

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

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June 12, 2019
Start: 1:20 p.m.
Recess: 4:30 p.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E: Ydanis Rodriguez
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Corey Johnson
Chaim M. Deutsch
Ruben Diaz, Sr.
Peter Koo
Donovan J. Richards
Deborah Rose
Carlos Menchaca
Mark Levine
I. Daneek Miller

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

Susan Dooha
Executive Director
Center for Independence of the Disabled
New York

Mark O'Connor
Interim Co-Executive Director
Transportation Alternatives

Blythe Austin
Families for Safe Streets

Chris Widelo
Associate State Director
AARP New York City

Danny Perlstein
Policy and Communications Director
Riders Alliance

Polly Trottenberg
Commissioner
New York City Department of
Transportation

Eric Beaton
Deputy Commissioner

Transplantation Planning and Management
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Sean Quinn
Assistant Commissioner
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Gomel
DOT

Devan Sipher
Families for Safe Streets

Hindy Schacter
Families for Safe Streets

Christine Berthet
Chekped

Adriana Espinoza
Director
New York City Program
New York League of Conservation Voters

Kate Slevin
Senior Vice President
Regional Plan Association

John Orket
Bike New York

Eric McClure
Executive Director
StreetsPAC

Raymond Wayne
National Federation of the Blind
New York City Chapter

Kathleen Treat
Member
Checkpeds

Jim Weisman
United Spinal Association

Janet Liff
Co-Director
Neighborhood Empowerment Project and Open
Plans

Terri Carta
Brooklyn Greenway Initiative

Glenn Every
Bus for NYC

Patrick Condren

Greg Mihailovich
Community Advocacy Director
American Heart Association
New York City

Eman Rimawi
Access-A-Ride Coordinator and Organizer
New York Lawyers for the Public Interest

Neil Weissman

Alexandria Sica
Executive Director

DUMBO Business Improvement District

Jonathan Hawkins
Manager
Streetscape and Planning
Garment District Alliance

Greg Waltman
G1 Quantum

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2 [SOUND CHECK] Today is 6/12/2019, in the
3 Chambers Room. The meeting is being conducted
4 [inaudible] here at City Hall. Mic check. [pause]

5 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Good afternoon
6 everyone and thank you for being here. I'm Council
7 Member Ydanis Rodriguez, the chair of the Committee
8 on Transportation. Today the committee will be
9 considering two bills. The first bill is Intro 1457,
10 sponsored by Council Member Carlos Menchaca in
11 relationship to cyclists following pedestrian control
12 signals. The second bill is Intro 1557, sponsored by
13 Speaker Corey Johnson in relationship to a five-year
14 plan for city streets, sidewalks, and pedestrian
15 space, a bill that I believe will make our streets
16 safer for everyone. At this time I would like to
17 turn over to the speaker so that he will deliver his
18 opening statements.

19 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Thank you, Chair
20 Rodriguez, good afternoon. I love New York City.
21 It's the best city to live and work in the world, but
22 we can do better. We can make New York a safer, more
23 livable, and more equitable city. We can have a city
24 where it's easier for everyone to get around, where a
25 physical disability doesn't prevent you from taking

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2 advantage of all that this city has to offer, where
3 businesses thrive because people want to spend time
4 outdoors exploring neighborhoods, where commuting by
5 bus doesn't mean wasting hours away from your family
6 every week stuck in traffic, where working as a
7 delivery cyclist, hopping on a city bike or crossing
8 the street to get to your corner bodega doesn't mean
9 risking your life. When we give space back to
10 people, when we put people instead of cars first,
11 great things can happen. We can improve the quality
12 of life of all New Yorkers. That's why I devoted my
13 first State of the City Address as speaker to
14 transportation. It's not just about congestion and
15 traffic safety, it's about building the kind of city
16 we want to live in, and it's about all of us. I laid
17 out a vision for all New Yorkers in that speech and
18 I'm proud to be here today to start the process of
19 realizing that vision. So today we'll discuss a bill
20 that I've sponsored that would require a master plan
21 for New York City streets. For the first time, the
22 city would be required to look at our streets in a
23 comprehensive, holistic way. Not one neighborhood or
24 street at a time the way we do it now. And this bill
25 recognizes that we need to think seriously about how

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2 we share space on our streets. Cars cannot continue
3 to rule the road. It is not safe and it is not
4 sustainable. Pedestrian deaths are up over 20% this
5 year. The number of people killed while riding a
6 bike is up over 60%. We can do better and we must do
7 better. So this bill will set aggressive city-wide
8 benchmarks, not goals, benchmarks, of protected bike
9 lanes, bus lanes, and pedestrian space. That means
10 at least 30 miles of new bus lanes and transit signal
11 priority in at least a thousand intersections per
12 year to get buses moving again. That means giving
13 pedestrians, people riding bikes, and people with
14 disabilities their fair share of our streets. That
15 means dramatically expanding the city's plaza and
16 shared streets programs. Redesigning and making
17 every signaled intersection accessible. And that
18 means installing at least 50 miles of bike lanes with
19 real physical protection, not just green paint, per
20 year and completing a fully connected bike network by
21 2030. I want every neighborhood in the city to feel
22 like home to every New Yorker, no matter how you get
23 around. We're not doomed to have a city dominated by
24 constant honking, pollution, and near misses with
25 cars. We control our streets and we know how to fix

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2 them. Now we just need the will to get it done, and
3 this won't be easy. This bill is ambitious. But I
4 truly believe that if we stay true to what's
5 important and our vision for a safe, livable, and
6 truly inclusive city that we will get there. I want
7 to thank you again, Chair Rodriguez, for holding
8 today's hearing. I want to thank give a big thank
9 you to all the advocates that have worked tirelessly
10 on this issue for so many years, and I want to thank
11 one of the best commissioners in the entire City of
12 New York, someone whom I'm really proud to have a
13 great partnership with, who has been I think a
14 transformative leader in her vision in the last five-
15 and-a-half years in changing the way we get around
16 New York City. I really want to thank Commissioner
17 Trottenberg, who is going to testify today. I'm
18 grateful for her entire team and the work that we've
19 done together. They've always been responsive.
20 They've always been helpful. And I look forward to
21 continuing to build on that great partnership that we
22 have. So with that I want to turn it back to you,
23 Chair Rodriguez, and thank you again for chairing
24 this hearing today.

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2 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you,
3 Speaker Johnson, and I would also like to add my
4 compliments on how we've been so lucky to have a DOT
5 commissioner that, as I said before, not only is a
6 great New Yorker, but someone also that brought a lot
7 of national expertise when it comes to
8 transportation, so as we are discussing this bill,
9 this plan is not about her lack of leadership but
10 this is about what are we leaving in place for the,
11 not only for the present but also for the future
12 administration, so that we all appreciate the
13 leadership and the great job that you have done with
14 your whole team working in collaboration. And thank
15 you, Speaker, for your leadership and vision in how
16 to improve the transportation infrastructure in our
17 great city. As you must know, early this year
18 Speaker Johnson delivered his first State of the City
19 Address that focused primarily on transit issues and
20 offered a comprehensive transportation master plan
21 for our City of New York. We live in a very busy
22 city, one where trucks, cars, buses, cyclists,
23 pedestrians all need to share our streets. As the
24 chair of the Committee on Transportation my goal has
25 been to make New York City the most walkable,

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2 pedestrian-friendly city in the nation, and that's
3 why I have been asking for a plan to reduce the
4 numbers of New Yorkers who own vehicles from 1.4
5 million that we have today to 1 million by 2030. We
6 need to ensure that when our pedestrians and cyclists
7 go onto the streets they remain protected and secure.
8 We have to decrease the numbers of crashes we see in
9 the city. We do need to get the city to have a
10 master plan when it comes to transportation issues
11 and the way we design our streets. Again, that's a
12 plan that we should work together, not only for the
13 current administration but for administrations to
14 come in the future. Intro 1557, which I have also
15 co-sponsored, will require DOT to implement a master
16 plan that sets certain goals and benchmarks for
17 redesigning all aspects of the transportation network
18 in New York City. This is a noble goal and I look
19 forward to working with the speaker, the
20 administration, my colleagues, and advocates to
21 ensure that the bills get all the support that is
22 needed. As mentioned earlier, we will also be
23 considering Intro 1457. This bill will also allow
24 cyclists to follow pedestrian-controlled signals when
25 crossing a roadway at intersections as long as they

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2 yield to pedestrians. The recent pilot study
3 conducted by DOT found that bicyclists would benefit
4 from getting the same head start as pedestrians
5 currently do to cross an intersection. This bill
6 could provide our cyclists with increased safety
7 while traveling through our city. Now we're going to
8 be calling the first panel and then it will be
9 followed by the administration.

10 UNIDENTIFIED: Susan Dooha. Mark
11 O'Connor. Blythe Austin. Chris Widelo. Danny
12 Perlstein.

13 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: And let me also
14 recognize our colleagues who are here, council
15 members Deutsch, Diaz, Koo, and Richards. [pause]
16 Council Member Rose is here. [pause]

17 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: So you may begin.
18 We'll try to see how we can maintain in three minutes
19 and if more to please summarize. [pause]

20 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Just make sure the red
21 light is on.

22 SUSAN DOOHA: Thank you so much, thank you
23 Speaker Johnson and thank you council members for
24 this opportunity to testify in relationship to the
25 plans for city streets, sidewalks, and pedestrian

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2 routes. We gratefully applaud the effort that has
3 been made and the proposed local law discussed today.
4 As you know, the Center for Independence of the
5 Disabled is among the pioneers of accountability and
6 transportation for people with disabilities. We
7 were involved in the campaign to make New York City
8 buses accountable. We were involved in the Taxis for
9 All campaign. We most recently succeeded in
10 negotiating a binding settlement agreement that will
11 result in making curb cuts compliant with the
12 Americans with Disabilities Act citywide that will
13 require maintenance of those curb cuts as well,
14 transparency, and an independent monitor. And we're
15 very proud of that achievement. We're also involved
16 in three lawsuits as the lead plaintiff in state and
17 federal court to try to bring about an accessible
18 subway system, as has already been achieved in many
19 cities in the United States and is currently underway
20 in others. We are an independent living center. Our
21 leadership and our staff are people with
22 disabilities, including myself, and we serve people
23 with disabilities in New York City. Last year we
24 reached around 52,000 individuals with disabilities,
25 with benefits advisement, education, and advocacy.

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2 As you know, people with disabilities face heightened
3 dangers when attempting to cross city streets and
4 people whose disabilities affect their mobility,
5 people who are blind or have low vision, people who
6 are deaf or hard of hearing need street and
7 pedestrian pathways that reduce the risk of
8 collision, injury or death. I speak of this from
9 personal experience. I was crossing a street in New
10 York City and was hit by a car while I was in the
11 intersection. I was in the walkway, I had the light,
12 but nonetheless was injured and acquired a traumatic
13 brain injury at that time. We believe that this
14 legislation with its goal of improved access will
15 make an enormous difference in our daily lives. We
16 applaud the idea of separating traffic to reduce
17 collisions. We believe it will help. We believe
18 that audible signals will be very beneficial. We
19 look forward to seeing what shelter upgrades would
20 look like and ensuring that they are fully accessible
21 for people with disabilities and that people can
22 board and disembark from buses easily at bus stops.
23 We welcome pedestrian spaces and we hope that the
24 street furniture and other features will be organized
25 in such a way as to avoid creating impassable spaces

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2 for people who are wheelchair users. We certainly
3 look forward to the transparency aspects of the
4 proposal. We believe in accountability and in
5 transparency and we think this will encourage the
6 public to have confidence in what is coming forward.
7 We look forward to learning the details of all of
8 these plans and contributing to the extent that we
9 can to ensure that the plans made going forward
10 pursuant to these legislative initiatives fulfill
11 the promise that it's making, to make streets safer
12 for people with disabilities. I thank you for this
13 opportunity to speak.

14 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you, and
15 can you please say your name for the record?

16 SUSAN DOOHA: My name is Susan Dooha,
17 executive director, Center for Independence of the
18 Disabled New York.

19 MARK O'CONNOR: Good afternoon. My name
20 is Mark O'Connor. I am interim co-executive director
21 with Transportation Alternatives and I want to
22 applaud you, Council Speaker Johnson, Chairman
23 Rodriguez, for putting forth these bold plans. And
24 thank you, council members, for having this hearing.
25 I'm here to testify in strong support of both bills

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2 in today's hearing. For 46 years Transportation
3 Alternatives have advocated on behalf of New Yorkers
4 for safer, more inclusive, and more livable streets.
5 With more than 150,000 people in our network, nearly
6 10,000 dues-paying members and over 1000 activists
7 throughout all five boroughs, we fight to promote
8 biking, walking, and public transportation as
9 alternatives to the car for all New Yorkers. We
10 support the master plan. At Transportation
11 Alternatives we are guided in our support of policy
12 not by politics but by data, and the data is
13 overwhelmingly clear. The measures and benchmarks
14 proposed in this legislation is proven to save lives,
15 improve bus transit service, promote the healthiest
16 and most environmentally friendly transportation
17 modes, including biking, and to make our streets more
18 accessible. These are improves that all New Yorkers
19 deserve. In New York City most households don't own
20 a car. The vast majority of New Yorkers commute by
21 public transit or walk and countless New Yorkers want
22 to bike or spend time in car-free plazas. But sadly
23 and to the detriment of all, 80% of our street space
24 is dedicated to the move or storage of harmful cars
25 and trucks, with cars sitting still parked 95% of the

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2 time on average. That is inequitable and harmful use
3 of our streets. This master plan takes a giant leap
4 forward by addressing these inequities. Importantly,
5 this visionary master plan would require many
6 improvements at a pace that our current crises in
7 these areas require. More than 6000 people have been
8 killed in traffic on New York City streets since
9 2001. We don't feel safe walking and have far too
10 few oases of calm space. Numerous areas of our city
11 are congested with cars, buses move at walking
12 speeds, and we need to reduce carbon emissions and
13 reach our 80 x 50 goals and Vision Zero in our
14 lifetimes. Far too often people on New York City
15 have lost their lives due to inadequate street
16 designs and far too often improved designs only come
17 after tragedy has struck. The current pace of
18 improvements is plain and simply inadequate to meet
19 these crises. For these reasons we strongly support
20 the master plan and we have four brief
21 recommendations: 1) To require benchmarks for
22 bicycle parking facilities, including bike racks and
23 corrals; 2) require benchmarks for daylighting of
24 intersections to increase safety and micro mobility
25 parking; 3) require benchmarks for expansion of

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2 sidewalk space to promote walking; 4) require
3 benchmarks for protected intersection to improve
4 safety and bicycling. These are measures that we
5 believe would, it will improve this already promising
6 and great legislation. Lastly, I want to register
7 our support for Intro 1457 for bicyclers' use of
8 pedestrian-controlled signals. Thank you very much.

9 BLYTHE AUSTIN: Mr. Speaker, Chair
10 Rodriguez, and members of the City Council. Thank
11 you for inviting members of Families for Safe Streets
12 to share our stories of traffic violence here today.
13 My name is Blythe Austin. In November of 2017 I was
14 in a crash with a mini van driver while I was riding
15 my bike down Nevins Street in Boerum Hill in
16 Brooklyn. I broke my ankle and chipped my two front
17 teeth. Shortly after my crash the Department of
18 Transportation approved a safe street redesign of
19 Fourth Avenue in Brooklyn, which runs parallel to
20 Nevins Street. These bike lanes were supposed to be
21 fully installed by now, but the Department of
22 Transportation has delayed installation and has only
23 just started installing the lines, with no timetable
24 for the project's completion. If Fourth Avenue had
25 had protected bike lanes in November of 2017 I would

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2 have been riding my bike there and I would not have
3 been in a crash and I would not have been hurt. My
4 experience shows the urgency of safe street redesign.
5 All too often our elected officials and our
6 government bureaucrats agree that streets should be
7 redesigned and even say that streets will be
8 redesigned. But then they delay these installations
9 for years. These delays have a human cost, more
10 crashes and more people hurt just like I was hurt.
11 Because our streets are designed for cars to go fast
12 and not for people to walk or to bike safely. The
13 bill before you calls for the installation of at
14 least 50 miles of protected bike lanes each year. It
15 is ambitious, but it is just this kind of ambition
16 and urgency we need to make our streets safe. Our
17 current system for street redesign does not work. My
18 only concern is that this bill does not go far enough
19 to make streets safer, particularly at intersections.
20 About half of fatal crashes and more than half of
21 crashes involving pedestrians occur at intersections
22 in New York City. This bill needs to mandate
23 policies that will make instructions safer for
24 pedestrians to cross. First, the bill should mandate
25 either lead pedestrian intervals or exclusive

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2 pedestrian crossings at all intersections. That is,
3 pedestrians should either get a few seconds head
4 start to cross an intersection before cars can go or
5 pedestrians should be able to cross in all directions
6 at an intersection while all vehicles at the
7 instruction have a red light. These designs are easy
8 and cheap to achieve, just change the timer on
9 lights, and we know that they prevent crashes and
10 save lives where they are now. So why not spread
11 them across the entire city. Second, we need to
12 improve driver sight lines at intersection so drivers
13 can see pedestrians, particularly children, the
14 elderly, and people in wheelchairs and not hit them.
15 This type of redesign is call daylighting. It is
16 also easy and cheap to achieve. Just remove all
17 vision barriers, including parking spaces, within 10
18 feet of a crosswalk or intersection. Imagine how
19 many fewer crashes we would have and how many lives
20 would be saved if this bill mandated clear sight
21 lines. Some drivers won't like this proposal because
22 it means removing a few parking places. But those
23 parking places have a human cost. I know how highly
24 you value human lives because you put forward this
25 bill and we're having this hearing here today. I

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2 hope that you will make this wonderful and lifesaving
3 bill even stronger by adding provisions to prevent
4 intersection crashes. Thank you.

5 CHRIS WIDELO: Speaker Johnson, Chairman
6 Rodriguez, and members of the council, thank you very
7 much for the opportunity to be here. My name is
8 Chris Widelo. I'm the associate state director for
9 AARP here in New York City, and wanted to share with
10 you some demographics and some information about how
11 our population is aging and the need to have, in
12 order to have livable communities the need to have
13 complete streets, as we call it at AARP. You know,
14 complete streets is our term for streets that can
15 accommodate modes, all modes of transportation,
16 pedestrians, people on bikes, cars of course, trucks,
17 and making sure that our neighborhoods, you know,
18 when they are undergoing being redesigned or rezoned
19 that they incorporate all these features into those
20 neighborhoods because it's essential. Even if we
21 have affordable housing we don't have the
22 infrastructure or the roadways and easements for all
23 users. It's sort of, you know, misses the mark. You
24 know, livable communities are very important to AARP
25 because our population is aging very rapidly. We

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2 just released a report a few months ago with the
3 Center for Urban Future and it provided a lot of new
4 data about the aging population in New York City.
5 The study revealed that the number of older adults in
6 New York City, residents aged 65 and older, increased
7 12 times faster than the city's under-65 population
8 over the past decade and there are now a record 1.24
9 million adults age 65 and older living in the five
10 boroughs, and according to the report as well New
11 York City added 237,000 older adults between 2007 and
12 2017, which is a 24% increase, and during the same
13 period the city's under-65 population increased by
14 only 2%. Every day 10,000 people across the country
15 turn 65 and older, and this has happened for the last
16 10 years and will continue to happen for the next few
17 years. And so as our population ages we need to make
18 sure that people can get around and do the things
19 that they want to do in their communities and having
20 complete streets and the plan that you have
21 introduced is vitally important to that, to people
22 living in their homes and their communities and being
23 able to age in place, which is what people want to
24 do. They would much rather stay where they've lived
25 their whole lives. Last year we also released a

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2 report called "Disrupting Racial and Ethnic
3 Disparities - Solutions for New Yorkers Age 50 Plus."
4 We partnered with the Hispanic Federation, the Asian
5 American Federation, and NAACP and Urban League to
6 look at racial and ethnic disparities within the 50-
7 plus age group and two of the findings in the area
8 of livable communities had to do with not only
9 accessible public transportation and the ability to
10 get to our public transportation, but also one of the
11 findings was that in African American, black, Asian,
12 and Hispanic neighborhoods have a greater number of
13 pedestrian accidents due to unsafe crossings than
14 their white counterparts. And so the things that we
15 can do to minimize those fatalities and make our
16 roadways safer for all users also has an impact on
17 communities of color and, you know, making this city
18 as fair for everyone. So thank you very much for the
19 opportunity to speak.

20 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Thank you. Can someone
21 switch out with Danny Perlstein? Thank you.

