're trying to work out. And we think it would probably make sense to look at those things together and just be consistent. It'll be easier for us. It'll be easier for the restaurants. It'll be easier for everyone sort of trying to understand the program.

COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: Okay. And I know we've talked to DOT, uh, a number of times about this, but the SLA has, uh, stipulations that they make with the community board on like whether they can have windows open, closed, hours of serving drinks. Um, however, a lot of times, and we've done walkthrough in my district, and I know Councilmember Epstein has done walkthrough in his district, where we see people take advantage of, you know, whether it's sidewalk or the roadside dining, to continue to

serve liquor when the SLA, you know, uh, says they can't, or whether they made an agreement with the community board that they shouldn't. Um, what can DOT do to make sure that the agreements that are made in the community board or with the SLA are actually monitored and enforced on both the sidewalk and roadside?

MICHELLE CRAVEN: So it's— that's a great question. It's kind of a tricky question because the SLA requirements are outside of— the SLA licenses are outside of our jurisdiction, right? It's a state entity. Like, we don't have the authorization to enforce that.

COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: Um, and so I, I have a quick follow-up. So because they've do a lot of stipulations with the community board during the SLA process of how an establishment is gonna function and look like.

MICHELLE CRAVEN: Mhm.

COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: Would DOT be able to respect, uh, or promote or advocate to the owner of that establishment to do stuff in accordance to those agreements that have been made in the past?

MICHELLE CRAVEN: I think it would depend at a minimum on what those requirements were, what those stipulations were, because I know there's certain language in the legislation that prevents us from enforcing certain things like hours of operation. And those agreements— some of those stipulations, I understand, are things like hours of operation, and they wouldn't necessarily, um, align. And so anything that conflicts with the legislation or the rules, we would not be able to enforce.

COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Council Member Phil Wong.

COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: Yes, um, you were mentioning about Street Ambassadors, uh, can you talk about, like, how often they come visit? Because I, I've never seen mine. If you can tell me who, who's, who's the Street Ambassador in my district, I would certainly like to reach out to, to him or her.

JEFFREY MALAMY: Ah, got it. Okay, yeah, happy to talk about that program. Um, so they, they serve the all 5 boroughs, uh, and it's a team of —like, 12 to 15, uh, and so, you know, they're deployed, you know, kind of throughout the city on a

project-by-project basis. We, uh, between the— our DOT project managers and the borough commissioner's offices, um, strategize about when and where, um, uh, to, to deploy the street ambassadors, whether they're, you know, gathering feedback from the public or explaining a project that's soon to be implemented. So I'm not sure, like, I, I could get back to you on projects in, in your district.

COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: I would certainly need, need the ambassador around when there are major projects in my district, and there were several of them, and I haven't seen any ambassadors, uh, like, collecting feedback. I had to do that, right? So, uh, I welcome the ambassador in my district at the next project. Thank you.

JEFFREY MALAMY: Okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: Thank you. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you, Councilmember Wong. I want to go back quick to, uh, Intro 845. In your testimony, you said that DOT upgraded lighting at more than 2,500 locations across the city in 2025. How many of those locations were under elevated train lines?

MONTE DEAN: Uh, we'll have to get back to you and check on what the breakdown is of that.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Please do. Thank you. I have no other questions to ask, so this hearing is hereby adjourned. Thank you very much. Sorry, not this hearing, this portion of the hearing. You're excused.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: At the beginning of— sorry, I now open the hearing for public testimony. I remind members of the public that this is a formal government proceeding and that the quorum shall be observed at all times. As such, members of the public shall remain silent at all times. The witness table is reserved for people who wish to testify. No video recording or photography is allowed from the witness table. Further, members of the public may not present audio or video recordings as testimony, but may submit transcripts of such recordings to the sergeant-at-arms for inclusion in the hearing record. If you wish to speak at today's hearing, please fill out an appearance card with the sergeant-at-arms and wait to be recognized. When recognized, you have 2 minutes to speak on the legislation being heard today. If you have a written statement or additional

written testimony you wish to submit for the record, please provide a copy of that testimony to the sergeant-at-arms. You may also email written testimony to testimony@council.nyc.gov within 72 hours of this hearing. Audio and video recordings will not be accepted. Now I'm going to call the first panel, Andrew Ridgy and Vinnie Dong.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: And Andrew, you can start whenever you're ready.

ANDREW RIDGY: Good afternoon. My name is Andrew Ridgy. I am the executive director of the New York City Hospitality Alliance. We represent restaurants, bars, and nightclubs across the 5 boroughs. Thank you for hosting today's hearing. I'm gonna testify on 3 bills, Intro 894, 917, and 918. I've also submitted written testimony. Uh, first on 894, seasonal enclosures for sidewalk cafés. Uh, restaurants are paying the city for a year-round license for their sidewalk cafés, but as mentioned earlier, during the more inclement, uh, you know, months, uh, they're unable to really utilize that space even though they're paying for it. So as Councilmember Brewer mentioned, we would like the ability to use high-quality winter vestibules. You