22 DANNY PERLSTEIN: Thank you. Good
23 afternoon, Speaker Johnson, Chair Rodriguez, and
24 members of committee. Thank you for the opportunity
25 to testify today. My name is Danny Perlstein. I am

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2 the Riders Alliance policy and communications
3 director. The Riders Alliance is New York's
4 grassroots organization of subway and bus riders.
5 There are more than 2 million daily bus riders on New
6 York City Transit and MTA local buses in New York
7 City. Which is remarkable, consider that our bus
8 service is the slowest of any big city in the United
9 States. In addition to being slow, bus service is
10 unreliable and as a result for the past decade and a
11 half ridership has been tragically falling because
12 the bus is the most efficient and affordable way to
13 get around city streets. Intro 1557 would change the
14 game for two-million-plus daily bus riders. Thirty
15 bus lane miles a year is the most ambitious target
16 that anyone has proposed to date. Planning for bus
17 lanes on literally hundreds of routes citywide would
18 revolutionize our bus service, and for a lot of the
19 reasons Chris was just explaining a progressive city
20 must do better for bus riders and must deliver for
21 our bus riders. It's a matter of basic fairness.
22 Folks who ride the bus earn an average of \$28,000
23 annually. That's significantly below the average New
24 Yorker and it's even further below the average subway
25 rider. 75% of bus riders are people of color. The

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2 elderly and folks from immigrant communities
3 disproportionately ride the bus and depend on the
4 bus. New York City Transit president Andy Byford,
5 Commissioner Trottenberg, and the DOT, Mayor de
6 Blasio, have taken serious and crucial steps over the
7 past year to improve our bus service and today's
8 legislation from Speaker Johnson ups the ante. It's
9 a powerful vision for bus riders across the city to
10 look forward to while we're still unfortunately stuck
11 on the bus. Thank you.

12 SPEAKER JOHNSON: I want to thank you all
13 for coming to testify today and not just for, of
14 course, your presence here today but also the
15 advocacy that you do year round, the smart,
16 thoughtful, innovative policies, the organizing
17 efforts, the advocacy, the policy papers, everything
18 that you all do really informs and educates us as the
19 City Council and I know similarly the Department of
20 Transportation and when we're considering pieces of
21 legislation and when we are doing things to try to
22 make our city a safe, more livable city. So I really
23 want to thank you for being here today, for your,
24 again, specific thoughtful testimony that we are
25 going to definitely use in continuing to craft this

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2 legislation. So I really, really want to thank you
3 all for being here today, and I don't know if Chair
4 Rodriguez has anything else before we call up the
5 Department of Transportation.

6 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Obviously adding
7 my voice and thanking you guys for being a team
8 player with what we're doing, and I know that even
9 DOT recognizes, you know, and all of us, how you guys
10 from Transportation Alternatives, Families for Safe
11 Streets, Riders Alliance, and all the institutions
12 and the voices advocating for individual, you know,
13 the one million New Yorkers with disabilities. I
14 think that having [inaudible] DOT is someone that
15 plays a role and that is someone from our community
16 who lives everyday life, all the challenges that New
17 Yorkers with disability have, shows the commitment to
18 DOT to say we are open. But I think this is about
19 the urgency and I appreciate that you are the voices
20 for making our streets safe for everyone and being a
21 partner with this proposal, as the speaker already
22 has presented to having a master plan. So thank you
23 for [inaudible].

24 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Thank you all. Come on
25 up, Polly, thank you, and your team.

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2 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: So we would like
3 to ask our counsel, our committee counsel, to please
4 administer the oath.

5 SPEAKER JOHNSON: So I think the
6 committee counsel will swear the commissioner and her
7 team, anyone else who may be answering questions in
8 before the testimony begins.

9 COUNSEL: Please raise your right hand.
10 Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and
11 nothing but the truth in your testimony before this
12 committee and to respond honestly to council member
13 questions?

14 UNIDENTIFIED: Yes.

15 COUNSEL: Thank you. [pause]

16 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: Good
17 afternoon, Speaker Johnson, Chair Rodriguez, and
18 members of the Transportation Committee. I'm Polly
19 Trottenberg, commissioner of the New York City
20 Department of Transportation. With me today are
21 Deputy Commissioner for Transplantation Planning and
22 Management, Eric Beaton, and Assistant Commissioner
23 for Street Improvement Projects, Sean Quinn. We're
24 very happy to be here today on behalf of Mayor de
25 Blasio to testify on Intros 457, 1457 and 1557. The

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2 administration shares the goals that Intro 1557 puts
3 forth and we welcome the conversation on the policy,
4 political, budgetary, and operational issues it
5 raises. With a growing city and finite street space,
6 the need to tackle climate change, and the urgency to
7 provide safe, equitable, green, and accessible
8 mobility must continue to transform and humanize our
9 streets and prioritize more efficient,
10 environmentally friendly modes. DOT is rising to the
11 challenge, guided by citywide planning documents like
12 OneNYC and the 80 x 50 greenhouse gas reduction plan,
13 as well as DOT-specific publications like our
14 strategy plan, our Vision Zero, pedestrian safety
15 action plans, our safer cycling plan, and the mayor's
16 Better Buses Action Plan. You can see them all on
17 the board behind me. We think our documents present
18 an ambitious vision that we're focused every day on
19 delivering, but we're happy to discuss the value of
20 bringing all the work into a single planning
21 document. And while we are very proud of the world-
22 class studies and strategy documents we think what
23 has distinguished DOT under this administration is
24 our execution. We have dramatically increased our
25 output of projects to make our streets safer,

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2 greener, smarter, and more equitable and accessible,
3 all while having substantive community input. This
4 includes increasing the miles of bike lanes by a
5 third in the last five years, from 908 to 1240,
6 including 83 miles of protected lanes, increasing the
7 number of bus lanes, miles of bus lanes by nearly
8 50%, from 75 to 112, and implementing over 514
9 separate street improvement projects under Vision
10 Zero compared to 242 prior to Vision Zero. We know
11 of no other US city that is accomplishing this
12 dramatic pace of transformation, tackling big
13 challenge projects. At DOT we are proud and
14 passionate about our work and always strive to
15 accomplish more. But achieving the targets in the
16 bill as drafted would require a significantly
17 reconfigured agency. The bill's vast new operational
18 requirements would necessitate significant additional
19 funding from the city budget, which we estimate to be
20 several billion dollars, new head count, new
21 facilities, and equipment. Furthermore, the
22 magnitude of the changes proposed would require a new
23 reinvisioned public engagement model, perhaps with
24 fewer mandated requirements for work with the city's
25 59 community boards, and the work we do with council

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2 members, borough presidents, state and federal
3 elected officials, bids, major institutions, civic
4 groups, and all the numerous other entities that are
5 affected by DOT's work. The bill would also require
6 tremendous managerial and operational bandwidth at
7 DOT. This is at a time when the agency is already
8 managing enormous growth and undertaking major new
9 initiatives, as well as our core mission. In the
10 last five years the mayor and council have increased
11 DOT's operating budget by a total of 25%, from
12 approximately 150 million to over a billion. We've
13 increased our head count by nearly 20%, from
14 approximately 4600 employees to 5500. And we have
15 hundreds more hires planned. The mayor and council,
16 and we've very grateful for this, have doubled our
17 10-year capital plan from approximately 8 billion to
18 over 16 billion, and in FY18 we committed a record
19 2.2 billion worth of projects and achieved a capital
20 commitment rate of 81%, which is up from 42% at the
21 start of this administration. And, as I noted above,
22 we're taking on several enormous new projects to
23 which we will be devoting significant resources and
24 attention. The scale and scope of these undertakings
25 is dramatic. For example, as you heard earlier from

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2 the testimony from the advocates, the city is
3 committed to making our estimated 320,000 pedestrian
4 ramps accessible, and we are moving ahead with a
5 comprehensive plan. While other US cities are also
6 grappling with this tremendous challenge, none are on
7 the same scale we face. To accomplish our plan, DOT
8 is engaged in a survey using high-definition street
9 imagery and Lidar to collect multiple measurements on
10 each pedestrian ramp. We're constructing new and
11 upgraded ramps with significantly expanded in-house
12 crews as well as DDC-managed private contracts. For
13 this work the FY20 executive budget proposes 1.5
14 billion over the next 10 years in capital and expense
15 funds and over 500 new staff for the agency, for what
16 will ultimately be a multi-billion-dollar, multi-
17 decade effort. With the dramatically expanded Speed
18 Camera authorization from the state, we are preparing
19 to ramp up our program to be the largest in North
20 America and among the largest in the world. This
21 expansion from 140 to 750 school zones, which will do
22 so much to help us achieve Vision Zero, will be an
23 enormous undertaking. It will require budgetary
24 resources, many new employees to review violations,
25 as required by state law, and many millions of

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2 dollars in camera purchases, the first installments
3 of which are reflected in our proposed executive
4 budget. All the while we are also moving forward
5 with LIFT to triple number of city bikes to 40,000,
6 double the size of the service area, and add more
7 valet stations and docks in the busiest parts of the
8 system. At the same time, we're looking to expand
9 dockless bike share to all of Staten Island, and,
10 depending on what happens in Albany, we may be
11 charged with figuring out how shared e-scooters and
12 e-bikes will function on our streets. And of course
13 a major focus for DOT and this administration is
14 working with the MTA as the implement congestion
15 pricing for the Manhattan central business district,
16 collaborating on traffic studies and evaluation, a
17 parking study, and working with the MTA to improve
18 transit options on day one of the plan. And at DOT
19 we're also planning to repurpose street capacity for
20 buses, bikes, and pedestrians, as London has done.
21 Other cities all around the country are watching New
22 York and we intend to rise to this historic
23 challenge. All this comes on top of everything DOT
24 is already doing. Overall, our agency manages and
25 maintains the city's 6000 miles of streets, 12,000

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2 miles of sidewalks, and nearly 800 bridges. The
3 largest and most complex urban street network in
4 North America as well as the Staten Island Ferry, the
5 second largest public ferry in the country. On
6 Vision Zero in 2018 we saw our fifth annual decline
7 in traffic fatalities, yet again bucking the national
8 trend. But fatalities are currently up 25% compared
9 to last year and recent tragedies underscore the
10 urgency of our work. There is much more to do and we
11 have always known that progress will not be linear.
12 Vision Zero is this administration's top
13 transportation priority, one that requires extensive
14 resources and managerial focus from all levels of the
15 agency, as well as constant collaboration with our
16 sister agencies and other stakeholders. But looking
17 ahead, our dramatic Speed Camera expansion will play
18 a big role, and along with targeted enforcement and
19 education we will continue our exponentially
20 increased output of safety projects. We've increased
21 leading pedestrian interval installations by 5000%
22 compared to pre-Vision Zero averages, increased
23 corridor retimings by over 800%, triple the pace of
24 our street improvement projects, and more than
25 tripled the pace of installing protected bike lanes.

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2 I'll just point to my written testimony to give more
3 details on sort of what I would call DOT's bread and
4 butter work. But that work on our roads, bridges,
5 sidewalks, traffic operations, parking and ferries,
6 it doesn't often make big headlines, but it is
7 essential for the safety, mobility, and quality of
8 life for millions of New Yorkers. And I want to take
9 this opportunity to especially thank the dedicated
10 men and women of DOT who work so hard and deliver for
11 this city every day. Let me now turn towards some of
12 the major areas of Intro 1557. First on buses. In
13 the State of the City Address this year, the mayor
14 committed to the ambitious goal of increasing bus
15 speeds by 25% by 2020. Building on this
16 announcement, DOT released its Better Buses Action
17 Plan, which presents a vision for how to improve bus
18 service citywide and complements the MTA's Fast
19 Forward plan. DOT is committed to installing 10 to
20 15 miles of new dedicated bus lanes each year, which
21 is double the pace we had been installing them at,
22 upgrading five miles of existing bus lanes annually,
23 bringing TSP to 300 intersections each year, and
24 making at least 10 bus stops fully accountable every
25 year, along with many other upgrades. We plan to

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2 work with New York City Transit as they complete
3 their borough bus redesigns, implementing borough-
4 wide bus priority programs at the same time. We've
5 included the first of these as part of the New York
6 City Transit's Draft Bronx Plan and we will work with
7 them on the other boroughs, with Queens up next.
8 Each location will also get our full planning and
9 design effort, including analyzing parking and
10 traffic impacts and working collaboratively with
11 local stakeholders. Effective bus lanes designs
12 involve a lot of trade-offs, like reduced curb
13 access, parking and traveling removals, and turn
14 restrictions that can improve bus speeds and street
15 safety, but are also very unpopular with local
16 businesses and residents. We've created a Better
17 Buses advisory group with advocates, business and
18 labor, elected officials, and other key stakeholders
19 to help guide our work and build political support.
20 And we would welcome council member support to ensure
21 our bus lanes designs remain robust and effective.
22 Finally, the legislation calls for bus lanes that are
23 either physically separated or camera enforced.
24 We're excited to pilot two miles of physically
25 separated bus lanes for the first time this year, and

1
2 of course we look forward to implementing the city's
3 first transit and truck priority speed on 14th Street
4 to accommodate New York City Transit's new M14 SBS
5 serve. But we have a lot to learn as we undertake
6 these new treatments and we will be evaluating their
7 performance. When it comes to camera enforcement,
8 we're currently authorized by the state to deploy
9 cameras on 16 bus routes. I want to thank Senator
10 Kruger and Assemblywoman Rozic for fighting to
11 reauthorize and expand the city's bus lane camera
12 program. That program is set to expire next year and
13 passing this legislation is a top priority in Albany,
14 and we welcome the council's support. On cycling,
15 DOT seeks to double the number of active cyclists and
16 make New York the best biking city in the US. Over
17 the last three years DOT has been adding an average
18 of 62 miles of bike lanes a year to our 1240-mile
19 network, the largest in the country. This includes
20 adding an average of 20 miles of protected bike lanes
21 to our current 440, 480, up from about six per year
22 pre-Vision Zero. And you can see that up on the
23 chart. We're not simply adding miles, but developing
24 continuous protected corridors that allow cyclists
25 to ride from downtown Brooklyn to the Bronx and from

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2 Queens Boulevard to midtown Manhattan. As a key part
3 of this, we're enhancing the connections to our East
4 River bridges, including Jay Street, Grand Street,
5 Delancey Street, Chrystie Street, and Park Row.
6 We're adding bike infrastructure to the streets
7 approaching the Harlem River bridges, as outlined in
8 our "Connecting Communities" report, including Willis
9 Avenue, this year. We're also building out protected
10 Manhattan crosstown routes. We've completed pairs of
11 routes on 12th and 13th Streets and 26th and 29th
12 Streets, and we expect to install another pair on
13 52nd and 55th Streets this year. Overall, on bikes
14 we're focused on three key priorities: Continuing to
15 build out an interconnected protected network,
16 enhancing safety and priority bicycle districts,
17 neighborhoods that have high ridership but lack
18 adequate bicycle infrastructure, including a
19 commitment to create or enhance 75 lane miles in
20 these districts by 2020, and you can see on the map
21 the districts are represented in those pink areas.
22 We also have an ambitious citywide bike program for
23 2019, and you can see some of those details in my
24 written testimony. Ultimately, our goal is a
25 protected bike lane network that provides safe,

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2 appealing bicycle connections between major
3 neighborhood centers, complemented by local
4 neighborhood connections. But bike lane
5 implementation draws on many parts of the agency.
6 Our bike staff take the lead, but work with our
7 borough offices, traffic engineers, planners, as well
8 as our markings, signals, and sidewalks division. We
9 continually update our designs to make sure our work
10 reflects best practices, which includes upgrading
11 existing bike lanes and intersections, and we work to
12 maintain curb access for residences, businesses, as
13 well as traffic flow. Protected bike lanes in
14 particular involve a lot of local outreach.
15 Continuing to expand and truly weave an
16 interconnected, protected bike lane network into the
17 fabric of our city streets involves more than just
18 DOT. When bike lanes and bus stops are on the same
19 side of the street, for example, we have to
20 coordinate with New York City Transit on potential
21 conflicts and design challenges, and I would give for
22 example on Fourth Avenue New York City Transit is
23 doing work on the R Train underneath the street, so
24 we've had to do some coordination there as well.
25 That can sometimes impact our project timelines. Our

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2 projects include a substantial and labor-intensive
3 review process by FDNY, and they may have to consider
4 the use of smaller vehicles to navigate different
5 street layouts. Department of Sanitation needs
6 greater capacity to handle smaller spaces and
7 narrower lanes, with smaller vehicles for street
8 sweeping and plowing. DDC needs greater capital
9 management capacity to handle complex street designs.
10 We need to have coordination with EDC on their
11 complex capital projects, and as we build out more of
12 these projects we need further NYPD enforcement
13 resources. Finally, all of these street designs come
14 with greater ongoing maintenance requirements, from
15 markings to delineators to medians and Jersey
16 barriers, which we must plan for and fund as well.
17 It's been exciting to implement these
18 transformational projects all over the city, but they
19 must also be kept in a state of good repair for all
20 the years to come. DOT's Pedestrian Plaza program,
21 now 10 years old, creates public space from under-
22 utilized portions of our right-of-way to enhance
23 safety, walkability and accessibility to transit,
24 while supporting neighborhood economic and civic
25 life. This past year alone we finished capital

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2 construction on seven plazas, while adding another
3 four new plazas, bringing our total to 79 citywide.
4 A lot more goes into creating our plazas than simply
5 designating areas for pedestrian use and adding
6 amenities. Plazas in New York City require a local
7 maintenance partner, who can ensure the space remains
8 clean, safe, inviting, and well programmed. That
9 requires local participation, resources, and
10 organizational capacity, and is often performed by
11 the neighborhood BID or civic association. These
12 important partners are key to creating a successful
13 plaza. The same is also true for shared streets.
14 When done right, our plazas have transformed spaces
15 previously dominated by cars, like Times Square, and
16 become vital neighborhood focal points, like
17 Diversity Plaza in Jackson Heights. And our other
18 partners perform extraordinary work for our
19 neighborhoods. But when a plaza partner is absent
20 the space can quickly become derelict and detract
21 from the neighborhood rather than enhance it. In
22 2016 the de Blasio administration created the OneNYC
23 Plaza Equity Program, which provides 1.4 million
24 annually to lower-capacity plaza partners, typically
25 outside the Manhattan core. The funds are used for

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2 maintenance, programming, and landscaping assistance
3 to cover 25 plazas, while also helping to strengthen
4 the performance of the local partners. The program
5 is essential, especially in lower-income
6 neighborhoods, and would need to grow as the program
7 grows. Each plaza remains an ongoing resource and
8 management commitment for both the city and the local
9 partner. Lastly, the bill sets several benchmarks
10 that touch on accessibility. I want to emphasize
11 that all DOT design work complies with the ADA and
12 we're passionately committed to full accessibility as
13 part of everything we do. At the same time, as I
14 described earlier, with an enormous commitment of
15 resources and staff, the city has embarked on the
16 tremendous challenge of upgrading all of our over
17 320,000 pedestrian ramps. When it comes to
18 accessible pedestrian signals, we have the most
19 ambitious retrofit program in the country and are
20 including them in all new signal installations moving
21 forward. For our retrofits, we work with the
22 disability community and elected officials and
23 utilize national design standards to identify and
24 prioritize intersections which present crossing
25 difficulty for low-vision and blind pedestrians. It

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2 should be noted that there is also ongoing litigation
3 on this issue. In conclusion, the team at DOT is
4 excited about all the work before us, proud of our
5 accomplishments to date, and grateful to the mayor
6 and the council and to you, Mr. Speaker, for a
7 significant increase in resources and support over
8 the last five years. And we're grateful, of course,
9 to the advocacy community for their ongoing support
10 of our work to transform city streets. But that
11 growth has meant we're straining to find the hiring
12 capacity, management bandwidth, and facilities to
13 handle our enlarged scale of operations. We're also
14 starting to exhaust local outside contracting
15 capacity in certain areas, such as street striping
16 and milling. And executing the work required on the
17 scale and timeline and vision in this bill would
18 necessarily mean a very different relationship with
19 the council and community boards, which are also
20 straining to keep up even with DOT's current roster
21 of projects. And the potentially pared-down level of
22 community engagement. In 2018 DOT conducted over 600
23 separate project presentations to community boards,
24 as well as numerous other site visits, walk-throughs,
25 and meetings, and our Street Ambassador Outreach Team

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2 visited 130 different locations, conducted over 3700
3 surveys, and had close to 8000 conversations with New
4 Yorkers to support over 50 separate projects. And I
5 and our borough commissioners and other senior
6 leaders also personally participate in dozens of town
7 halls, open houses, council hearings, and site visits
8 each year. And when we speak with many of you and
9 your state and federal colleagues, we often hear a
10 desire for more and not less of this type of
11 engagement. DOT now faces ever-greater council-
12 mandated reporting, notice presentation, and waiting
13 period requirements, and the body may want to take a
14 hard look at reducing and streamlining these rather
15 than adding. And I think we would need to explore
16 further how the benchmarks in this bill square with
17 the current level of engagement that communities,
18 stakeholders, and elected officials expect. And all
19 that being said, our engagement frequently leads to
20 insights and improvements to our projects, and for
21 every engagement process that moves too slowly,
22 dozens of other projects are moving forward with
23 implementation. As we like to say, we are not
24 leaving any paint in the can at the end of each
25 construction season. The de Blasio administration is

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2 grateful to the council for your support. We have
3 accomplished so much, but we know there is much more
4 to do to transform our city streets. We need the
5 council's continued strong support and partnership to
6 accomplish our shared goals, particularly for the
7 most politically challenging projects in your
8 districts, where you are respected local leaders.
9 I'll just say now my written testimony also contains
10 some comments on Intro 1457, which the administration
11 supports. And I will say then that we are grateful
12 for the opportunity to testify today and look forward
13 to taking your questions.

14 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Thank you. Thank you,
15 Polly, thanks, Commissioner, for being here and for
16 all of your hard work. I want to thank you for
17 everything that you have done. You and your staff,
18 as I've said, as I said in my operating statement,
19 have always been responsive, have always been
20 thoughtful, have always been deeply engaged not just
21 on the big picture issues that we talk about, but
22 even on the most hyper local issues in my council
23 district, you all have always been very responsive.
24 So I'm grateful for that. I think we've had a very,
25 very good partnership and as you can tell from this

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2 bill, and as you outlined in your testimony, I'm
3 hoping to see an even more ambitious vision for our
4 city streets, and I sort of feel like I'm not seeing
5 enough movement towards a more modern, livable city,
6 even with all of the incredible things that you
7 outlined and that DOT has done. I feel like, and
8 this is not your fault, I feel like we are stuck in
9 the Robert Moses area and that we still need to push
10 harder and harder to compete with cities around the
11 world that are focused on meeting the needs of all
12 residents, not just repeating some old patterns that
13 existed before you became commissioner and before I
14 was elected to the City Council, or us taking small
15 incremental steps. So I want to ask you, just sort
16 of generally, do you think that we're doing our best
17 right now, and if not what's holding us back? Is it
18 money, is it support from other agencies or City
19 Hall? Is it political will? What can we do better
20 if we are not doing enough right now?

21 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: Right, I mean,
22 I would always say, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for
23 your comments. Of course we can always do better.
24 I've often said in this job it gives you great
25 humility. You try our best but there are always

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2 areas where you think you could do more. You know, I
3 do, again, I sort of, I brought some visuals here to
4 show that I think the work of the DOT team has been
5 pretty extraordinary, always room for improvement,
6 but, I mean, we have, you know, dramatically picked
7 up the pace of bike lane installation, of buses, and
8 I think, I hear you, your vision for a larger
9 planning [inaudible], but I did just want to make
10 sure folks could see we have done a lot of
11 extraordinary planning work. I think it's true, I
12 appreciate your comment that, you know, I think as I
13 tried to convey in my testimony, some of the areas
14 where we need to do better there's a lot of, kind of
15 interdependences. Again, when the mayor announced,
16 for example, his Better Buses plan we decided and
17 we're happy to have some council members
18 participating, including the chairman, to create a
19 task force, because we realized we sort of, we needed
20 some help. We were really running into political
21 challenges. We didn't feel like we were getting
22 enough of a sense of all the stakeholders and some of
23 them are here today, not only the traditional transit
24 advocacy groups, but business groups, labor,
25 disability groups, AARP. There's a whole of, the

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2 Community Services Society, a bunch of different
3 players who we think can really help us convey that
4 message that I think we often struggle with
5 admittedly, on things like bus lanes, that these are
6 so important for millions of New Yorkers. So, you
7 know, we want to step up and do better, but I think,
8 I want to convey in the testimony it is a real team
9 effort, I mean, DOT is a piece of transportation
10 puzzle, but there are a lot of there organizations
11 and players in the city that we need to work with on
12 this.

13 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Is any of the challenge
14 money? I know you talked about, ah, money, how much
15 of an increase you've seen, but if you want to do
16 something ambitious like this there would be a
17 significant cost involved.

18 COMMISSIONER TROTTENBERG: I mean, I
19 certainly think the benchmarks laid out in the bill,
20 there would be some significant costs and, again, I
21 think as I tried to convey in my testimony, I do not
22 want complain about resources. This council and this
23 mayor have given this agency a lot of resources, I
24 mean, we have seen our budget rise dramatically, our
25 head count rise dramatically. More resources enable

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2 us to do more, but I think, as you're hearing in my
3 testimony, money is not the only piece of the puzzle
4 and money isn't always just sort of, can always be
5 applied in a linear fashion. You know, one thing I
6 mentioned, for example, in terms of striping, we're
7 doing so many projects now, bike lanes, bus lanes,
8 Vision Zero projects, so many things that involve
9 striping, as well as just our regular maintenance of
10 the streets. We've basically used up the contracting
11 capacity of the region. Striping is a kind of
12 specialized business. There are a lot of barriers to
13 entry. If we want to get into doing dramatically
14 more projects we need to create more in-house
15 striping capacity. That means hiring, that means
16 finding the space for those employees. So, you know,
17 cost can go like this and then at some point you have
18 to start making some, some jumps.

19 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Do you think we could
20 be more aggressive? Even all the progress you've, in
21 the visuals, what could we do to be more [inaudible]?

22 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: I mean, I
23 absolutely think we can be more aggressive. But I
24 would also say it's great to have this discussion
25 with you all and it's the thing I touched at, at the

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2 end of my testimony. We have a lot of the advocacy
3 community here and it's funny. On the one hand they
4 often express frustration that we take too long with
5 our outreach, that we're engaging too much with
6 community boards, that we should plow ahead. But
7 then I often hear from a lot of the other
8 stakeholders, they want more engagement, more
9 meetings, more time spent. I think, you know, when
10 you're speaking about some other cities. Other
11 cities sometimes do that differently, and I think
12 that's a question that's not just one for DOT to
13 answer. I think that's one for the council, and
14 frankly your state counterparts, who are also very
15 engaged in our work. You know, if there is a way to
16 streamline some of that we're certainly interested in
17 doing it. I don't want to lose working with local
18 stakeholders and local institutions, though. In a
19 lot of cases they do make our projects better. What
20 does that hospital on the block need? What does that
21 grocery store need? What, you know, what are the
22 concerns of local neighbors? Those aren't things I
23 want to shortchange. But it is true, our present now
24 can be very long and involved, and involve a lot of
25 meetings, a lot of stakeholder engagement, a lot of

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2 hearings, town halls, you name if. If there's a way
3 to think through how to make that go more quickly,
4 but not shortchange the parts that are beneficial,
5 I'm happy to engage on that.

6 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Thank you. I want to
7 talk a little bit about car culture right now. Car
8 ownership is up, as you know. [inaudible] vehicle
9 ridership has skyrocketed, as you outlined in your
10 testimony. Pedestrian deaths are up over 20% this
11 year from last year. And the number of people killed
12 riding a bicycle in New York City is up 66% this year
13 over where we were last year. But I don't see just
14 as a safety issue, but it is, or an environmental
15 issue, though it is. It's also, I believe, an
16 economic justice issue. As you heard from the
17 previous panel, drivers tend to have much higher
18 incomes than bus riders and they're almost certainly
19 doing better economically than delivery cyclists. Do
20 you think that there are too many cars in New York
21 City?

22 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: I mean, I do
23 absolutely think there are too many cars in New York
24 City. But, and I want to talk a little about,
25 particularly about sort of the topography and justice

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2 issue. Because one of things we've been proud of, a
3 point back here. Many, many in this room are
4 familiar with our Borough Pedestrian Safety Action
5 Plans. Because that was an effort to look borough by
6 borough where the crash data sent us. And, you know,
7 we just looked at where we saw the highest rates of
8 fatalities and serious injuries and we have focused a
9 lot of our design work, our enforcement, our
10 education. We're going to be focusing a lot of our
11 Speed Camera installations on those corners, and they
12 are all over the city. And so we really try in our
13 work to look at data. We have worked, I think, to
14 come up with some ways to tackle the issue of car
15 culture beyond that, and I certainly think congestion
16 pricing is going to be something that is going to
17 have a profound effort on the city. As I said in my
18 testimony, we're very excited about it. We've looked
19 to sister cities like London to see what they have
20 done. They have reclaimed, as you probably know, Mr.
21 Speaker, vast amounts of street space in the wake of
22 congestion pricing, turned it over for bus service,
23 for bikes, and for better pedestrian space. We're
24 going to have an opportunity to start that process in
25 the next two years and see how it works, and I think

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2 it's going to be a tremendous, exciting opportunity
3 for us. I can tell you on the DOT side something
4 we're very excited about, you said today how much you
5 love the city. This is going to be a chance to
6 really transform the city.

7 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Do you think that we're
8 prioritizing walking, cycling, and transit, or are we
9 just making improvements? I think it's a pretty
10 important distinction.

11 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: Well, you
12 know, look. As you mentioned, there's no question
13 this is not a good year for us in Vision Zero. We
14 are very focused on it and grieving heavily for the
15 loss of life we've seen our streets. But I do, you
16 know, I do always want to mention that prior five
17 years we saw fatalities on our roadways go down by
18 almost a third. When the de Blasio administration
19 came in 2013 we had 299 fatalities on the streets in
20 New York. Last year we had 202, and that was work
21 not only done by DOT, but by NYPD and so many of the
22 advocates and political leaders. It was a real team
23 effort in the city. I agree we need to continue to
24 step that up because we want to see those fatality
25 numbers go down every year, but I think behind that

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2 you have seen, you know, redesigns of streets all
3 over the city, to make them more bike friendly, to
4 make them more pedestrian friendly, to make them more
5 accessible and safer for people with disabilities. I
6 take it's a fair point, we can always do better to
7 pick up the pace, but that really has been one of the
8 driving forces behind Vision Zero.

9 SPEAKER JOHNSON: But do you think we're
10 prioritizing walking and biking and transit, or are
11 we just making improvements? Because it sounds like
12 we're making a lot of improvements, which we are very
13 grateful for and we've worked with you on many of
14 those improvements locally as council members. But I
15 think what sort of this bill is about is shifting
16 away from car culture, breaking the car culture, and
17 moving more towards prioritizing people who are not
18 in cars and prioritizing pedestrians, cyclists,
19 buses, and mass transit, and I think that's the key
20 distinction that I'm trying to suss out.

21 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: I mean, I
22 think in our designs we have tried to shift that
23 priority. As we like to say, we are trying to
24 prioritize what we call the more sustainable modes,
25 which is cycling, which is, it is also buses, and,

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2 you know, again, when we talk, you know, there's
3 often discussions in our projects where people say
4 well, we're worried about congratulations.
5 Oftentimes one of the things we're looking at in our
6 projects is it a major bus route and making sure, as
7 was mentioned, I think by Mr. Perlstein, making sure
8 that we can keep those buses moving. But, you know,
9 again, I think citywide this is an area where we can
10 all work together. I mean, we have done a lot to,
11 frankly, start to change the mix on our streets, put
12 bus lanes in. We're doing one on 14th Street, for
13 example, where we're basically, other than local
14 pick-ups and drop-offs, going to eliminate vehicles
15 all together. We will be focusing instead on buses
16 and pedestrians. 12th and 13th will be the
17 complementary bike lanes. So we're starting to do
18 that. I'm sure for some in the room they would like
19 to see the pace go faster, and certainly something we
20 can talk about. I would also just say I do think
21 there is different appetites for that in different
22 parts of the city, and, you know, particularly in
23 parts of the city where mass transit is good I think
24 that pace is moving rapidly. In parts of the city
25 where there are fewer options and more people are

1 auto-dependent, perhaps moving at a slower pace.

2 Although I'm proud even places like Staten Island we
3 have been really building out the bike network and
4 now we're going to have borough-wide bike share,
5 dockless bike share, and I think that is really going
6 to start to boost the bike culture in Staten Island
7 as well.

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9 SPEAKER JOHNSON: In terms of road space,
10 has DOT analyzed how much room cars take up and how
11 it compares to the amount of space that pedestrians
12 and people riding bikes take up? Could we actually
13 be accommodating more people if we take space away
14 from cars?

15 COMMISSIONER TROTTENBERG: We, I mean, we
16 absolutely could accommodate more people and I don't
17 know whether we, I'm are looking over to Eric to see
18 if we have that number. It's something we may have
19 to get you. There is a famous poster, which I think
20 a lot of people in this room have probably seen,
21 which shows a picture of a street and it shows the
22 number of people that single-occupancy vehicles can
23 carry and it's some cluster of 20 people. How many
24 people bikes can carry and it's, I don't, it's 60
25 people, and how many people buses can carry and it's

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2 100 people. So of course when you prioritize what we
3 call the sustainable modes you will carry more
4 people. There's no question about it.

5 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Do you think we have
6 enough free personal parking in New York City?

7 [laughter]

8 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: [chuckles]
9 It's interesting. We have tried in the past couple
10 of years to both raise parking rates to add more
11 commercial parking, to try and I think chip away at
12 the volume of free parking on the streets. There is
13 no question that our curb is very underpriced and,
14 you know, I would also say, it doesn't get a lot of
15 attention, but the projects that we have put on the
16 ground, we have removed a fair amount of parking.
17 You know this well, Mr. Speaker. We've removed
18 hundreds of spaces in your district recently. We
19 went to a community board last night with a project
20 to put in a bike lane on Central Park West, where we
21 announced we are removing 400 spaces, and the
22 audience actually cheered. So we were happy to see
23 that. And you know we are also looking to put in
24 alternatives. We have our bike share program, which
25 we are now going to be tripling the size of. We have

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2 put car share in as a pilot, and we're looking to
3 potentially expand that. So, and of course as you
4 know, in the larger picture, working with the MTA
5 both to improve bus service on the Fast Forward Plan
6 with Andy Byford, and of course now with congestion
7 pricing to give the MTA the resources it needs. If
8 we're going to encourage people to get out of their
9 cars, we do have to offer them good alternatives, and
10 particularly for New Yorkers who live in the far-out
11 distances of the city. They need good mass transit
12 alternatives.

13 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Do you think we have
14 enough free parking in New York City?

15 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: We have too
16 much free parking in New York City.

17 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Too much?

18 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: Too much, yes.

19 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Yes. Do you know how
20 many free parking spaces there are in New York City?

21 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: We estimate
22 about three million.

23 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Three million free
24 parking spaces. How does DOT decide whether a
25 parking space is more important than a bus lane or a

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2 bike lane or widening a sidewalk or adding more
3 dedicated space for deliveries? How does decision get
4 made? I know it's, of course, it is case by case,
5 depending on the site itself and what's happening and
6 the context. But what are some of the guiding
7 principles that are used?

8 COMMISSIONER TROTTEMBERG: Yeah, I'm
9 going to speak a little bit and then actually I have
10 a couple of experts who spend a lot of time on the
11 ground, particularly on bus lanes and bike lanes and
12 pedestrian space and want them to talk about our
13 present. You know, and as you know, again, let's
14 start with the Vision Zero side of the house here,
15 where we're focusing our interventions, looking at
16 where the data tells us, where we see the highest
17 rates of fatalities and seriously injures, and
18 looking at how we can redesign those states, and
19 where we need to repurpose space, take it for buses,
20 take it for bikes, take it for daylighting, take it
21 for bike parking and pedestrian islands, all the
22 thing that we can do to make streets safer, make them
23 more accessible. You know, likewise we get into sort
24 of the designs we're doing on our bike network, we're
25 building out a bike network and those questions arise

1
2 there, as well as with all the bus lanes. So I think
3 with that, actually I'm going to let Sean and Eric
4 talk in a little more detail about how our process
5 works.

6 SEAN QUINN: Sure. So when we're looking
7 at bike lanes we, specifically protected bike lanes,
8 we do often have to take, um, ah, parking spots to
9 make the design work. And we don't only look at the
10 spaces that we have to take to get those safety
11 elements included for pedestrian islands or
12 protection or visibility of the cyclist, we then look
13 at the parking regulations that are left in place.
14 So we look to change those regulations to make sure
15 that they are tailored to the curb needs of that
16 neighborhood, whether it be residual needs, for
17 loading for commercial, and then we also look around
18 the neighborhood to see if there are other places we
19 can make adjustments for that parking. So we're, as
20 we do a bike lane design we're actually going and
21 rethinking the curb completely, curbs that haven't
22 been rethought for generations, and making sure that
23 the parking is there for the needs of the street and
24 not worrying too much about what we're taking away,

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2 ensuring that what we're leaving is actually
3 functional.

4 ERIC BEATON: And similarly on bus lanes
5 and in Vision Zero we want to make sure that whatever
6 we put out there actually functions. You can draw a
7 nice plan on a piece of paper, but if you're not
8 making sure that we take care of the grocery store
9 that needs to get its deliveries, or a facility with
10 people with disabilities that needs to be able to get
11 pick-ups and drop-offs. Those vehicles are going to
12 be in the lanes whether we want them there or not,
13 have a very legitimate public purpose, we think, in
14 accommodating those. So that isn't a reason to not
15 do a project. It's a reason to be thoughtful and
16 careful and really look to make sure that sometimes
17 it means that we have to go around the corner, as
18 Sean said, or sometimes it means that we have to move
19 the bus lane one lane in so that we can maintain some
20 access at the curb. But we do really want to look at
21 those block by block and not move so quickly that we
22 can't actually take care of the things along the way
23 that we need to do.

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2 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Commissioner, why do
3 you think we're seeing such a sharp increase in
4 deaths?

5 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: It's a good
6 question and obviously one that we've had our experts
7 looking at. I mean, I'll talk a bit about a few of
8 the factors we're seeing, while fully admitting I
9 don't know that we can totally explain it, I mean,
10 you know, one thing we see with fatalities is that
11 they can be somewhat weather-dependent, and we've had
12 a very mild, which means more activity on the
13 streets, more driving, more people out. When we've
14 had very snowy winters, actually we see that
15 fatalities go down. We have seen, unfortunately, a
16 raft of crashes in which we had multiple fatalities.
17 That's unusual, but we've had some of those this
18 year. You know, we are also monitoring a trend which
19 is something that seems to be happening at the
20 national level, which is the fleet mix in the United
21 States is changing. People are more and more giving
22 up regular sedans and moving to SUVs, and when you
23 have collisions with SUVs, unfortunately they tend to
24 be more fatal, the sort of center of gravity on the
25 SUV hits, can potentially hit a pedestrian in a more

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2 vulnerable spot. They're high up. They sometimes
3 have less ability to see pedestrians around them. So
4 we're looking to see, you know, if the changing fleet
5 mix of the city is having some effect. But I do want
6 to emphasize we are, you know, tremendously grieving
7 the rise in fatalities we're seeing this year.
8 We're, you know, particularly huddling with NYPD to
9 talk about are there places we need to get out and do
10 better education and enforcement. We are moving as
11 aggressively as we can with installing the new Speed
12 Cameras. The mayor has tasked us with installing 40
13 new cameras a month in the coming months. So we're
14 hoping that all these things will help to address
15 what we're seeing on the streets.

16 SPEAKER JOHNSON: One of the biggest
17 motivations I've had in introducing this bill is
18 changing how we engage with communities, and you've
19 talked a lot about this in your testimony and in the
20 answer to the aforementioned questions. I've seen
21 with my own eyes again and again that without a
22 comprehensive vision people can't be expected to
23 understand the true importance of a project. They
24 will feel like you are foisting this upon my local
25 block or community without understanding the broader

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2 context involved, of having sort of a master plan of
3 how it all fits together. And have you ever
4 considered doing a Vision Zero-like campaign to
5 educate New Yorkers about why everyone benefits from
6 transit upgrades?

7 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: It's, you
8 raise a very good question and one that I think we've
9 thought a lot about. I and my five-and-a-half years
10 I've done, I think probably close to, well over 100
11 town halls and walk-throughs and testimonies, and so
12 had a lot of interaction with the public in all
13 different corners of the city and really seen, I
14 think the different ways that people approach this
15 issue. And I think there's no question that
16 sometimes presenting a grander plan can be very
17 powerful. For me, we really saw that with Vision
18 Zero. In a lot of places where for years there had
19 been resistance to certain types of projects, when
20 you framed in a whole new way, that it was going to
21 be about saving lives, it resonated powerfully...

22 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Yes.

23 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: ...with people
24 all over the city. There's no question about that.
25 But I have also seen, you know, some people respond

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2 very much to sort of a grand plan. For some
3 transportation is intensely local. It is very much
4 about their particular route to school or to work and
5 the grand plans, to the extent that we have them,
6 they don't always particularly like them. But I
7 think, as I said in my testimony, we're certainly
8 open to working with you, all of you, who think there
9 are better ways to package our plans, to educate the
10 public. I mean, I and my teams are pretty much every
11 single night trying to do that. But, again, a task
12 we approach with humility, I'm sure there are ways we
13 can do it better and obviously happy to work
14 particularly with elected officials who bring
15 obviously local leadership and local respect in the
16 bargain.

17 SPEAKER JOHNSON: I think that is
18 something that we should think about because given
19 these really incredible improvements that you've
20 outlined, that your team has done over the last five-
21 and-a-half years, building on some of the work that
22 was done by the previous administration and going
23 even further and deeper, I think educating the public
24 about how these improvements really, how it does
25 benefit them, their safety, their, not just from a

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2 Vision Zero style-like campaign that has been, I
3 think, enormously successful and I'm so glad that you
4 all have undertaken it. But sort of shifting that
5 even further to transit upgrades generally and why it
6 makes sense for a community having that conversation
7 about how to do that, I think would be a sort of
8 helpful next step in evolution in this process.