have seen restaurants that have used them, uh, in the past. Uh, they hold up to the elements. They allow businesses, small businesses in particular, to really maximize, uh, their revenue by using the space that they're paying for throughout the winter months. It's also important worker protection, as when the weather gets cooler, you see restaurants are reducing worker hours, even eliminating some jobs because— excuse me— because they're losing that space. If they're able to utilize it by keeping it warm during the winter, then they will able to sustain those jobs as well as sustain the small business revenue and giving their customers a place to, uh, sit. The next bill we are speaking on is the 918, which would allow the revocable consent fees to be paid quarterly instead of in one lump sum. This is how it was done for probably decades at DCWP. Not even a small business's landlord requires one-year rent paid up front. Why is the city requiring small businesses to pay fees in a lump sum? It's not just the consent fees, it's also the licensing fee, security deposit, the fee for the public notice, um, you know, architect fees if they're paying that, expediter fees. It is a lot of money. You could be talking tens of thousands of

dollars. It worked in the past paying quarterly. We think it would be a nice option, especially when we talk about supporting small businesses in neighborhoods across the city. And can I get 30 seconds to finish up the last one? Um, obviously we all want to keep, uh, the streets, you know, clean, the outdoor dining clean. We believe, as DOT acknowledged and was mentioned earlier, that, uh, the rules currently establish a regulatory framework and penalties if the sidewalk or roadway cafe area is not kept clean. Um, we don't necessarily love doubling up the, um, fine scheme. However, that being said, if you are gonna codify what's already in the rules, we would just ask that violations, or I should say first-time violations, allow for a warning or a cure period before a monetary penalty is issued. Um, the council I know is working on small business reforms. The mayor's administration through Executive Order 11 is looking at reducing fines and fees, and we believe, as the hospitality lines, any small business violation that does not pose an immediate hazard to workers or to the public should allow a warning or cure period before a penalty is issued. Um, we think

the focus should be on education training first, penalties as a last resort. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you, Vinnie.

VINNIE DONG: Good afternoon, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. Thank you for allowing me to testify. My name is Vinnie Dong, and I'm a current sophomore at Queens High School for the Sciences. As a student, I am here to testify about Intro 845-2026 and Intro 866-2026. As a student, we are across all 5 boroughs of New York City, and we travel all across the city to get to our schools every single day, Monday through Friday, at sometimes absurd hours. Sometimes wake up at 6 o'clock and sometimes we get home at 9 o'clock because of extracurriculars, getting to school, the distance. It is essential for the Department of Transportation and this committee to invest on, invest on the infrastructure around surrounding the trains, underpasses, and streets. When winter comes and the daylight time shrinks, sometimes it gets dark at around 6 or 7. When streets get dark, stuff happens. It, it's well reported in analytics, it's well reported in crime reports, and when streets are unsafe parents cannot assure that their child will

come home safe either. No student should have to give up their access to extracurricular activities or DYCD programs or any other programs they do outside of school simply because transportation is unsafe or uncertain. Additionally, I would like to branch out this issue more than infrastructure. Sometimes when transportation is delayed or uncertain, or when the roads are uneven, it poses a significant threat to students, especially those with disabilities. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Council Member Marte.

COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: I just want to say thank you, uh, for coming today and for testifying. I think what you said is exactly what this legislation is meant to achieve. And so Just want to thank you for having the courage showing up to a city council hearing and, you know, saying how you and other students feel.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you. This panel is excused. If we inadvertently missed anyone who registered to testify today and has yet to be called, please use the Zoom raise hand function if you are testifying remotely, and you'll be called in the order that your hand has been raised. If you are

testifying in person, please come to the dais. I will need you both to fill out an appearance card. Thank you. They're bringing an appearance card for you to fill out, and then you'll be able to testify. Just give us a moment. All right, Blake Walker, please turn on your mic. You're fine.

BLAKE WALKER: Hi, my name is Blake Walker. I live in Park Slope, Brooklyn, and I'd like to speak about a different infrastructure issue. So at the start of each summer, my dad and I ride our bikes from Prospect Park to Coney Island along the Ocean Parkway bike path. And embarking on a journey from a 585-acre urban park to the sea is an experience that's unique. Unique to New York City, but the problem is that there's a lot of missed potential to extend this opportunity to the 10 million people who visit Prospect Park annually, as many locals and virtually all tourists are actually unaware of the opportunity. So on this year's bike ride, my dad and I decided to further our little biking exploration by figuring out a way to connect Coney Island to the Shore Parkway bike path. So we rode along the waterfront at Coney Island to Owls Head and Bay Ridge before taking the New York City

Greenway bike path to another protected path along 4th Avenue, then turning onto 15th Street before returning to Prospect Park, which effectively created a loop, and the loop was an obvious missed opportunity for New York City to capitalize on bicycle tourism. And the current problem is that this loop that I just spoke of, which connects a lot of historic locations and beautiful landscapes, is disconnected. And the infrastructure is in place, but The, the signage is not— like, there's no signage on the bike paths to effectively guide riders. And although some locals might be able to figure it out, a lot of tourists are just not going to even try. So simply closing the loop by adding signage and calling it something like the Prospect Park, Coney Island, Bay Ridge loop would allow Brooklyn to capitalize on the $150 billion a year in bicycle tourism that's generated. And it would also— sorry, have one second— and it would also enable all of Brooklyn to benefit from the tourism which often stays centralized in affluent neighborhoods currently. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you so much, Blake. I, I really appreciate you coming to testify today.

BLAKE WALKER: And thanks for having me.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Of course, always, always welcome.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Just gonna do another check to see if there's anyone on Zoom who would like to testify. Please use the Zoom raise hand function if you're testifying remotely, and if you're in person, please come to the dais. Seeing none, I will now close the hearing. Thank you to the members of the administration and the members of public who have joined us today. This hearing is officially adjourned.

C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.

Date September 20, 2026