9 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: Well, I, you
10 know, just to underscore the point, I mean, it's part
11 of why the mayor released the Better Buses Action
12 Plan and we took it upon ourselves to then work with
13 City Hall to create a task force, for precisely that
14 reason, because I think we felt like we were
15 struggling a bit to present the larger vision on why
16 we need to reimagine the city's bus network, on what
17 it means to the millions of New Yorkers who rely on
18 buses, who those people are, and why, you know, yes,
19 maybe you should stop and let the bus get past. So
20 we agree, I think, there and we're happy to say we're
21 having council participation, including the chairman.
22 I think that's great. And one thing that we have
23 done, I mentioned in my testimony, that I think we
24 would like to do more of, we created what we call the
25 Street Ambassador Program and we're very proud

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2 because it's, you know, basically enthusiastic, very
3 knowledgeable young people. They speak multiple
4 languages. They come from communities all over the
5 city, and we've really been deploying them to sort of
6 get away from what is, sort of the traditional mode
7 that we often talk about projects in town hall
8 meetings or community board meetings, but instead
9 have our street ambassadors get on the bus and talk
10 to bus riders, stand at the bus stop, go to the local
11 merchants, just stand on a street corner and hear
12 from regular New Yorkers as they're going about their
13 day what we can do better, and I think try and engage
14 in that education process. I think that's something
15 we certainly could do more of them.

16 SPEAKER JOHNSON: I mean, I should have
17 mentioned it before, but since we're talking, since
18 you just mentioned the work, ah, the working group on
19 buses, and you don't have to comment on this, but I'm
20 really sad to see you leaving the MTA board. I think
21 you've been one of the best MTA board members. I
22 think you've been clear and level-headed and
23 thoughtful and with a huge command of the balancing
24 act that needs to happen and pointing out the major
25 deficiencies that have existed for a very long time

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2 at the MTA, while looking out for the city's interest
3 on a board where the city is outnumbered
4 significantly with only four appointments. I think
5 you've really been a clarion call in your time on the
6 board. So I know that you are, you will not leave
7 the board until your successor is confirmed by the
8 state senate and until the governor actually lets
9 that happen, but I'm sad to see you go and I'm
10 grateful for the leadership that you've shown in your
11 time on the MTA board.

12 COMMISSIONER TROTTEMBERG: Well, thank
13 you, Mr. Speaker. And, you know, look, thank you.
14 Obviously we read with great interest your vision on
15 potentially how the city could some day even have a
16 much greater role in managing New York City Transit.
17 It is not an easy place to be on the MTA board. I
18 did it for five years. I really enjoyed the
19 experience and was glad to be a part of it, but I
20 think now it's a good chance for fresh members to
21 come on and obviously, you know, Commissioner Bob
22 Linn and Dan Zarilli, who runs the city's resiliency
23 program, will be terrific candidates and just my
24 office going to continually to work closely with
25 them, to staff them, as well as Veronica Vanterpool

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2 and David Jones. You know, I will still always be
3 very involved in MTA affairs. I speak with Pat Foley
4 and Andy Byford almost every day. So we will always
5 have a close relationship with that agency.

6 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Thank you. Are there
7 any other changes to community planning or the review
8 process that you think could be improved? You talked
9 about the balancing act of doing all the outreach and
10 engagement that you do and sometimes that slows
11 projects up, but it's also important to get community
12 feedback because sometimes, as you said, it really
13 improves the project, it makes it better. So are
14 there any general changes to that engagement process
15 that you can see from your experience over the last
16 five-and-a-half years?

17 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: I mean, again,
18 I think, you know, we have some sort of mandated
19 requirements about steps and notifications we have to
20 take and, you know, as I said in my testimony, quite
21 frankly, you know, the council has put a lot on us in
22 terms of reporting and other things. It's starting
23 to add up. But that's a question also that I think
24 should be a dialogue. I mean, I would love to, you
25 know, engage the community boards and that I hear

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2 from a lot of them individually, we have some amazing
3 people on our community boards doing tremendous work,
4 you know, a lot of them doing it on a volunteer
5 basis. I think sometimes they feel pretty
6 overwhelmed at the volume of things that are coming
7 at them, not just on the transportation front, but on
8 other fronts as well. I think it would be great to
9 have that discussion with them and the elected
10 officials. How do we maximize the input so we get
11 the best possible projects, but not slow things down
12 unduly or get lost in a process that isn't adding
13 value.

14 SPEAKER JOHNSON: There are some
15 community boards that want more aggressive
16 treatments, I can tell you, I see my...

17 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: Community
18 Board 4 I know that in the house...

19 SPEAKER JOHNSON: I see my dear, dear
20 friend who I love tremendously, Christine [inaudible]

21 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: [laughter]
22 She's a delightful outlier, though.

23 SPEAKER JOHNSON: She is the best, ah,
24 Christine's amazing and, and, ah, there are some
25 community boards, like Community Board 4 in

1
2 Manhattan, that want more aggressive treatments than
3 DOT is willing to do. Have you ever gone further
4 than initially planned because of community support?

5 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: I mean, we
6 certainly have. I mean, there are, look, there are
7 cases where the community board has wanted us to go
8 further. We usually go further, if that's what the
9 community board wants. And, look, there are cases
10 where we have overruled community boards. We do do
11 that. I mean, I like to work with community boards
12 when I can, but, you know, one of those cases, for
13 example, is currently under litigation up in the Bronx.
14 It's a safety project, Morris Park, so community
15 boards are, you know, entities we work closely with
16 but we don't always agree. You know, I would say,
17 you know, your district is a very special one. You
18 and have talked about this. There is no other
19 district in this city that has the transportation
20 facilities you do, the density you do, it's an
21 extraordinary piece of the city and one where I hear
22 you. If you want us to go further and Christine is
23 an amazing supporter of ours, we love working with
24 her, we're ready to do so. That isn't, you know, in
25 some, in some parts of the city the community boards

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2 are suing us. So it can vary from neighborhood to
3 neighborhood.

4 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Do you think that the
5 feedback DOT gets from community board meetings is
6 really representative of the community at large, or
7 do you see sort of a higher percentage of drivers or
8 higher-income folks that speak out?

9 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: I think that's
10 something that I'm seeing changing, and it's an
11 interesting question I get from council members and
12 borough presidents because, after all, you all do get
13 to appoint the people who are on the community
14 boards. And I have seen that, you know, there is
15 starting to be sort of a fresh generation of people
16 that are coming on to community boards in many
17 neighborhoods, you know, maybe less focused on auto
18 ownership and more focused on cycling and Vision
19 Zero. And I don't know the community boards are
20 perfectly representative, but, again, it is the
21 system the city has. If there are changes we want to
22 make, including potentially how the appointment
23 process works, and I know that, I think there have
24 been some recent changes made in terms of term
25 limits, you know, I'm happy to discuss those. That

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2 probably involves other parts of the administration
3 as well. We're just, we touch community boards on
4 our projects, but obviously many city agencies touch
5 community boards on an number of different fronts.

6 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Do you think we're in a
7 mass transit crisis?

8 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: I think, I
9 think I would say this, and again I work very closely
10 with New York City Transit president, Andy Byford. I
11 think the city was facing a real crisis in the not-
12 too-distant past, but I think we are really seeing
13 some encouraging signs. I think he and his team,
14 with an infusion of resources, both that the city
15 gave them and that they got up in Albany, have
16 started to turn the page on some of the service
17 challenges that was plaguing the subway system, not
18 to say there isn't more work to be done, and I think
19 President Byford would be the first to admit it. I
20 think now, too, obviously when congestion pricing and
21 the other funding sources that Albany passed in the
22 budget, you know, start to come online, that is also
23 going to make a big difference. It will enable the
24 MTA to get back to doing the kind of deep maintenance
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2 and capital work that they need to do on a system
3 which in many places is over 100 years old.

4 SPEAKER JOHNSON: When I asked about the
5 mass transit crisis I was, um, thinking particularly
6 about buses, and I know you've mentioned the working
7 group. Do you think that your bus plan is enough to
8 turn the tide? Do you think it's aggressive enough
9 as it could be to significantly improve service?

10 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: I mean, I
11 think so. The mayor has set, you know, what to us is
12 an aggressive goal, which to improve bus fees by 25%
13 by 2020. That is in concert with the MTA. I mean,
14 DOT is part of the puzzle, I mean, we are the
15 controllers of the city streets, of building bus
16 lanes, of doing part of transit signal priority, but
17 there are pieces that are also sort of in the MTA's
18 wheelhouse, doing effective dispatching, having
19 enough buses on the road to meet demand, all-door
20 boarding. So together the two agencies I think have
21 a lot of work to do and, you know, I think it's a
22 fair question. For us this is going to be setting a
23 very aggressive pace and, again, part of why we
24 pulled together a task force. Because I have found
25 in my time, um, I have never, you know, I've never

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2 met a New Yorker who didn't say that they wanted to
3 see improved bus service. I think it's a goal that
4 everybody shares. But I've also never seen a bus
5 project in which there weren't a lot of concerns to
6 work. To improve bus service you normally need to
7 take away travel lanes and parking and restrict turns
8 and do a lot of, restrict curb access. A lot of
9 things, as you know now from particularly our work
10 together on 14th Street. You can get there. But it
11 takes some work to bring people along and I think, as
12 Eric has said, make sure you get the design that
13 really will work best [inaudible], I don't know, I
14 want Eric. Eric and his team had a big hand in
15 putting this plan together.

16 ERIC BEATON: Sure, and a lot of what
17 we're trying to do is not just rack up miles for
18 miles' sake, but to make sure we're doing it in the
19 places that are most targeted, so a lot like with
20 Vision Zero where we took a very data-driven
21 approach. We're trying to do that now with buses,
22 and we've been given a treasure trove of information
23 as DMT and New York City Transit have put GPS on all
24 their buses and now we're in the drinking from the
25 fire hose stage where there's so much information

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2 coming in, we want to make sure we're using it most
3 effectively to target our treatments where they're
4 most needed. But as the commissioner said, those
5 treatments are, the places where the buses are
6 slowest often buses are slowest often end up being in
7 some of the most crucial places in every community.
8 They're the main street, the commercial corridor in
9 every community, the places that we want to see
10 thriving. So we don't want to shut them down just to
11 make sure that the bus goes faster. We want to get
12 that bus moving faster, but do it in a way that
13 supports local businesses, that supports neighborhood
14 access and neighborhood needs at the same time, and,
15 you know, not come through the Robert Moses approach
16 of just do this wherever we need to. We want to make
17 sure we're doing it in a community consultative way
18 that actually achieves what we wants.

19 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: I want to just
20 add one other thing that Eric and his team are
21 working on. Another thing that the MTA is
22 undertaking, they started in Staten Island, they are
23 now up in the Bronx and Queens is next. They are
24 doing for the first time in often 50 or 60 years a
25 holistic look at the bus routes in each borough, and

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2 in Staten Island we made some real dramatic changes
3 to the way express buses run and saved a lot of time
4 for a lot of riders, but had to work through a lot of
5 the issues, in cases, for example, of removing bus
6 stops, which can speed up buses but often proves
7 pretty unpopular on the ground. So we're also
8 working hand and glove with them on that. That has
9 the potential to be, I think, pretty transformative,
10 it requires them to change the way they deploy buses,
11 their drivers, a whole lot of work on their end. And
12 then in our work, making sure that we're doing what
13 we can to help straighten out routes to, again, ban
14 turns and do other things that can make the buses
15 flow more quickly. It can be pretty granular work,
16 but it's going to be, this is going to be an exciting
17 project when we get through all five boroughs.

18 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Do you know how often
19 bus lanes get blocked with drop-offs and deliveries,
20 or folks just parking in the lanes? Do you keep
21 track of that?

22 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: I mean, well,
23 everyone tweets to me about it, so I get a pretty
24 good sense everyday. Thousands of people let me
25 know. It is, no question, a huge problem in the city

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2 and, look, one obviously the mayor has talked about
3 and recognized that we need to do better. As part of
4 his announcement on buses we are now creating NYP7
5 tow teams that are going around and working closely
6 with NYPD, where are the bus lanes where we're seeing
7 the most egregious behavior. And I have seen them
8 out, I have seen them out on the streets towing. As
9 I mentioned in my testimony, you know, we're also,
10 ah, looking up to Albany to Senator Kruger and
11 Assembly Member Rosa, because right now we only have
12 the ability to deploy bus lane cameras in 16 routes,
13 in a city that has hundreds of bus routes. Obviously
14 if we had the ability to use cameras that would be
15 ideal. Because NYPD is stepping up their
16 enforcement, but they're not going to be everywhere
17 in every bus route all the time. Automated
18 enforcement, I think, is sort of the future of where
19 we need to go and it's a priority for us up in
20 Albany. We're keeping our eyes on it.

21 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Do we currently keep
22 track of it?

23 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: Keep track of?
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2 SPEAKER JOHNSON: If a bus lane is
3 blocked. It's not currently data that we capture.
4 It'd be hard to capture.

5 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: I mean, yeah,
6 I mean, I think PD captures when they write a
7 summons, and I don't have that data. I can get it
8 for you. But I won't deny it is a pretty regular
9 problem all over the city.

10 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Can you define a
11 protected bike lane for me? Don't you think that the
12 term protected is a little misleading? If someone
13 told you that something is protected wouldn't you
14 think there is something more than paint? That's
15 what I'm trying to get to.

16 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: Right. I'll
17 talk a little about it, but I want to turn it over to
18 the expert here, to Sean, and I know this is an area
19 of some dispute with the advocacy community and I
20 think the ideal is what we would call a parking
21 protected bike lane, where you can have vehicles. I
22 think that is the highest level of protection. Or in
23 some cases, you often seen them in greenways and
24 other areas a set of bollards or Jersey barriers.
25 It's not always, unfortunately, what we can do, ah,

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2 in every street in New York, and I'll sort of let
3 Sean talk about the different gradations.

4 SPEAKER JOHNSON: But Sean, tell me how
5 you currently define a protected bike lane? How DOT
6 defines a protected bike lanes?

7 SEAN QUINN: So the protected bike lanes
8 are either, um, have a line of a hard barrier, parked
9 cars or a Jersey barrier, or some form of vertical
10 delineation, so that would be a flexible post or, um,
11 one of our Quick Curbs, something like that. So it's
12 either a hard barrier or the vertical delineation,
13 and then the third category of protected lanes are
14 off-street lanes, lanes that go through parks or some
15 of our greenways. So we put a lot of thought into
16 what kind of barrier we can use on these corridors.
17 It comes down a lot to maintenance, keeping those
18 lanes usable 365 days a year, making sure that
19 they're plowable, making sure that they are
20 sweepable, making sure that we can maintain them. So
21 that maintenance piece, oh, and also making sure that
22 fire and access can be maintained in those lanes. So
23 if we don't have the width we often go with the more
24 vertical flexible posts to make sure that people can
25

1
2 do what they need to do to keep the lane maintained
3 and clear.

4 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Do you, if you were a
5 cyclist would you feel safe in a protected lane that
6 was not the parking protected lane?

7 SEAN QUINN: Yeah, so most of our, ah,
8 the lanes that aren't parking protected also have a
9 buffer from moving vehicles. They have other
10 treatments at the intersections to keep them safe as
11 they travel down the corridor. It definitely feels
12 different when you're cycling on a parking protected
13 lane versus a flexible delineator protected lane, but
14 those safety elements are built into all of our
15 protected lane projects.

16 SPEAKER JOHNSON: So the ones that you
17 just outlined, are they all physically protected?

18 SEAN QUINN: Yeah, if, if we count
19 something as a protected bike lane it either has a
20 line it either has, ah, a line of physical barriers
21 or the vertical protection.

22 SPEAKER JOHNSON: So right now a bike
23 lane that is just green paint with no physical Jersey
24 barrier or [inaudible] barrier, that's not considered
25 a protected bike lane?

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2 SEAN QUINN: Correct. So on some of our
3 crosstown routes this year you'll see, it's reflected
4 on our bike map, not every block is counted as a
5 protected bike lane. There are blocks around Madison
6 Square Park, for example, it's just green with a
7 buffer. That's not counted as a protected lane.
8 That is a green lane, curbside buffered bike lane.

9 SPEAKER JOHNSON: So, Commissioner, in
10 your testimony you outlined the amount of new bike
11 lanes that DOT has been installing annually. I can't
12 find the number. Tell me number.

13 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: It's about an
14 average of 20.

15 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Twenty miles, and
16 how...

17 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: Twenty
18 protected, yeah.

19 SPEAKER JOHNSON: And how many of those
20 miles are protected?

21 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: No, 20
22 protected. It's about 60 bike lane miles altogether.
23 And, look, I will just say, you know, we, we
24 understand and share the desire to build as many
25 protected lanes as we can. They are the safest and

1
2 most comfortable. But all bike infrastructure
3 improves safety on the streets.

4 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Definitely, but people
5 are dying, and...

6 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: No question,
7 and so, you know,...

8 SPEAKER JOHNSON: And we talked about
9 that. I just...

10 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: You, you can
11 here sort of how we have picked up the pace with
12 protected bike lanes miles and, you know, this year
13 we're going to try and exceed what we did last year
14 and we will try to do that again the year after that.
15 I understand you want to make that target much
16 bigger. Again, I think that, to do that, as we sort
17 of said in the testimony, we do now need to start to
18 think of other pieces of the puzzle, be it
19 Sanitation, be it FDNY, be it PD, be it our contract
20 and capacity, et cetera.

21 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Have you all ever tried
22 to sketch out, and I think that illustration from
23 1997 to 2019 is, tells you a lot at what has happened
24 in 22 years on a bike network, a bike network in New
25 York City. But have you all ever tried as an agency

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2 to fully sketch out what a full bike network would
3 look like for the entire City of New York.

4 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: We have. It
5 is sort of, I'd say it's a product...

6 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Which safe is that
7 sketch in and how does it get shared?

8 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: [chuckles]
9 Well, I'd say it's a product in progress, um, and you
10 know, again, something happy to come back and sort of
11 talk more about. You know, we sort of want to
12 balance putting the grand scheme on the map with also
13 moving at a, sort of in lock step with local
14 communities to pick what the actual streets would
15 look like, but I, I understand, I think, from this
16 hearing and your bill that is something we should
17 certainly come back in and engage with you all on. I
18 think it is something we could come together on
19 reasonably quickly.

20 SPEAKER JOHNSON: So I'm just looking at
21 a statement that, um, DOT gave to a streets blog at
22 the end of last year and in the statement DOT offered
23 its definition of a bike lane, protected bike lane,
24 and this is from DOT. "A protected bike lane is a
25 path intended for use of bicycles that is physically

1
2 separated from motorized vehicle traffic by an open
3 space, vertical delineation, or barrier. So the
4 question is what I was asking is that vertical
5 delineation, ah, of paint or something else, is that
6 considered, I think, or I'm not fully understanding.

7 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: I think, I
8 think by vertical delineation we mean like a...

9 SPEAKER JOHNSON: A Jersey barrier?

10 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: Like a super,
11 like a delineator.

12 SPEAKER JOHNSON: What about the old...

13 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: Like you would
14 see...

15 SPEAKER JOHNSON: What about, I meant
16 sort of the open space, like...

17 SEAN QUINN: The open space is the third
18 category I mentioned of lanes that are in parks,
19 greenways. They're protected because they're not on
20 the street. They're protected by green space or open
21 space in the park.

22 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Got it. I want to end
23 with accessibility and I then want to turn it back
24 over the chair, and I want to thank Council Member
25 Rose and Chair Rodriguez for being very patient with

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2 my long list of questions, and I want to thank you
3 for just being so great and being her today and
4 answering these. OK, so I want to talk about
5 accessibility. Our transit record, in terms of
6 accessibility, is pretty deplorable. I don't mean
7 towards you. I mean that generally as a city, the
8 history of our city, and you spoke about the work on
9 pedestrian ramps that the city is undergoing and the
10 enormous cost involved, but how it's the right thing
11 to do for New Yorkers that have mobility impairments
12 or visually impaired and getting around the city.
13 It's not just the MTA, in my opinion. It's the
14 entire city. The MTA is a whole different, ah,
15 deplorable ball of wax as it relates to how
16 inaccessible our subways have been. I can't imagine
17 trying to get around with a physical or visual
18 impairment and there are so many New Yorkers, some of
19 whom are here today, who have to navigate the streets
20 every single day, where it is not done in a way that
21 makes it easy for them, and it's really unsafe for
22 them in trying to traverse and get around the city.
23 Not even 3% of signaled intersections have accessible
24 pedestrian signals. And our population, as was
25 discussed by the AARP testimony in the first panel,

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2 is growing older every day, so this going to get
3 exacerbated year after year. Do you agree that we
4 have a moral responsibility to make our streets and
5 sidewalks fully accessible for all New Yorkers.

6 COMMISSIONER TROTTENBERG: I, I certainly
7 do, Mr. Speaker, and I know this is a topic you're
8 very passionate about. And I even want to go further
9 because from DOT's point of view we're lucky we're
10 joined here today by Quemuel Arroyo, who is our
11 disability advisor, who, he works across all areas of
12 the agency, because it's not just streets and
13 sidewalks, it's ferries, it's all our traffic
14 operations. It's our, we're looking now in terms of
15 our bike share system are there ways we can have
16 accessible bike share. So there are so many
17 different elements. But there is also, of course,
18 sort of the practical questions of resource
19 technology, ligation in some of these cases, and I
20 think APS is as good example. We have tripled the
21 pace at which we're doing them. I'm the first to
22 admit I think we will at some point need to go
23 further still. But we are also monitoring now on the
24 APS front that, you know, other cities are starting
25 to do pilots with other potential ways to do it.

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2 Because it's fairly costly. It's thousands of
3 dollars per intersection to install the hardware at
4 each corner. You put sort of two APSES at each
5 corner. It could be eight per intersection. Other
6 cities are starting to look potentially at are there
7 handheld or mobile devices which may even be more
8 accurate and easier to deploy than, and much quicker
9 to deploy, than sort of the system of APSES that were
10 installing now. Likewise, we have gotten a grant
11 from the federal government to do a connected vehicle
12 pilot. We are also looking there and are there
13 technologies that will enable the vehicles, again, to
14 communicate with devices that, not just for people
15 with disabilities but anyone could have. So I agree,
16 there's more that needs to be there, but that is also
17 a field in which there are a lot of potentially
18 exciting technological developments which may make
19 our ability to do the work go more quickly and be
20 less expensive. It's too soon to say, but we're sort
21 of looking across that spectrum as well. I would say
22 in general on the accessibility front there are a lot
23 of exciting potential technologies out there. A lot
24 of them unproven, a lot of them being piloted around

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2 the country and around the world, and we're wanting
3 to make sure that we stay on top of those as well.

4 SPEAKER JOHNSON: What's the hardest part
5 of doing this job that you do?

6 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: [laughs] Oh,
7 Lord. Um, you know, look, I would say this is, this
8 has been the opportunity of a lifetime and I love,
9 Mr. Speaker, that you started this hearing by saying
10 how much you love the city. I feel the same way. I
11 love the city and having the opportunity to serve has
12 been remarkable. You know, what is the hardest part
13 of the job? Probably in a year like this in which,
14 you know, after so many years of the heartening
15 experience of seeing fatalities go down, to have a
16 year in which fatalities start to go up. I can't
17 tell you how personally difficult that is, not only
18 for me but for the whole team. You know, it makes us
19 want to redouble our efforts. But, you know, those
20 are certainly some of the days when we hear of a
21 terrible crash, one maybe that, you know, involves a
22 child, that break our hearts and I'd say that's the
23 hardest part of the job.

24 SPEAKER JOHNSON: And what can we do to
25 help?

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2 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: Well, listen,
3 I think this is a terrific discussion today and
4 obviously we appreciate your leadership and the
5 chairman's leadership. We're ready to engage. I
6 think, I think you're hearing a willingness on our
7 side. If there are ways collectively we can pick up
8 the pace on how we're doing things, we want to work
9 with you on that and we appreciate your interest.

10 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Polly, I want to thank
11 you again for how thoughtful you always are, for
12 always being willing to work with us, even sometimes
13 when it's difficult and painful and not easy and
14 painstaking. Your team similarly has conducted
15 themselves that way in nearly every interaction that
16 I've had with them over the last five-and-a-half. I
17 am supremely grateful for that, and not just a
18 superficial level of engagement, but a real level of
19 wanting to understand neighborhood by neighborhood
20 how to work with local communities and making
21 improvements that are going to save people's lives
22 and make our city a more livable city, a better city,
23 a city that we can continue to love even more. And
24 so I'm tremendously grateful for your leadership. My
25 goal in this piece of legislation, as you know, as

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2 you testified to, as I've outlined in my operating
3 statement and in these questions today, is to keep
4 pushing the envelope, keep going deeper, keep going
5 further, shifting our mindset away from private
6 automobiles and cars and trucks and moving more
7 towards mass transit, towards pedestrians, towards
8 cyclists, towards having greater economic justice and
9 environmental justice, and, ah, having less traffic
10 violence in New York City, and trying to figure out
11 ways that we can do that that are achievable, that
12 are sometimes hard to actually hit that benchmark,
13 but will push us to go even further, and I feel
14 pretty confident that with a partnership with you and
15 your team, with the leadership of our amazing chair,
16 who has shown leadership on all these issue for the
17 last five-and-a-half years citywide, and with my deep
18 commitment to doing this that we can continue to
19 improve the city, to make it even safer and better so
20 that at the end of, hopefully you'll stay for the
21 next two-and-a-half years, but at the end of eight
22 years of you being DOT commissioner and my being in
23 the City Council and the chair chairing this
24 committee for eight years, that we will have real
25 significant accomplishments to point to, not just on

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2 what we've accomplished so far in five-and-a-half
3 years, but even deeper, quicker, more transformative,
4 changes of accomplishments that we can point to
5 together, and I look forward to doing that with you
6 and I'm really grateful for your partnership and for
7 your leadership.

8 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: Thank you, Mr.
9 Speaker.

10 SPEAKER JOHNSON: And I want to turn it
11 back over to our chair.

12 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Well, thank you,
13 Speaker for, you know, that vision and putting
14 together the master plan. And as we have said
15 before, I have seen a lot of accomplishment, and the
16 fact that even some members that used to be a
17 transportation facility now working with DOT, those
18 are all the people being a pedestrian and cyclists
19 advocate, will be now working in that transition,
20 playing another role. It's like [inaudible] that
21 have been [inaudible] organizing now have to be
22 holding public offices. I think that gives us the
23 opportunity for us to work together and be able to
24 see, you know, our opportunity to even have a more
25 ambition plan, and I, one of the areas where I have

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2 some concern is about the Vision Zero Educational
3 Fund, and I wonder if even the increase of fatalities
4 that we've had this year also, can be also related
5 for the lack of resources for DOT to put more money
6 to put resources on billboard, on radio, and TV, it's
7 something that we able to do it up to like two years
8 ago when the council was allocating 3 to 5 million
9 dollars. So how much do you see the value of DOT
10 having the resources to invest in the Vision Zero
11 Educational Fund, something that is clear, I'm
12 talking about the last year, compared for the last
13 one, since in the BMT negotiation that money was
14 removed, even though DOT, you know, you can say you
15 have some resources, that we're doing some work,
16 we're going through a community board. But those
17 advertisings are not happening in the back of the
18 buses. Those advertisings are not happening in the
19 billboard. So how important was to have those
20 resources to carry on those campaign for the Vision
21 Zero Education?

22 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: I think, we
23 found, Mr. Chairman, and I want to thank you because
24 we know you have been a big champion and supporter of
25 the Vision Zero Educational Funds and, you know, I

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2 think we made, I think we thought it made a
3 difference and we certainly, part of how we looked at
4 that is we did focus groups and opinion surveys and,
5 you know, we did see that when we did those ad
6 campaigns it did raise awareness among New Yorkers.
7 We worked with you, obviously, to help make sure we
8 were getting those campaigns out in multiple
9 languages and I think I understand that is probably a
10 source of discussion right now in the current budget
11 negotiations. We will be, just as I mentioned in my
12 testimony, since the city is about to start an
13 exponential growth in our Speed Camera program and I
14 want to mention it here today, starting July 11 our
15 Speed Cameras will be operating, our existing Speed
16 Cameras will be operating, the number of hours will
17 be doubled, and then each money we're going to be
18 adding 40 new Speed Cameras in locations all over the
19 city, and we want to make sure we're getting the word
20 out to New Yorkers. These Speed Cameras are going to
21 be everywhere and you're going to need to drive at a
22 safe speed. We're going to be doing a big ad
23 campaign and public awareness campaign around that,
24 and of course it will also reference Vision Zero.
25 But I think we agree that the education campaign has

1
2 been very important and, again, perhaps it's
3 something that's currently under discussion in the
4 budget negotiations.

5 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: We do agree that
6 in this past budget there was not resources for the
7 Vision Zero education.

8 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: They weren't
9 in the budget. DOT, we did use some of our own
10 internal resources. But it's true, we didn't have...

11 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: The same amount.

12 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: ...resources
13 we'd had in previous budgets. You're correct, Mr.
14 Chairman.

15 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: So I just hope,
16 again, that as, as we continue like having this
17 conversation that we can be able to look at it. Can
18 you share with us, you know, what was the difference,
19 and Speaker, I don't know if you recall that, what
20 we're addressing is up to two years ago there was
21 from 3 to 5 million dollars designated for the Vision
22 Zero Educational Fund. And it was with that money
23 that they were able to, based on what I saw and based
24 on information that we shared, they were able to use
25 the billboard to put advertising, in the Latinos, in

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2 the mainstream media, doing their part, educating New
3 Yorkers about the benefits of driving safety, slow
4 down, those benefits that we're talking about. So
5 the last year what we did from, and this is not the
6 agency, you know, even [inaudible], but what we heard
7 across this building was we would do it internally.
8 But the reality that DOT, they don't have those
9 resources. And last year they didn't have, you know,
10 even though, and you could see walking the street,
11 seeing the buses, seeing the billboard, those levels
12 of educational features they were not in our streets.
13 And for me the fact, and I don't know that, you know,
14 we don't have any data to say, oh, how the lack of
15 investment in the Vision Zero Educational Fund
16 happening at the same time that we have seen an
17 increase of crashes in the street. I always say that
18 one thing that I give credit to Mayor Bloomberg was,
19 you know, the whole educational component on the
20 anti-smoking campaign. When people saw those
21 advertised on the TV, people thought twice about
22 should I get into smoking, yes or no. And
23 [inaudible] because you used to chair that committee
24 before becoming the speaker. So I, you know, since
25 we are in [inaudible] BMT hopefully, you know, we can

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2 get, it doesn't matter how, but I would like to see
3 how DOT gets the resources that they need to be able
4 to really be able to do the educational piece on
5 Vision Zero.

6 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: Thank you
7 again, Mr. Chairman. Again, I think that's part of
8 the budget negotiations. We have some of our City
9 Hall colleagues here, so I presume they'll take your
10 message back.

11 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: OK. On page 3 of
12 your testimony you highlight how the agency, the
13 second paragraph, that you overall you say the manage
14 and maintains the city's 6000 miles of streets and
15 12,000 miles of sidewalk. Can you define what is
16 management when it comes to the sidewalks?

17 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: Well, it's a
18 good question, because it's a fair point that a good
19 amount of the sidewalks are actually privately owned
20 by the building managers, but the city is actually
21 legally responsible for all the pedestrian ramps and
22 now for making sure that they all comply with the
23 ADA. The city is also responsible for the curb. It
24 is, it is a bit of a complicated system. As you
25 know, the city also does a good amount of sidewalk

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2 repair in places where sidewalks are damaged by city
3 things that happen, including tree roots pushing up,
4 and the city is now investing a good amount of
5 resources in NYCHA sidewalk repair as well. We know
6 that's been a big area of focus for NYCHA. A lot of
7 sidewalks in very bad condition there, and over the
8 years we've been increasing the amount of money we
9 put in to helping to improve NYCHA sidewalks.

10 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: I introduced
11 legislation recently calling for giving DOT all the
12 lead management on the sidewalks. I feel that right
13 now that's not where we are. I feel that right now
14 there's a lot of confusion is that considered
15 [inaudible], is it DOT, is it the Department of
16 Buildings? And, by the way, I would like to thank
17 all the agencies that also help with the sidewalks
18 that I've been highlighting. One is St. Nicholas
19 Avenue between 180 and 181st, and finally that
20 sidewalk is open for pedestrians. But I think that
21 right now what I have seen based on all those
22 questions that we addressed is that we have limited
23 responsibility, all the agencies have limited
24 responsibility. And being the sidewalk is the most
25 important venue for our New Yorkers to walk, I think

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2 someone has to be responsible. And if this means
3 that Consumer Affairs, Department of Buildings, and
4 whoever had to coordinate with you guys, or whoever
5 is responsible, but right now if we say let's hold a
6 hearing [yes] about the sidewalk, there's not an
7 entity that can say we're responsible for the whole
8 area. So I hope that, you know, that we can as part
9 of this plan or, you know, separated, I would like to
10 have a conversation with you to see how we get DOT to
11 take the lead controlling and real management of the
12 sidewalks.

13 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: It is a very
14 fair criticism. We have a very complicated sidewalk
15 system, and I will say as we were undertaking
16 designing our plan to make all the ped ramps in the
17 city accessible, it is one of the things we sort of
18 realized, on any given day in our thousands of miles
19 of sidewalks, utilities, private building owners, a
20 bunch of different entities are working on, cutting
21 open, and changing our sidewalks. It is a difficult
22 system to manage. I've talked to a lot of my
23 counterparts in other cities. Most other cities have
24 a similarly complicated sidewalk system. Certainly
25 an area where I think there's room for improvement,

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2 to the extent that the city takes over more and more
3 of the sidewalks, obviously there's a cost associated
4 with it.

5 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: You know, we need
6 to look at sidewalks like, you know, it's like our
7 street. So when thinking about what are they, 7
8 million New Yorkers don't own buildings. Only 1.4
9 million New Yorkers own buildings. So we're talking
10 about that more than 7 millions, millions rely on our
11 buses, they take the bus, they take the train, they
12 get their bike, and they walk on the sidewalk. So I,
13 I know that we had these periods of, I just think
14 that it's time right now, as part of this
15 comprehensive to look at sidewalk as the most
16 important area that we need to clean, like when I see
17 around 9th Avenue and see how pedestrians, they are
18 forced to walk in the bike lane, because there's not
19 enough space. And it's a challenge that we have in
20 the city. We've got [inaudible] last year. So I'm
21 not saying that it is an easy program, but I hope,
22 again, that we can...

23 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: I'd like to
24 respond to that. And I know, Mr. Chairman, you've
25 had some legislation on that, and I think between

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2 Sean and Eric we have tried to give a lot of thought
3 to the question of where are places where we can
4 expand sidewalks, improve the pedestrian experience.
5 As you say, it is a, I'm [inaudible] they say well
6 make the sidewalk bigger, and to which I say, OK,
7 we'll be making the road narrower, and they'll say,
8 well, wait a minute, we didn't mean for you to that.
9 It is a trade-off. But let's talk, as we've had, I
10 think, some good success, particularly in some of the
11 denser parts of Manhattan, where exactly we see
12 pedestrians spilling onto the street and reclaiming
13 more of that space for pedestrians.

14 SEAN QUINN: Sure, yeah, we have, um, you
15 know, on Seventh Avenue between Times Square and Penn
16 Station last year we dramatically increased those
17 sidewalk widths. We've been doing that in Flushing.
18 We're adding new tools to our plaza tool kit. We're
19 doing more shared streets to give more space back to
20 pedestrians in the denser parts of the city, sort of
21 formalizing what we already see pedestrians doing.
22 We're looking at Eighth Avenue right now, how we can
23 reclaim some of that space for pedestrians there. So
24 we have a bunch of different ways, whether it's
25 widening a sidewalk, creating a shared street,

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2 creating a pedestrian plaza, and really going into
3 places where there's an overabundance of pedestrians
4 and trying to reclaim that space.

5 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: I just hope that
6 during the time we continue serving in government,
7 especially in this administration, because my thing
8 is that we need to work with what we have in our
9 hand, and what we know in that there is a leadership
10 in this administration that understands. You know,
11 the opportunity that we have to turn our city as the
12 most walkable one. And I feel that it would take not
13 only redesigning our streets, but also it would take
14 investments on educating New Yorkers also who are not
15 necessarily in work 20-25 miles away from where they
16 live because that's challenging to promote more New
17 Yorkers to walk, it's about increasing the incentive
18 to the private sector to create good jobs in
19 underserved communities, so that people, they don't
20 have to travel an hour and a half to go to work. So
21 it's also about accessibility and that, you know,
22 part of my question is what is your assessment that
23 you have done with challenges that we still have to
24 make, especially intersections, more accessible for
25 people with disabilities?

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2 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: I'm going to
3 talk a bit about that, and I think I also want Sean
4 and Eric to just talk in general about the design
5 process, and I think, as you heard in my testimony
6 today, New York City is undertaking, I think, a
7 dramatic transformation of the accessibility of our
8 corners, and that starts with, as I said in my
9 testimony, something that the advocates have long
10 wanted us to do and we're now undertaking, which is a
11 comprehensive survey of every single curb cut in New
12 York City, and we estimate that to be about 320,000,
13 but that number may go up, and that means using Lidar
14 and other management tools to get the most precise
15 set of dimensions and characteristics so that as we
16 repair and upgrade these ped ramps we're bring them
17 up to full ADA compliance, and we're going further
18 than that, which is first we're committed to doing
19 that throughout the entire city. It's a big project.
20 It's going to take years to do and billions of
21 dollars. But then also committing the resources and
22 the manpower behind it, ensuring that we maintain
23 those ped ramps as well. It's going to be a big
24 challenge for New York, but it's something I think we
25 are really excited to roll up our sleeves and get to

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2 work on. We've started the work. We've hired
3 several hundred people now to start getting out on
4 the street and hopefully in many of your
5 neighborhoods you've seen, you've seen our crews hard
6 at work. And I want to talk a little bit just in
7 general because Eric and Sean do a lot of work, but
8 sort our bigger, more comprehensive street
9 improvement projects and how they incorporate
10 accessibility and they work with Carmel, who is
11 sitting right here with us.

12 GOMEL: So last year we did 140 street
13 improvement projects throughout the city. Many of
14 those were on our Vision Zero priority corridors and
15 many of those focused on intersection redesigns,
16 whether it was, and this is on top of the work we're
17 already doing to improve accessibility, but whether
18 it was finding ways to shorten crosswalks through
19 neck downs, adding pedestrian islands, removing legs
20 of traffic from intersections and make it clearer
21 where pedestrians should travel and make it easier
22 for them to cross an intersection. Our planners are
23 always looking at ways to enhance the pedestrian
24 experience in all of these projects, whether it be a
25 bus project, a lot of them come along with

1
2 pedestrian, ah, boarding islands. Or a bike project
3 has a pedestrian safety island. So each of our modes
4 comes along with thinking about the pedestrian and
5 how to improve that, ah, their experience,
6 particularly at the intersection.

7 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Do you have any,
8 as you share the data about the numbers of sidewalks
9 and other information like that, do we have, and if
10 you don't have it, if you have it, great, that you
11 can share now, if not, how many intersections do we
12 have in the City of New York throughout the five
13 boroughs?

14 COMMISSIONER TROTTENBERG: I think that's
15 a good question. We have 13,000 signalized
16 intersections. But we have a much larger non-
17 signalized, and someone can probably get that. And
18 thank you, Mr. Chairman, I was remiss in mentioning
19 in one thing about this comprehensive survey we're
20 doing of all the pedestrian ramps in the city. That
21 is all going to be online. It is going to be
22 interactive. It is going to show all the survey
23 results we found, categorize, with an ability for
24 people to go in and file complaints where they want
25 to see work done. So I think it is going to be a

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2 very state-of-the-art, transparent, and interactive
3 system. Oh, I just got the number, 40,000
4 intersections in total. I'm sure that's an
5 approximate number, but.

6 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: I would say as
7 we're planning for the present and the future, you
8 know, and thinking about the one million New Yorkers
9 with disabilities, and it's a matter of time, when
10 especially for us who are lucky to live long, those
11 who will be relying on wheelchair or whatever, any
12 other tools because of their age, so one, how are we
13 doing, in intersection is there areas where, you
14 know, pedestrians, they walk, getting to the
15 sidewalk, so what percentage can we say today are,
16 have been designed or redesigned for people with
17 disabilities?

18 COMMISSIONER TROTTENBERG: That's a good
19 question, and I'm hoping someone will dig those
20 numbers up. We have them here, but I don't have them
21 off the top of my head. We'll have to get you those.
22 I'm happy to say, you know, over the years we have
23 done a lot of work to install pedestrian ramps. I
24 think one thing we've discovered in the course of our
25 work with the advocates is that the city went through

1
2 a burst of installing pedestrian ramps. I think we,
3 we got up to installing sort of in the 90% area, but
4 with a couple of caveats. We didn't have a good
5 program in place to maintain them and, you know, this
6 is, I think, one of the themes of my testimony in
7 general. Installing is one thing, but continuing to
8 maintain, particularly in our busy streets, where
9 things get drilled into and trucks drive over them,
10 and then I think we had sort of this final component,
11 which was particularly what we would call ped ramps
12 in complex areas, where there is subway
13 infrastructure underneath, or water and sewer
14 infrastructure, catch basins that have to be moved.
15 Those are the ones where admittedly the city has, I
16 think, had a hard time keeping up, but, again, now
17 we're going to have a much more aggressive plan
18 working with DDC to have some big capital contracts
19 to go in and get at that last group of sort of hard
20 to reach ped ramps and then be upgrading all the ones
21 that were previously installed that have been damaged
22 or need to be improved to meet ADA standards.

23 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: So I, look, I can
24 say that one of the things that I have seen in my own
25 neighborhood, and I would [inaudible] that happened

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2 also throughout the five boroughs [inaudible],
3 sometimes when they're repaving happen like some
4 intersections are not repaved at the level where the
5 water goes through the drain at the intersection, but
6 the water accumulate at the corner and then when the
7 winter comes it turns to ice and it is an obstacle
8 for people with disabilities. So I think that if it
9 is with the in-house repaving like you're doing so to
10 look to pay attention to really be sure that when
11 repaving happen intersections have to be also taken
12 into consideration that accumulation with water when
13 it rains be sure that it goes through the drain.
14 That's one thing that I have seen. And I can tell
15 you, in my own community [Harding] Road is one of
16 those. Just a little bit rain, the water is
17 [inaudible] intersection. Davidson Road with the
18 same thing. So I, it's more to have it in mind, and
19 I'm not being to like to call, you know, let me know
20 when something like that happen, but it's more as you
21 work with contractors or if you do in-house to have a
22 new mandate that intersection [inaudible] is very
23 important for people who are [inaudible].

24 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: So, of course,
25 I would always say if there is an intersection or a

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2 place in your district or elsewhere in the city you
3 see where there's ponding or some other [inaudible]
4 of course have your staff call and we'll go out and
5 take a look. As we started to undertake this
6 ambitious plan to make every ped ramp accessible, we
7 ran into, I think, exactly the issue that you're
8 talking about, Mr. Chairman, which is DOT is a piece
9 of the puzzle, but there are so many other entities
10 working on our streets. There are utilities, there
11 are private contractors, there are our own city
12 agencies, could be DEP, could be Sanitation, DC, and
13 one of the things we realized is, not only did we
14 have to make sure that we ourselves are doing the
15 right designs and meeting those challenging problems
16 of sometimes where the street meets the ped ramp, but
17 we needed to educate and get all our other sister
18 agencies on board. One challenge we have in New
19 York, I've seen this happen in my own neighborhood.
20 We install a ped ramp, it looks beautiful, two days
21 later a heavy truck cuts the corner, drives over it,
22 and it comes out of kilter. So, again, one of the
23 things in New York, the streets are kind of an
24 organic entity. They are always changing, you know,
25 we really do rely on you and your constituents to

1
2 come to us when you see, and we certainly, again,
3 have a very robust system now where people can come
4 and make complaints. But we really do rely on you.
5 One day a ped ramp can be fine, the next day a truck
6 ran over it and we need to get out and make repairs.

7 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: And last, one, I
8 would like to, you know, I have to bring back what I
9 said last time, and if, you know, this is something
10 that for me is very, it's a tough situation for me
11 because, ah, being advocating citywide to increase
12 the level of protected bike lanes and, as you know,
13 the speaker had to take the initiative we should
14 [inaudible] to have 50 and we mentioned that only,
15 but another day if we just get the 50 it will be a
16 very important thing for the cyclist community, and
17 we are working, we're expanding the city bike, bike
18 share, by any chance a scooter will come to the city,
19 we need, this is not a matter of luxury, we need to
20 increase the number of protected bike lanes in order
21 to accommodate the space, especially for more
22 cyclists and for those who will be using a scooter.
23 So this [inaudible] to put in your hands. The last
24 thing is about also I need to get my protected bike
25 lane in the north side of Dyckman. That was

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2 including the rezoning agreement. It's in the
3 language, when we're signing with the deputy mayor
4 and I know it's not on you, it's above you, but the
5 mayor has refused a piece of the agreement that is in
6 the documents signed by the deputy mayor which is the
7 only way that we have to connect side place in
8 Dyckman area from the west to the east.

9 SPEAKER JOHNSON: I will help, Mr.
10 Chairman. I will help. I want to thank you for
11 being here today and I look forward to continued
12 partnership and pushing even further. Thank you all
13 very much.

14 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: Thank you very
15 much, Mr. Speaker and Mr. Chairman.

16 SPEAKER JOHNSON: So the next panel are
17 the Families for Safe Streets, who are our heroes,
18 who we love. I want to call up Iris Reyes, Devan
19 Sipher, and Hindy Schacter. Are they here? No? Yes,
20 OK. Iris Reyes, Devan Sipher, and Hindy Schacter.
21 OK, so you may begin. Just make sure the red light
22 is on, on the mic, if you push the button, and
23 welcome. Thank you for being here.

24 DEVAN SIPHER: Thank you. I shouldn't
25 actually be here. I shouldn't be alive. On July 3,

1
2 2015, I was run over by a double-decker tour bus
3 while crossing Sixth Avenue in Greenwich Village on a
4 crosswalk on a green light. I spent three months in
5 the ICU, having multiple surgeries, and, um, still
6 couldn't leave me with a femoral vein or a peroneal
7 nerve or an adrenal gland, which translates as
8 meaning for the rest of my life I will likely have
9 pain, have needed medication, wear a leg brace, and
10 the thing about traffic violence is isn't doesn't
11 discriminate. It doesn't matter race, religion,
12 sexual orientation, class. Everyone in this room is
13 at risk the moment you leave the building. And, um,
14 and the proposed bill 1557 could possibly reduce that
15 risk, and if some of those proposed changes had been
16 in effect in 2015 my crash and may others could
17 likely have been avoided. For example, the bike
18 lanes, if they had been on Sixth Avenue, would have
19 created less lanes of traffic for the bus driver to
20 require his attention, um, and lanes would likely
21 trigger him to be on the outlook for bicyclists and
22 pedestrians. It's, um, I'm here to support the bill,
23 but also to urge consideration of additional safety
24 measures and amendments. Daylighting has been
25 brought up. The removal of visual barriers would

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2 greatly have reduced the chance of my crash taking
3 place, eliminating my injuries and eliminating many
4 deaths. Having no parking by crosswalks, around the
5 crosswalks, allowing, would allow for more visual,
6 um, would increase the visibility for drivers to see
7 pedestrians, especially children and people in
8 wheelchairs, and it would also allow pedestrians to
9 make eye contact with drivers. I recently returned
10 from Spain and I was so impressed with many of the
11 cities there the priority they gave to pedestrians.
12 Pedestrian signals counted down to green lights as
13 well as red lights. Pedestrian, there were
14 pedestrian-only intervals for crossing intersections.
15 Mr. Chairman, you referred to the power of public
16 service announcements. There were giant billboards,
17 government-sponsored, about driving safely. And I
18 felt safer there. Not because of any specific
19 individual enhancement, but the overall effect
20 conveyed that there was a concern for the well-being
21 for me and all pedestrians, and I think that message,
22 literal and, um, subliminal, communicates the
23 importance, um, and makes drivers more likely to be
24 concerned about safety. Um, I'm very lucky to be
25 here, lucky to alive, lucky to live in one of the

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2 greatest cities on the planet, and this city is such
3 a beacon that any life-changing measures can save
4 lives around the world. You have that power. I
5 thank you for utilizing that power and wielding it so
6 wisely, and thank you for your dedication to this
7 issue.

8 HINDY SCHACTER: I'm Hindy Schacter. I'm
9 a senior citizen cyclist, pedestrian, and driver. In
10 all of those roles I would support a master plan to
11 reclaim this city from car dominance and in the
12 speaker's immemorial words to make it a people-
13 focused infrastructure city. I started to cycle the
14 streets of Manhattan in the 1970s. Long before bike
15 lanes. As my husband and I rode down, say, Second
16 Avenue, people would scream get out of the street,
17 you belong on the sidewalk. Since my husband could
18 easily ride over 20 miles an hour on the flats for
19 long times it wasn't our lack of speed. It was
20 simply they didn't want to share the space. My
21 husband isn't here to testify today because on August
22 3, 2014, he was practicing for the marathon, running
23 in the pedestrian-only lane in Central Park, when a
24 17-year-old cyclist veered into the lane at speed,
25 collided with him. His life was over. Who do we

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2 blame for that? Well, we blame the cyclist. But we
3 also blame the design in Central Park. One barely
4 legible line between the cycling lane and the
5 pedestrian lane. That's why ever since his passing I
6 have dedicated to his memory a fight for safe street
7 design. You gave us a bill with Vision Zero design
8 standard, you passed it. Thank you. Now you have in
9 front of you a bill for a master plan with benchmarks
10 and goals, and you need that, because everything I've
11 heard in the testimony for the last hour and a half
12 we're doing wonderful things, but there are so many
13 constraints. Your master plan will make sure that
14 even if there are constraints the agencies move in a
15 direction of a people-centered city. My husband
16 isn't here to testify today, but today I cycle the
17 streets of Manhattan with my granddaughter. And I
18 ask you in our name to pass this master plan and to
19 give us a city where for many years we can cycle
20 safety together. Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Ms. Schacter,
22 you've testified at the council before and your
23 testimony is always moving and painful to hear about
24 the tragic and preventable loss of your husband, and
25 I'm sorry. I'm sorry that you have had to live with

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2 that pain for nearly the last five years. But I am,
3 of course, so grateful to Families for Safe Streets
4 and people like you who continue in the aftermath of
5 such a painful, tragic, life-altering incident to use
6 your voice to advocate so that this doesn't have to
7 happen to other families and other wives and other
8 grandfathers and husbands, and so I really just want
9 to thank you for not just being here today, but your
10 real continued advocacy in showing up and in speaking
11 from what you've had to endure and go through. So I
12 want to thank you, and I want to thank you, Devon,
13 for being here. I think I remember that incident
14 that happened on Sixth Avenue in my district with
15 that double-decker tourist bus, and I, of course, you
16 and I have not met before, I don't believe, but, um,
17 thank God that you're here today and I'm sorry that
18 you're still living with the consequences, and the
19 effects from that traffic violence that you had to
20 endure and, again, I'm really grateful that you're
21 using your voice and advocacy to ensure that other
22 people don't have to go through being in the ICU for
23 three months and not knowing if they were going to
24 live or have full mobility again or be able to be a
25 full citizen. And so, again, for both of you, I just

1
2 want to say I am tremendously grateful and moved by
3 your testimony, by your showing up, by your
4 leadership, and by your advocacy, and I'm just
5 incredibly grateful that you're here today and that
6 you continue to do that work. So thank you both
7 very, very much.

8 DEVAN SIPHER: Thank you.

9 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Thank you.

10 HILDY SCHACTER: Thank you.

11 SPEAKER JOHNSON: I want to call up the
12 next panel. Christine Berthet from Chekpedes, Adriana
13 Espinoza from NYLCV, Kate Slevin from the Regional
14 Plan Association, John Orket from Bike New York, and
15 Eric McClure from Streets Back. [pause] Oh, there we
16 go. Make sure that John is OK in getting to his,
17 yes. OK. Thank you, John, for being here on
18 crutches. And I want to start with Christine
19 Berthet.

20 CHRISTINE BERTHET: Good morning, Speaker
21 Johnson, and good morning, Chair Rodriguez and
22 esteemed council members. I'm Christine Berthet,
23 the co-founder of Chekpedes, a 15-year-old advocacy
24 coalition for pedestrian safety. We applaud the
25 creation of a five-year transportation plan for New

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2 York City. But we want walking to be a priority in
3 this master plan. Everyone walks in New York, 11.5
4 million of us walk every day. You know, from parking
5 lots to stores, to and from bus and subway stops, to
6 home and work. The 1.1 million of commuters which
7 arrive at bus terminal in Grand Central and Penn
8 Station walk. 60 million tourists visiting New York
9 annually, they walk. And we pay the highest price
10 for it. Since 2015 663 crash fatalities involved
11 pedestrians, which is 50% of the total crash
12 fatalities, and 55,000 pedestrians were injured in
13 our fair city. So please remember that. And yet in
14 Manhattan, and Chair Rodriguez, you said that
15 earlier, our walking infrastructure has been
16 overlooked. Sidewalks are crowded to the point of
17 overflowing into traffic, at great risk to walkers.
18 There are at least five different laws for the
19 minimum width of the pedestrian right-of-way in the
20 rules of the city, all the way from 9.6 to 3 feet,
21 and while it takes two days to fill the potholes, it
22 takes six months to repair dangerous sidewalk
23 conditions. People with disabilities have to sue the
24 city to obtain compliance with federal laws. So it
25 is time to re-envision our sidewalks and walk lanes

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2 and to address the pressing needs of their users, all
3 of us, in this master plan. Chekped's recommends
4 that the annual citywide audit be performed for 500
5 miles of walk lanes, out of a network of 12,000
6 miles. The audit must address the capacity of the
7 walk lane compared to the volume, the level of
8 protection provided on sidewalk and crosswalks, and
9 the quality of pavements. And it would address also
10 ADA rules. To support Vision Zero it should
11 prioritize transportation hubs and high crash areas.
12 DOT should then perform upgrades to create protected
13 walk lanes, remove obstacles, widen the sidewalks,
14 protect walkers from vehicles, and raise sidewalks
15 and islands, split phase, LPIs, stronger lighting, et
16 cetera, and repair the pavement. 200 miles should be
17 upgraded each year. DOT should establish standards
18 for a minimum walk lane and after all DOT must
19 consider institutional changes for the sound
20 maintenance and enforcement of the walk lanes. And
21 as far as accountability we should publish an annual
22 report of completed projects and changes implemented
23 and project plan for the following year. Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you, as
25 always, for everything, Christine. You're the best.

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CHRISTINE BERTHET: Thank you.

ADRIANA ESPINOZA: Good afternoon. I'm Adriana Espinoza. I am the director of the New York City Program at the New York League of Conservation Voters. I wanted to thank Speaker Johnson, Chair Rodriguez for the opportunity to testify and support of Intro 1557. One of NYLCV's top priorities is ensuring that New Yorkers have access to sustainable, low-carbon modes of transportation. We believe that mass transit, pedestrian safety, and, excuse me, smart street design are crucial to achieving this goal. With a comprehensive citywide vision, New Yorkers can more easily pursue sustainable modes of transportation, reduce dependency on vehicles, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and breath cleaner air as a result. That's why we strongly support Intro 1557. And we thank Speaker Johnson for advancing this forward-looking property. We are grateful for the ambitious goals required in the plans, particularly those for bus lanes, bike lanes, and transit signal priority. We have long pushed for increased appointment of this critical infrastructure, and in fact we are pushing a transportation master plan legislation at the state level, which has recently

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2 passed both houses up in Albany. A comprehensive
3 approach to the design and expansion of the spaces
4 represents an incredible opportunity not only to
5 reduce congestion and improve mobility in
6 the city, but also sustainability and well being for
7 all New Yorkers. Our most recent policy agenda
8 called for a comprehensive growth strategy that
9 incorporates affordable, reliable mass transit and
10 walkable neighborhoods that connect people to jobs
11 and education to address threats to livable,
12 sustainable communities, and we're thankful that the
13 City Council under the leadership of Speaker Johnson
14 has recognized and acted on this need. Additionally,
15 we believe that transparency and accountability are
16 critical in the policy-making process and commend the
17 bill's sponsor for including provisions related to
18 public engagement and tracking of benchmarks and
19 implementation. And we respectfully request the
20 inclusion of the following to consider strengthening
21 the bill: Incentives for zero emission vehicles,
22 including green loading zones, promoting the
23 equilibration of green infrastructure, such as street
24 and bioswells, which would help enhance the city's
25 air and water quality, maximize the use of

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2 sustainable materials, and require interagency
3 coordination. The City of New York has never
4 undertaken a transit plan of this scale and thus
5 should be to take its time to be deliberate,
6 exhaustive, and inclusive with the planning process.
7 October [inaudible] is coming up and so we think that
8 maybe should be revisited so that this planning
9 process can be more thorough, and to conclude I'd
10 like to thank Speaker Johnson and the Committee on
11 Transportation for your ongoing support of transit
12 issues that concern our members, and I look forward
13 to working with you both. Thanks.

14 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you,
15 Adriana. Kate?

16 KATE SLEVIN: Thank you for the
17 opportunity to testify today. I am Kate Slevin,
18 senior vice president at Regional Plan Association.
19 We are here today to strongly support Intro 1557,
20 which would create a master plan for city streets
21 once every five years, and we thank you both for your
22 leadership in moving this bill forward. In RPA's
23 fourth regional plan we, that looks out for a
24 blueprint for the next 30 years, we laid out a vision
25 for city streets that is very consistent with what is

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2 in this legislation. In our research we found that
3 currently less than a quarter of New York City street
4 space is dedicated to sustainable modes, including
5 walk lanes, cycling, and exclusive bus lanes, and
6 most of this is concentrated in Manhattan and the
7 very dense parts of the city. Looking forward, we
8 called for street design and management practices to
9 be turned upside down to prioritize pedestrians,
10 cyclists, and transit users first, followed by goods
11 movement, shared services, and finally the private
12 automobile. This would allow up to 80% of street
13 space to be used for sustainable modes eventually, as
14 illustrated by the images in your testimony. We
15 appreciate this legislation's focus on protected
16 bicycle and bus lanes. Existing painted bike lanes
17 without physical separation are often blocked by cars
18 and can lead to unsafe conditions, and they're
19 certainly not safe for young children. Our research
20 has also found that commute times has grown,
21 especially for the outer boroughs and for commutes
22 over 60 minutes. And a big contributing factor to
23 this is slow bus speeds. And so by prioritizing
24 buses on city streets we'll be able to speed up bus
25 speeds and speed up commutes for New Yorkers. Intro

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2 1557, um, might lead to trade-offs in terms of
3 [inaudible] with community outreach, but after years
4 of implementing bicycle lanes, bus lanes, plazas, I
5 think communities are more familiar with these
6 approaches and DOT more experienced at implementing
7 them. We are comfortable with shortening the
8 community court process to meet these goals should
9 they need to occur. RPA supports the expansion of
10 public plazas, and we know that the current plaza
11 management approach, which requires local bids to
12 take on financial and legal risks of public space
13 management limits the broad expansion of the program.
14 One option to address this is to have a citywide
15 government entity to manage the plazas, as has been
16 proposed by some of colleagues. And finally a few
17 questions to consider as the bill negotiations
18 continue. How is the City Council and DOT going to
19 work together to meet the benchmarks in the
20 legislation and is there an enforcement mechanism?
21 And what are the role of the city council members in
22 implementation? It would be ill-advised to pass this
23 legislation and then have council members within
24 their own districts trying to delay individual
25 projects. RPA is here as a resource as you consider

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2 this moving forward and work to improvement
3 transportation more broadly throughout the city.
4 Thank you for your time.

5 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Thanks, Kate. John?
6 Make sure your mic is on.

7 JOHN ORKET: Let's go. Thank you,
8 Speaker and Chair. Bike New York strongly supports
9 both bills before you, the street master plan
10 measure and the one allowing bike riders to proceed
11 at leading pedestrian interval traffic signals. Both
12 if enacted would mark major milestones on the path to
13 a bike-friendly New York. What we're really excited
14 in the street master plan idea is a new process for
15 implementing bike lanes in the city. We think the
16 city can conduct public outreach and be very
17 extensive and thorough in that without granting a
18 veto over projects to community boards. It's a
19 really good precedent for the approach. DOT planning
20 for the system of city bike stations solicits a huge
21 amount of input from community boards, other local
22 groups and institutions, but it never seeks an up or
23 down vote on where the stations go. There's a lot of
24 adjustment. There's a lot of dialogue. But the city
25 ultimately acts and implements the system. We can't

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2 build a transplantation system like City Bike or a
3 network of protected bike lanes if some parts of the
4 city are allowed to opt out. City Bike would not be
5 one of the leading bike share systems in the world
6 today if the city had followed the community board
7 process that it now uses for bike lanes. So just to
8 sum up, other things that are fantastic in the master
9 plan, a strong definition of protected bike lanes,
10 define the bike network as consisting of protected
11 bike lanes, call for protected bike lanes in every
12 square mile of the city, emphasize bike network
13 connectivity, including the requirement that this be
14 measured, which the city used to do but abandoned in
15 2014, and establish a city goal of 50 miles of
16 protected bike lanes implemented each year. Thank
17 you.

18 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Thanks. Eric?

19 ERIC MCCLURE: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Chair,
20 thank you very much for the opportunity to testify
21 today. I am Eric McClure. I'm the executive
22 director of StreetsPAC. We strongly support Intro
23 1557, which would require the Department of
24 Transportation to issue and implement a master plan
25 for use of the city streets, sidewalks, and

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2 pedestrian spaces. Mr. Speaker, as you underscored
3 in the comprehensive Let's Go report that your office
4 issued in March, the city too often takes the path of
5 least resistance in implementing bicycle or
6 pedestrian or transit projects. This is not meant as
7 a criticism of NYC DOT. Commissioner Trottenberg and
8 her teams are deeply committed to the safety and
9 mobility of all New Yorkers. Politics, however, too
10 often get in the way of their work. While the
11 department is, of course, concerned about being held
12 to arbitrary targets, we're confident that NYC DOT
13 and the council can arrive at mutually agreed
14 benchmarks that are both aggressive and achievable,
15 and the simple fact is that we need targets. The
16 city's bicycle master plan has not been updated
17 since it was issued in 1997. While we have of course
18 expanded greatly on that plan, we are still far from
19 the kind of fully connected and safe bike network the
20 speaker's report envisions and that a truly bike-
21 friendly city requires. Creating a master plan will
22 also help insulate our progress on transportation
23 from the vagaries of changing administrations. We're
24 falling behind major world cities to more quickly
25 recognize the importance of reducing car dependency,

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2 including Paris, London, Oslo, and Barcelona, to name
3 just a few. The future of New York City surely is
4 not one in which cars will dominate our streets, and
5 a master plan will help us get to that future more
6 quickly, directly, and efficiently. A master plan
7 will also help us better integrate the many facets of
8 our transplantation network. There is no good reason
9 that New Yorkers shouldn't be able to transfer freely
10 from a bus to a ferry, or a shared bicycle to a
11 subway. And the fact that our transit system is not
12 fully accessible to all New Yorkers, regardless of
13 their mobility, is just not accessible.

14 Additionally, a comprehensive plan will be critical
15 to turn around our struggling bus system, which is in
16 dire need of separated lanes, universal signal
17 priority, streamlined routing, and all-door boarding.

18 It will help us more quickly rationalize the way we
19 treat the curbside, implement better parking and
20 loading zone policies, and accelerate the breaking of
21 car culture. It will improve the safety and mobility
22 of all New Yorkers. It is hugely improvement,
23 however, that the City Council provide NYC DOT with
24 the resources it will need to create and adhere to a
25 transportation master plan. This is a mandate that

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2 cannot go unfunded. As the first line of the Let's
3 Go report states, transportation is the lifeblood of
4 New York. We must ensure that we fund it as such.
5 Lastly, StreetsPAC fully and unequivocally supports
6 Intro 1457, which would permit a person riding a
7 bicycle to proceed on a green leading pedestrian
8 interval, or LPI signal, at an intersection. The 50
9 intersection pilot program for the LPI for bikes
10 effort has been a complete success and we urge quick
11 passage in implementation of the bill. It will
12 improve safety for people riding bikes without
13 compromising safety for anyone else. Let's roll it
14 out citywide as soon as possible. Thank you.

15 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Thank you all. Thanks
16 for being here, appreciate it. Thanks for your
17 testimony. Next up, Jim Weisman from the United
18 Spinal Association, Janet Liff from Open Plans, Teri
19 Carta from Brooklyn Greenway Initiative, Raymond
20 Wayne from the National Federation of the Blind, and
21 Karen Gorgi from Pedestrians for Accessible and Safe
22 Streets. Did Karen leave? She had to leave? OK.
23 OK. Thank you. Kathleen Treat can come up and
24 testify in her place. Do you need help, sir? So
25 why don't we start with Raymond, who I really want

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2 to, take your time, I want to, ah, Kathleen, if you
3 could just make sure the mic is on and I want to
4 thank him for his patience and being here today, and
5 if you could apologize to Karen for us not getting to
6 her in time.

7 RAYMOND WAYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker,
8 and good afternoon. Thank you, Mr. Speaker and Mr.
9 Chair for giving us the opportunity to testify today.
10 I am Ray Wayne. I represent the National Federation
11 of the Blind, New York City chapter, NFB for short.
12 We are an organization of blind people speaking for
13 ourselves. We are, as an organization, also a member
14 of the Pedestrians for Accessible and Safe Streets,
15 that's PASS, Coalition, which is a member, which is
16 an organization of about 20 or more organizations in
17 the blindness field. We, and again, my colleague and
18 friend, Dr. Gorgi, was not able to stay, but I've
19 handed in her testimony as well NFB's. We, and I
20 want, Mr. Speaker, you stole, you took, you took some
21 of my thunder and I'm glad that you did.

22 SPEAKER JOHNSON: [chuckles]

23 RAYMOND WAYNE: Because you hit on the
24 problem that we as blind people who walk the streets
25 of New York City face. And nobody intended to do

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2 this to us. I know that LPIs and EPPs have a useful
3 purpose and we are in favor of them. However, APSes
4 need to keep up with LPIs and EPPs. The commissioner
5 said a while ago there are about 13,000 intersections
6 with traffic signals in New York City. As of April
7 26 of this year 418 of those had APSes. That's like,
8 I forgot to do the math, but that's like less than
9 1%. In 2018 DOT installed 485 LPIs. There are only
10 85 APSes. That's a 10 to 1 ratio. The, before I
11 came here today it was my understanding that DOT is
12 planning to, is, ah, install 150 APSes per year. At
13 that rate, with my math, it would take more than 75
14 years to complete the installation of APSes, and with
15 LPIs, and in my testimony I go into the techniques
16 that blind people use to cross streets, with LPIs we
17 lose that parallel, that auditory cue that I've been
18 relying on for like 50 years, literally, because
19 during the pedestrian phase there is no traffic
20 moving. So if I'm crossing, say, Fourth Avenue, I'm
21 listening for the traffic on Ovington, which is the
22 parallel street, to start to move and I'm not hearing
23 it because, guess what, there's an LPI and other
24 pedestrians who see the walk signal in their favor
25 are crossing the street, but the cars aren't moving.

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2 So I don't have that auditory cue, and by the way
3 it's generally not a good idea to follow other
4 pedestrians because they do all kinds of crazy things
5 like cross against the light and, you know, cross
6 while they're texting, and so on and so forth. So I
7 generally don't do that. We need to, again, DOT,
8 what we are asking is that the 2019 master plan
9 include a program, a plan for completing the
10 installation, did I lose the mic, of APSES. The
11 commissioner said, I believe she said they were going
12 to triple the number. That would be great. But even
13 at that rate it's going to take 25 years. I won't be
14 around to see it. Also, the, I'm sorry?

15 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Mr. Wayne, if you could
16 just wrap up?

17 RAYMOND WAYNE: Yeah. Just two quick
18 things. The bill talks about real time bus
19 information and that's fine, but it also needs to be
20 in an auditory and large print accessible format and
21 pedestrian plazas need to be designed in such a way
22 that they are easily, that the borders are easily
23 detectable for blind people, and that's, all that is
24 in [inaudible] testimony and our respective contact
25

1
2 information is in both of our testimonies. And thank
3 you again for your support.

4 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Thank you for being
5 here. I really appreciate your leadership and your
6 testimony and your patience, so thank you so much for
7 being here today. Kathleen?

8 KATHLEEN TREAT: Hi. Thank you both,
9 thank all of you for your hard work on behalf of the
10 New Yorkers, all of us, disabled and otherwise. I'm
11 Kathleen Treat. I am a proud member of Checkped.
12 I'm here to speak on behalf of my husband, Martin,
13 who is a disabled veteran. We live on the West Side.
14 He gets all around the city in a fabulous electric
15 scooter provided by the wonderful VA and we
16 completely depend on buses to get us all over the
17 city. I know every route of every Manhattan bus by
18 heart. There's a couple of things I'd like to
19 informally say about the bus system here. One is
20 eternal gratitude for whoever designed the kneeling
21 bus. I think all our city buses are kneeling buses
22 and they're marvelous, as are bus drivers. I've
23 never met in the ten years since Martin's diagnosis,
24 I've never met a bus driver who wasn't kind and
25 courteous and professional in every way. We need

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2 more buses. It's great to hear Polly Trottenberg
3 talk about studies and surveys and yada, yada, yada,
4 and bells and whistles, and God knows what they're
5 spending on all that stuff. But we need more buses.
6 We also need I think more help from the NYPD. We
7 need guys on the ground giving out tickets to drivers
8 who are clogging up the bus lanes. I'm sorry that
9 the DOT people aren't here anymore, aren't here
10 today. But they talk about bus lanes planning and
11 studies and surveys dah-dat-dah-dah, on the ground
12 they need to take a disabled New Yorker with them on
13 those studies. Martin would be happy to demonstrate
14 what's needed. Thank you.

15 SPEAKER JOHNSON: We love Martin Treat,
16 so thanks for being here to represent your wonderful
17 husband. Jim?

18 JIM WEISMAN: Thank you, Speaker Johnson
19 and Chairman Rodriguez for your support of us in the
20 past and for this great city planning initiative.
21 Very few, ah, I'm going to read my testimony, but I
22 should say that very few disability-specific projects
23 were the result of city planning. They're always the
24 result of advocacy by disabled people who end up in
25 court and get a consent decree requiring the city to

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2 do something, and so it happens in fits and starts
3 and it's not comprehensive, and nobody ever gets
4 10,000 feet above the city and figures out how people
5 with disabilities get anywhere, and this is a very
6 healthy way to proceed. I represent, and my name is
7 Jim Weisman, I'm a disability rights lawyer for 42
8 years and for the last three or four, the last 40
9 years, I've been at Eastern Paralyzed Veterans
10 Association, now called the United Spinal
11 Association. And for the last three or four I've
12 been CEO and executive director, too. We have 53,000
13 members nationally who have suffered spinal cord
14 injuries or diseases and since our founding in 1946
15 by paralyzed veterans our goal was to integrate
16 people who use wheelchairs into the American
17 mainstream. We're the guys and I'm the lawyer that
18 sued New York City in '79 and the MTA to make buses
19 and subways accessible. I was very young then and I
20 would be scared to do that now, but I didn't know
21 better then, and we settled in '84 and all we could
22 get were T stations, because even the most right-
23 thinking liberal Democrats thought this was a crazy
24 idea. There was only one City Council person who
25 supported us in the entire course of the litigation.

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2 And it was all Democrats at the time, so, you know,
3 this is an idea that has been coming of age,
4 accessibility, and it's a pleasure to hear it as part
5 of the city's plan now to move forward. Mobility is
6 the key to the economic success, I want to talk about
7 curb ramps, because as of July 23 there will be a
8 hearing, and I'll assume that my written testimony
9 because we don't have time to read. As of July 23
10 this settlement agreement with the city DOT for a
11 comprehensive plan for curb ramps that will cost
12 about a billion or more over the life of the
13 agreement, which is going to be 30 years, um, to
14 implement. As of July 23 there will be a fairness
15 hearing in federal district court on it and it will
16 become, assuming it's approved, ah, it's been
17 preliminarily approved by the court, it will be
18 become the law. So whatever plan we do, pursuant to
19 the legislation that's proposed, will have to
20 incorporate that. But I want to tell you to relax,
21 because it's good, it really is good. It's going to
22 be comprehensive, it is going to be, and Commissioner
23 Trottenberg talked about it, and my testimony lays it
24 out, and I can give you, there's a link to the
25 settlement agreement, because it's like 65 pages, but

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2 in my testimony there's a link to it, the website is
3 there, so you can pull it up and review it. But
4 you're going to have upgrades on existing broken curb
5 ramps and curb ramps that for your husband are
6 probably unusable, um, Commissioner Trottenberg is
7 right, trucks turn corners and break them right after
8 they're installed, even, and of course there's no
9 steel rim on the corner when there is a curb ramp, so
10 it's vulnerable. Many, many of them have to be
11 upgraded for visually impaired people because when we
12 originally sued New York City in '94 to get curb
13 ramps Guiliani made us litigate the entire, his
14 entire administration, they were not settled, and
15 Mayor Bloomberg settled in his first two months in
16 office. They did not put truncated domes on many of
17 them, the bubbles, tactile underfoot warnings for low
18 vision people, and so the city DOT has to go back and
19 do that. They were not required by the federal
20 government then. It was just, they put lines across
21 them, you've seen the old ones, um, to try to make it
22 textured. But this way it will be uniform and
23 predictable and people with visual disabilities will
24 be able to rely on it. That will also, and there's a
25 tremendous amount of work being done to regrade

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2 sidewalks so that they meet slope and transverse of
3 cross slope requirements as well of the Americans
4 with Disabilities Act, so they will be safe. There
5 will be an ongoing maintenance program.

6 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Thanks, Jim.

7 JIM WEISMAN: Four hundred people have
8 been added to the staff to do this.

9 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Thank you, Jim.

10 JIM WEISMAN: So please incorporate our
11 settlement agreement into your plan, and thanks for
12 the opportunity to be heard. I really appreciate.

13 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Thank you, Jim. Thanks
14 for everything. Janet.

15 Hi, Chairman and speaker. Thank you for
16 having me to speak. The name is Janet Liff. I'm co-
17 director of the Neighborhood Empowerment Project and
18 Open Plans. Our mission is to empower local
19 stakeholders to take ownership of and solve their
20 problems on a local level. As part of this process,
21 we've been talking with block associations,
22 nonprofits, BIDs, community boards across the city
23 and to a one we keep hearing the same stories. West
24 Fifties Neighborhood Association can't clean up the
25 filth on 56th Street, get by [cracks] for the

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2 delivery people. Sixth Avenue is a speedway. Fourth
3 on Fourth and Park Slope has the same issues,
4 clamoring for green infrastructure to combat the
5 [inaudible] on the sidewalk. Therefore, we support
6 Local Law 1557 to measure our streets and sidewalks
7 with the following two recommendations. One, metrics
8 are very important but which ones and how are they
9 collected? We need to think critically and identify
10 the desired outcome and determine which data will
11 reflect that. X miles of bus lanes and bike lanes,
12 each sure sounds nice, but what does it mean? If
13 safety is what we're after, rather you should ask
14 what percentage of pedestrian and cyclists feel safe?
15 How much do we want to move the needle? If it's 15%
16 now, do we try to double that each year, and even if
17 our KSI is down if people still are afraid to bike
18 the design is wrong. When 80% of the people say they
19 feel safe on our streets, then we will have won. So
20 I emphasize that strongly. Also the bill when
21 dealing with streets and sidewalk obviously the
22 priority has to be people first. The bill
23 acknowledges that. We commend that. We just ask
24 that you establish a level of service for pedestrians
25 again which to measure our states. In addition to

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2 safety, the quality of experience is crucial. When
3 is the sidewalk too crowded? Are people forced off
4 the curb? Is there a padlock? Is it too hot? We have
5 to add qualitative questions and look to address
6 those. Thank you very much. On my testimony I
7 included two links to two studies that discuss these
8 and I think would enrich the bill. Thank you.

9 TERRI CARTA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
10 My name is Terri Carta and I represent Brooklyn
11 Greenway Initiative. BGI is a private nonprofit
12 organization that has been focused for nearly two
13 decades on the development, establishment, and long-
14 term stewardship of the Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway,
15 which is a 26-mile protected and landscaped route for
16 pedestrians and cyclists of all ages and abilities
17 that encircles the borough of Brooklyn and connects
18 with Queens on both sides. The greenway adds new
19 mobility options for transit-starved residential and
20 business communities and connects workers to new and
21 growing job centers along the waterfront and to the
22 Manhattan and Queens greenway networks. BGI
23 enthusiastically supports the proposed bill and the
24 vision that it puts forth for our city, particularly
25 around the safety, mobility, and quality of life

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2 improvements it will deliver. BGI is especially
3 excited about the bill's focus on building a complete
4 network and its requirements to measure and report
5 the network connectivity index on an annual basis,
6 and as the master plan is updated in five-year
7 intervals. Our experience with the greenway is that
8 as segments are implemented they become immediately
9 popular and are used by commuters, recreational,
10 runners and cyclists, families, and even local
11 businesses delivering goods to market in small cargo
12 bikes. We've even seen adaptive cycles, adaptive
13 bicycles on the greenway as well. Perhaps the best
14 example of this is the greenway segment along Kent
15 Avenue in Williamsburg. In 2012 DOT took a bold step
16 to reconfigure Kent Avenue to allow for a
17 bidirectional protected bike lane and a separate
18 pedestrian route. Now it's one of the most heavily
19 used commuter routes in all of New York City, and on
20 the weekend it's packed with other types of
21 commuters, if you will, people, local residents and
22 others visiting waterfront parks, the shopping
23 corridor, and local restaurant scene. This success
24 story has been repeated for the greenway segments
25 from Brooklyn Bridge Park through Red Hook along the

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2 Shore Parkway Greenway, among others, demonstrating
3 the incredible public demand and the immediate
4 benefits afforded by the greenway. However, it can't
5 fulfill its full potential until remaining gaps are
6 filled and the route is fully connected. So BGI also
7 applauds the proposed bill's focus on accountability
8 to bold targets and supports all efforts that enable
9 DOT to take a more strategic and proactive approach
10 to implementation of the greenway and other protected
11 facilities for pedestrians and cyclists. We strongly
12 believe that the connectivity index is the way to
13 ensure that targets are met in the most impactful
14 way, and frankly the previous approach towards
15 implementation "as funds and opportunities arise"
16 simply isn't sufficient. Implementation funds need
17 to be fully allocated, not found. Coordinating
18 support for the bold targets outlined in this bill
19 among city agencies and within our communities is the
20 only way that we can reach these goals. Closing
21 major gaps in the greenway which exist in Red Hook,
22 Sunset Park, Coney Island, and DUMBO should be
23 addressed within the scope of the first master plan
24 to be issued on October 1, 2019, which would deliver
25 a completed greenway by October 2024. It can be done

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2 within five years when we're all aligned on goals and
3 targets, and would immediately benefit Brooklyn's
4 2.65 million residents, over 1.1 million employees,
5 and 15 million visitors from across the city and
6 around the world. BGI looks forward to continuing to
7 work with the city and other stakeholders to move the
8 Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway to completion as a
9 critical trunk route in the overall network that has
10 been described today. A leading factor to growth in
11 greenway use is perceived and real safety, benefits
12 that such a protected route offers. Prioritizing
13 completion of the greenway will move us more swiftly
14 towards Vision Zero standards as greater number of
15 people using all mobility options lives and work
16 along the waterfront. Thank you for bringing this
17 conversation to the fore with council members and
18 thank you, Chair Rodriguez, and the Transportation
19 Committee for the opportunity to testify before you
20 today.

21 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: [inaudible]
22 Menchaca, who also will speak about the bill that
23 [inaudible].

24 CARLOS MENCHACA: Thank you, Chair
25 Rodriguez and hi everyone. Thank you for having me

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2 here today as a member of this amazing committee on
3 transportation, but also as lead sponsor for Intro
4 1457. What I want to say here is how important it is
5 that we keep patients alive when designing bills.
6 This one came a few years back, when I first
7 introduced it back in 2016. This is now the
8 opportunity that we have in this new session to
9 really take a step forward in making New York City
10 our great city here in New York, America's safest for
11 cyclists. Because we're not there yet. We're not
12 there yet at allowing for our infrastructure to
13 really match our commitment, and cyclists are being
14 killed on our streets every day, well not every day,
15 but they're being killed on a yearly basis. And
16 eight New Yorkers so far this year. And that is more
17 than one a month, and two cyclists in my district
18 alone. And while every bike lane is great, amazing
19 progress they don't help where cyclists are more at
20 risk. Intersections are the most dangerous place for
21 people on bikes. And they are busy and stressful and
22 complicated. Cyclists die when drivers don't see
23 them. I find myself in that situation many times
24 when I'm riding to City Hall, where I'm at an
25 intersection and I can't make eye contact with a

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2 truck where I am. Getting those extra seconds to
3 cross allowing us all as cyclists to use the LPI, the
4 leading pedestrian interval, at these intersections,
5 they give pedestrians an extra set of seconds to
6 cross, will change that for bicyclists. By allowing
7 cyclists to get ahead of traffic people on bikes are
8 more visible to drivers and therefore more safe.
9 Proud to sponsor to this bill, I'm proud that this
10 came as an idea from the community. This came
11 directly from, ah, our big powerful bike lobby, and
12 it became a legislative project, and we went to the
13 NYPD, we went to the Department of Transportation,
14 and all they came back with was well we can't do it
15 because it's a new project and there's all these
16 issues and we don't know if it's actually safe. It's
17 going to make everything really unsafe. It's really
18 complicated. And we finally said, OK, fine, let's
19 do, let's do a study. Let's let the data show us the
20 way through. And that's why it's taking so long.
21 And the data came back and it's been incredible to be
22 working with the speaker and our transportation
23 chair, DOT, NYPD, so that we can take advantage of
24 this awesome, which will dramatically create safety
25 as an improvement for cyclists at intersections.

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2 This is smart government. This is smart government
3 and it's essentially free. That's the kind of stuff
4 that this City Council is doing and I'm really
5 excited to be supporting the speaker's package of,
6 ah, changes as well for a five-year plan, and I'm
7 thankful, and I don't know if there's anybody else
8 that's testifying, but thank you so much, Chair.

9 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Recognize that we
10 also had before Council Members Levine and Miller and
11 [inaudible] also.

12 UNIDENTIFIED: Greg Mihailovich, Eman
13 Ramawi, Patrick Condren, Stan Ludwig, Glenn Every.
14 [inaudible] begin.

15 Good afternoon, Chairman Rodriguez and
16 Councilman Menchaca. My name is Glenn Every and I'm
17 the president of a newly formed trade organization,
18 Bus for NYC. I'm also the owner and operator of a
19 company that has provided bus service in New York
20 State for more than 50 years. Bus for NYC is a New
21 York City-based advocacy group comprised of private
22 bus company owners and related businesses and
23 associations promoting the industry as a viable
24 transportation solution and local economic driver.
25 Our members include commuter, tour, charter, and

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2 sightseeing bus companies, including National
3 Express, Adirondack Trailways, Big Bus, Academy, West
4 Point Tours, TTI, and Hampton Jitney, among others.
5 Our members' operations range from interstate travel
6 throughout the United States right down to the local
7 New York City streets. We applaud the City Council
8 for ensuring that the New York City DOT look at
9 traffic planning through a comprehensive approach
10 with an eye towards safety and congestion reduction.
11 We as Bus for NYC members share the City Council's
12 goal of reduction congestion and greenhouse gas
13 emissions while encouraging residents and visitors to
14 consider public transportation. We are private
15 providers of public transportation and an important
16 piece of the traffic mobility puzzle. As such, we
17 are not the problem, we are an integral part of the
18 solution. Each bus that we operate takes as many 55
19 single-occupancy cars off the road, while bringing
20 commuters to work, shoppers to small businesses, and
21 visitors to vibrant destinations, all of which are a
22 critical part of the fabric of New York City.
23 Regarding the bill's language that is specific to our
24 industry, that is the 150 miles of protected bus
25 lanes, we support this approach. With the

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2 proliferation of for-hire vehicles and the explosion
3 of e-commerce, congestion in New York City is at an
4 all-time high. Many of our drivers, especially those
5 that are bringing commuters and visitors into and out
6 of the city are finding it increasingly difficult to
7 comply with hours of service mandates set forth by
8 the federal DOT, because of the relatively recent
9 spike in congestion that puts them at a standstill,
10 and because of the diminishing amount of areas for
11 bus parking and layovers. Finally, one consideration
12 that we as bus operators would like to raise
13 regarding protected bus lanes is that DOT should
14 ensure that barriers surrounding protected lanes are
15 realistically positioned to accommodate the turning
16 radius of 45-foot-long vehicles. And we would also
17 ask that any planning take into account suitable bus
18 parking and layover space. We will be sure to work
19 closely with DOT on these operational details. In
20 conclusion, Bus for NYC is supportive of Intro 1557
21 and looks forward to working with the City Council
22 and DOT on a continuing basis. While this bill's
23 timeline is aggressive, we applaud the speaker and
24 the council's consideration of protected bus lanes
25 and approved bus infrastructure. Not only will these

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2 measures reduce congestion, but they will also
3 increase economic output, reduce greenhouse gas
4 emissions, and help to ensure that improved safety
5 and Vision Zero goals are met. Thank you very much
6 for your consideration.

7 PATRICK CONDREN: Is this on? Thank you.
8 Good afternoon, Chairman Rodriguez and Council Member
9 Menchaca and others in the room, thank you. My name
10 is Patrick Condren. I've addressed the council and
11 committees and the Board of Estimates for many, many
12 years. I'm pleased to also be a transportation
13 alternative member for many, many years. Not
14 withstanding that, I, ah, since the 1960s have been
15 actively engaged with the bus operations here in New
16 York City, starting at West 43rd Street near the
17 then-relatively new identified Port Authority Bus
18 Terminal. Prior to the formation of the MTA, the
19 majority of buses in New York City were private.
20 Proudly operated, proudly run. My operations
21 included charter and tour operations, as well as
22 shuttle bus contracts, plus a franchise bus commuter
23 company here in New York City. I was one of the
24 private carriers in public transportation in the five
25 boroughs. It is noteworthy to note that the traffic

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2 grid is fundamentally the same all these years. I
3 applaud the initiative to create a master plan at
4 this time to increase bike lanes and Intro 1457 and
5 the master plan for 14, 1557. I should point out
6 that the effort the Bus for NYC coalition is starting
7 is a working group that provides the private and
8 public sector to maintain and continue a dialogue and
9 be transformative at this time. The last hundred
10 years things haven't changed. A critical element to
11 this plan should include input of private carriers
12 who provide the public with public transport. The
13 individual vehicles have chartered tour, intercity,
14 sightseeing, commuter, airport shuttle bus, and
15 related bus operations often have a fleet that counts
16 in total fleet buses in excess or just close to the
17 5000 vehicles being operated by the MTA. Those buses
18 include those various categories of efficiently
19 moving people around town. Private buses maintain a
20 very high safety orientation, with some companies
21 filing plans to the New York State Public
22 Transportation Safety Board. A lot of people in New
23 York City don't realize that. Additionally,
24 companies like Academy Bus sponsor Vision Zero and
25 Transportation Alternatives, Vision Zero conferences.

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2 They participate in them. The Bus Industry Safety
3 Council. They also submit data to the National
4 Transit Database, which benefits all New Yorkers by
5 increasing the pie for the State of New York, which
6 the City of New York shares under its unusual
7 circumstance of having New York operate its system.
8 I am pleased to work with Hampton Jitney, with
9 Academy Bus, with Big Bus Tours, right here in New
10 York City, and others. I'm a member, a board member,
11 of the Bus Association of New York, the American Bus
12 Association, and others. We support the new
13 initiative of Bus for NYC you just heard about and
14 you will heard more about it, and we suggest again to
15 be a participate in the master planning processes for
16 utilizing the most efficient per-passenger vehicle
17 for passenger transportation mobility, which is a
18 bus. I should note that Commissioner Trottenberg
19 referred to the [Travis] Street [equity graft]
20 before, where a bus is the most efficient vehicle.
21 Cars take up the big space. Buses take up that much
22 space for a hundred people. Once again, I applaud
23 your efforts. Please rest assured of our support and
24 continuing cooperation, and thank you again.

1
2 OK. Thank you, Chair Rodriguez, Council
3 Member Menchaca. My name is Greg Mihailovich. I'm
4 the community advocacy director for the American
5 Heart Association here in New York City [clears
6 throat], excuse me, and we're testifying in favor of
7 Intro 1557. So the American Heart Association is the
8 nation's largest and oldest voluntary organization
9 dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke, of
10 which approximately 80% of diagnoses are preventable.
11 So accordingly AHA prioritizes increasing physical
12 activity and physical fitness across the population,
13 because in the aging daily physical activity reduces
14 the risk of obesity, coronary heart disease, stroke,
15 hypertension, diabetes, and even some types of
16 cancer. Promoting active transportation, the
17 opportunity to bike, walk, roll to work, school, and
18 around the community and do so safely through policy
19 systems and environmental change is one of the
20 leading evidence-based strategies to increase
21 physical activity across the lifespan, OK, so
22 vulnerable populations, including people of lower
23 income, people of color, the elderly, children,
24 people with disabilities, are often
25 disproportionately affected by incomplete and unsafe

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2 streets, and pedestrian fatality rates are often
3 higher in these communities, and many also suffer
4 from higher rates of obesity, diabetes, and heart
5 disease. And the AHA recommends at least 30 minutes
6 of moderate intensity aerobic activity at least five
7 days a week for overall cardiovascular health and
8 providing safe active transportation options for
9 these underserved communities provides an opportunity
10 for that daily physical activity and results in
11 better health outcomes for all New Yorkers. So
12 complete streets are obviously a safety issue and a
13 transportation issue and an environmental issue and
14 I'd like this opportunity to remind the council that
15 it's also a health equity issue. You give the
16 opportunity here. So the AHA thanks Speaker Johnson,
17 Chair Rodriguez, and all the sponsors of Intro 1557
18 for their leadership and we look forward to the
19 passage and implementation of the bill. Thank you.

20 EMAN RIMAWI: Hi, my name is Eman Rimawi.
21 I'm for the New York Lawyers for the Public Interest
22 and I am their Access-A-Ride coordinator and
23 organizer. NYLPI's disability justice program works
24 to advance civil rights and ensure equality and
25 opportunities, self-determination, and the

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2 independence of New Yorkers with disabilities. NYLPI
3 disability advocates have represented thousand of
4 individuals and one campaign, improving the lives of
5 hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers. We have long
6 fought for equality to access of public
7 transportation for persons with disabilities and we
8 members of the Access-A-Ride Reform Group, or AARRG,
9 which, you know, makes us feel that Access-A-Ride,
10 you know, drives us crazy, and oftentimes people with
11 disabilities are ignored because folks don't think
12 that they can join a disability club at any time and
13 they can, anybody can. Oftentimes people don't think
14 about accessibility as their problem unless they are
15 directly affected by inaccessibility. Before I
16 became an amputee nearly six years ago I didn't
17 realize how inaccessible many parts of our city are
18 for people with disabilities. Even though I've had
19 lupus since 1999. I've never lived near an
20 accessible train station and I've only lived in one
21 place without steps, including my current apartment,
22 which is a 20-step walkup, which I have to hop and
23 down the steps every day, which is fun, I love it.
24 Until I became an amputee I could go anyplace I
25 wanted to go because I could use the bus and train,

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2 and/or walk whenever I needed to go, even though my
3 lupus made me a little bit slower than my peers. Now
4 I have to go down sidewalks backwards if they're more
5 than 2 inches high because it's safer for me to that
6 as an above- and below-knee amputee who uses a
7 walker. There have been times where I had to climb
8 down six-inch sidewalks, which is extremely unsafe,
9 but I don't have a choice. A few weeks ago after
10 multiple 12-hour days my body couldn't handle
11 stepping up the sidewalks and I nearly fell over, and
12 if the driver wasn't there to help me in the dirt and
13 in the dark I would have fallen over for sure. There
14 are also a number of public spaces that aren't
15 accessible to me for many reasons. There's a lot of
16 walking to get to the final destination to go some
17 places. There are a number of steps and/or ramp that
18 is extremely steep and doesn't work for people with
19 disabilities with a physical disability like mine.
20 There are several locations, like Bellevue, New York-
21 Presbyterian, and New York Public Libraries main
22 branch that have extremely steep ramps that are very
23 unsafe for people with disabilities like myself to
24 use, and I have opted out for using them because I
25 don't want to kill myself or fly to the moon using a

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2 ramp like that. I ask that the city follow the law
3 and ensure that people with disabilities have access
4 to all public facilities and services. I also ask
5 for you to include people with disabilities, various
6 disabilities, in the discussions and also hire them
7 to have jobs, and not just one or two, but multiple
8 people because there are a number of disabilities.
9 And I also, I'm concerned about the 14th Street being
10 shut off because there are some Access-A-Ride
11 vehicles that aren't big blue and white vehicles and
12 Sidney's organization, the Center for the Independent
13 of the Disabled, is on 14th Street and I am worried
14 that people will not be able to go to that location.
15 Thank you so much.

16 UNIDENTIFIED: Neil Weissman. Alexandra
17 Sica. Helen Goldstein. Jackie Weisberg. Jonathan
18 Hawkins. Paul Mankowitz. Snia Molka. Diane Drozik.
19 Matthew Shapiro. Greg Waldman.

20 NEIL WEISSMAN: Chairman Rodriguez, my
21 name is Neil Weissman. I [inaudible] 250
22 organizations, businesses and communities calling for
23 wider bikeways across the George Washington Bridge.
24 I speak in support of 1557. It's forward-thinking,
25 comprehensive, and overdue, but it does not address

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2 the problem of a city with 800,000 cyclists and no
3 recreational facilities not shared with pedestrians.
4 If the objective is to grow mode share, know that
5 nationally seven times as many bike for recreation as
6 transportation and that hundreds of local bike shops
7 and cycling organizations depend on having cool
8 places to go and safe ways to get there. For city
9 cyclists then the GWB provides sole access to green
10 space that the city cannot provide and what happens
11 to the George sets precedent for what the MTA does
12 with its seven bridges, which you cannot connect the
13 five boroughs without them. The council should at
14 minimum pass GWB Resolution 0103 and have one of its
15 14 co-sponsors speak before the agency. Second,
16 giving the city cyclists outsized potential to fuel
17 upstate cycle tourism call on Albany to fund the
18 project as extension of the Empire State Trail.
19 Third, because the George is a bi-state facility
20 enlist New Jersey. Their residents provide a
21 significant portion of city congestion and contribute
22 a commensurate portion of congestion revenue. Should
23 we lose the Hudson Rail tunnels new bikeways across
24 the Bayonne and Goethals Bridges will enable 45- and
25 60-minute commutes to Wall Street via Staten Island

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2 Ferry and widen George Washington Bridge paths would
3 support 20,000 bike commuters per day. Thank you.

4 UNIDENTIFIED: I'm not really a good
5 speaker, but this is about bikes. I came because I
6 got hurt crossing the street and they need to be,
7 crosswalks need to be addressed. I was told by the
8 commissioner of DOT that they don't even have
9 inspectors inspect the crosswalks. They wait till,
10 and I found out from Maintenance, either till someone
11 calls in the hole, a citizen, or if someone gets
12 hurt. That's not protecting the disabled, right?
13 When I said they should get a inspector in each
14 borough periodically to look at the crosswalks and
15 make sure they're safe before someone gets hurt,
16 like if there is a collapse or a pothole or a plate
17 missing, in each borough have one person or two
18 people driving around. You probably save injuries,
19 tons of injuries, from happening. I had two broken
20 feet crossing the street and a pothole, and I'm told
21 by the DOT you can't expect us to fix all the
22 potholes. There's millions of miles of road. The
23 earth isn't even a million miles of road. I don't
24 think. Well, the point is also the ADA law of
25 accessibility according to that crosswalks are

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2 supposed to be accessible for the disabled. Right?
3 But you have a notification law from the city code
4 that the city isn't responsible for injuries to
5 citizens who get hurt, even killed, unless they're
6 notified of that pothole or street deformity. How
7 can you have one law saying you're responsible and
8 then your code saying we're not, and yet you base
9 going and fixing the holes not on reviewing it
10 yourself, by having a citizen calling up. That means
11 you're leaving the potholes there or deformities
12 until a citizen reports it. And that means DOT isn't
13 doing their job of making sure that crosswalks are
14 maintained. I think the crosswalks, the notification
15 law, the crosswalks should be exempt from that
16 notification so if they do get hurt because the city
17 didn't do what they were supposed to do then at least
18 they can sue. I was offered a thousand dollars for
19 two broken feet and a hip. It didn't even pay for my
20 surgery. And that's disgusting, OK, and as I said
21 you need to fix what's broke. You need inspectors to
22 inspect before. I found out the inspectors that are
23 assigned inspect only after the area is fixed. These
24 little things were told because I'm the biggest pain

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2 in the ass and I keep calling the commissioner. But
3 someone's got to do it.

4 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

5 UNIDENTIFIED: Sorry.

6 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

7 UNIDENTIFIED: OK. Have a good day, and
8 thank you for listening.

9 ALEXANDRIA SICA: Good afternoon. I'm
10 Alexandria Sica. I'm the executive director of the
11 DUMBO Business Improvement District. I'm also the co-
12 chair of the BID Association's Plaza Working Group.
13 I'm here to talk on behalf of the collective plaza
14 partners from the Business Improvement Districts. We
15 love our plazas. We're glad that you all do, too,
16 and we, um, are excited to hear plans to expand the
17 program, and we think it has a ton of potential to
18 transform communities, um, a lot more communities
19 but, you know, we've been managing these plazas for
20 ten years and want to make sure that the program
21 advances in a way that is smart and a way that is
22 sustainable. So wanted to add, you know, a couple of
23 points to the discussion. So in those ten years the
24 city created 74 plazas citywide, um, and we have had
25 a big learning process. There are real challenges

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2 that we encountered taking care of these spaces, um,
3 and each time a new plaza is proposed a partner must
4 be identified and must agree to take on this role.

5 The partners we represent must weigh the benefits of
6 the new space and the costs and responsibilities for
7 their organizations, and right now there are many who
8 would not be comfortable taking on these additional
9 spaces. This partnership between nonprofit and city
10 is key to the success of the program as the city
11 would otherwise have to staff up significantly and
12 handle all of this public space management
13 themselves. We don't believe that is a good idea
14 either, as we know our communities very well and are
15 uniquely and efficiently positioned to play this
16 role. So in addition to benchmarking the total
17 acreage of the pedestrian plazas as part of this
18 legislation we ask that the five-year strategic plan
19 also address the city's master agreement with the
20 plaza partners, and we've submitted a number of
21 detailed recommendations, but it's really about the
22 city taking on the liability for these spaces. This
23 is public space. We believe that the plaza partners
24 should be treated like park conservancies and would

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2 hope that the agreements between our two entities can
3 be updated as such. Thank you.

4 JONATHAN HAWKINS: Good afternoon. My
5 name is Jonathan Hawkins. I'm the manager of
6 Streetscape and Planning for the Garment District
7 Alliance in midtown Manhattan. We're very excited by
8 Intro 1557 and we thank the chair, Speaker Johnson,
9 and all of the sponsoring council members for
10 proposing this legislation. Being in the heart of
11 midtown, the workers and residents and visitors in
12 the garment district are very familiar with just how
13 untenable our streets have become. We have more than
14 1.7 million transit riders in and around our
15 neighborhood every day, from subway stations, rail
16 terminals, the bus terminal, and the PATH. And these
17 millions of people exit this transit network onto
18 sidewalks that are often so crowded that people are
19 forced to walk in the street, as has been discussed
20 early today, and drivers constantly block
21 intersections and crosswalks and they create
22 threatening situations for pedestrians, not to
23 mention that these conditions also contribute to the
24 slowest bus speeds in the nation and make it so that
25 bicycling, which we think is a cheap, healthy, and

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2 environmentally friendly mode of transportation is
3 only for the bold and daring. So we think this
4 requires a wholesale reassessment and reallocation of
5 our roadbed, curb, and public plaza spaces.
6 Unfortunately, some solutions are already readily
7 available, but they're just moving it too slow of a
8 pace. We are proud to have been a part of the DOT
9 plaza program for more than ten years and our plazas
10 provides some of the only areas in the garment
11 district that are green, spacious, and inviting. But
12 these kinds of treatments have been very slow to
13 expand. We think the city should move aggressively
14 towards adding more pedestrian space, including
15 pedestrian-only streets, particularly in
16 neighborhoods like the Garment District that feel
17 dominated by cars, even though nearly everyone walks
18 or uses transit. Critical, but not mentioned in this
19 bill, is the consideration for maintenance of the
20 pedestrian and bicycle spaces. Ah, if the admirable
21 goal of doubling the plaza acreage is to be achieved,
22 we think the city must reconsidered how the plazas
23 are maintained, or better incentivize and indemnify
24 maintenance partners. Under the current arrangement
25 most areas of the city would be ineligible for a

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2 plaza because of a lack of potential partners. But
3 we think this bill is a great start and we are
4 encouraged by the intent of it and we would like to
5 just see some language clarifying how this new
6 pedestrian spaces would be maintained. But we're
7 very encouraged and with that addition we would be
8 eager to support this bill. Thank you.

9 GREG WALTMAN: Good afternoon, Chair
10 Rodriguez, general council. My name is Greg Waltman.
11 I represent a clean energy company, G1 Quantum. Not
12 so much addressing transportation, I wanted to talk a
13 little bit about environmental, if that was OK. I'm
14 also in favor of, support of what my colleagues have
15 just articulated. But bringing to light parsing
16 through Green New Deal scams and these value
17 narratives that plague the media, you know, we can go
18 back to Quantum Tracks, the variation of speed
19 breaker technology I was talking about, or the solar
20 wall application. You know, and maybe the solar wall
21 application being more, um, relevant for you, ah,
22 Council Rodriguez, and in a context where you can
23 begin to understand where I'm coming from. If you
24 put solar panels on the southern side of the border
25 wall at ten feet, 2000 miles, that's 242 trillion

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2 kilowatt hours of energy that can be created. That's
3 291 billion dollars at 12 cents per kilowatt hour.
4 So whether you agree with those figures or not, if
5 you can export energy, clean energy, to Latin
6 America, you can reduce the energy costs, thus
7 reducing the [inaudible] entry for Latin American
8 citizens to participate in their economy and the
9 global economy, and when you're able to articulate
10 solutions like that, then you're ending and resolving
11 chain migratory issues and then creating new
12 revenues, not only in the United States but Latin
13 America. And when I say this, to get to this level,
14 to get to this point, parsing through Green New Deal
15 scams and these value narratives and Mexico tariffs
16 and it's one thing after the next. Every, every week
17 I come here and just completely flatten the media.
18 Whether it be, you know, side media or the *New York*
19 *Times*, and these narratives get beaten down week
20 after week and, you know, I just wanted to say that,
21 you know, these bids have been submitted to the FBO,
22 Federal Budget Office, and now they want to play a
23 Department of Defense issue with it, another side
24 narrative, and these, if these solutions and these
25 contracts can be derived out of New York they're very

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2 lucrative for New York. I just want to say that
3 'cause we go week and after week and I'm just, I just
4 want to make sure that you're aware of it. OK.

5 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: I wanted to
6 personally thank everyone who came to testify around
7 this legislation. The conversation will continue,
8 and we are determined to make this city the most
9 walkable one in the whole nation. Thank you, and
10 with that.

11 UNIDENTIFIED: Ah, sir...

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: [gavel]

13 UNIDENTIFIED: I just want to let you know
14 I had two, a broken arm biking once, crossing the
15 street, do you know what I'm saying? I was hit by a
16 car twice and another time, they definitely [sound
17 cut off]

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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 July 15, 2019