

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

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HELD AT: Remote Hearing (Virtual Room 1)

B E F O R E: Ydanis Rodriguez
CHAIRPERSON

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Selvena Brooks-Powers
Fernando Cabrera
Ruben Diaz, Sr.
Robert Holden
Peter Koo
Stephen Levin
Mark Levine
Carlos Menchaca
I. Daneek Miller
Antonio Reynoso
Deborah Rose

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

Hank Gutman, Commissioner
Department of Transportation

Joseph Jarrin, Executive Deputy
Commissioner
Department of Transportation

Rebecca Zach, Assistant Commissioner of
Intergovernmental and Community Affairs
Department of Transportation

Aloysee Heredia Jarmoszuk, Commissioner
and Chair
Taxi and Limousine Commission

Vincent Chen, Assistant Commissioner for
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Amanda Berman, Director
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Linda Nguyen, Senior Policy and Research
Analyst
Alliance for a Greater New York

Terri Carta, Executive Director
Brooklyn Greenway Initiative

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Can we start the
livestream, please? Oh. Thank you. Sergeants, will
you start the recording?

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Recording to the
computer all set.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Recording to the cloud
started.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Sergeant Sadowsky, you
may begin with your opening statement.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Thank you. Good morning
and welcome to today's remote New York City Council
hearing of the Committee on Transportation. At this
time, would all Council members and Council staff
please turn on their video? To minimize disruption,
please place electronic devices on vibrate or silent
mode. If you wish to submit testimony, you may do so
at testimony@Council.NYC.gov. Once again, that is
testimony@Council.NYC.gov. Thank you, Chair. We are
ready to begin.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you,
Sergeants. And good morning and welcome, everyone,
to the city Council transportation committee hearing
on the fiscal 2022 preliminary budget and fiscal 21
preliminary mayors Management Report. My name is

Ydanis Rodriguez and I have the privilege of chairing this committee. Before I get into the matter that we will be discussing on this budget today, I would like to say a few words in regards to the announcement that Mayor De Blasio made on reference to some financial support to a taxi medallion owner in the city of New York. Everyone knows that I-- and I have been probably one of the few Council members that have always stated giving all the credit to this administration and as someone that served with previous administrations and current administrations and we have seen the difference of the things that have happened, the things that we have accomplished under Mayor de Blasio's leadership. Things that we had never thought that we would be able to accomplish before. UPK, computers for all, criminal justice reform, more supports for the small businesses, helping tenants and building affordable housing. But I think that the announcement today should be seen only as a beginning. To share-- and we will hear from the TSA commission later on that with the millions of dollars and \$65 million that will be invested to help with a yellow taxi medallion, it will alleviate the crisis. The answer is no. And I

hope to continue working with my colleagues, especially, you know, that Speaker, but most important, we can also-- with our friend, Bill de Blasio and his team, to increase that commitment. \$20,000 will not help someone that has a debt of \$400,000. I think that there is a plan already percentage that came out from the yellow taxi medallion task force that will allow medallion owners by especially, you know, the individual medallion owner, 6000 of them to redefine the debt. We need to do it. We cannot take the employee or from the lenders or the brokers. We need to take the input and word especially with the individual medallion owners. So, again, I hope that we can continue a conversation with the Mayor's team to look at this number. This number cannot and will not bring the solution to the crisis of thousands of medallions that are parked in the garage and drivers that they're not making. So, hopefully, we can continue addressing this matter. Today, we are here to begin the fiscal 2022 budget process under very different circumstances and when we met last year. Tragically, nearly 30,000 New Yorkers have died due to the coronavirus in the lives of all New Yorkers have been

drastically altered by the and everyone we don't want a single New Yorkers to die, but most people who died, they were working class New Yorkers that didn't have the privilege to do in isolation in [inaudible 00:04:45] where they help somebody. Families have been separated, jobs have been lost, and local businesses have been forced to shatter and the virus has laid bare many long-standing social injustice that have existed for decades. With the developments of three vaccines, there is a light at the end of the tunnel, however, as we are able to begin to return to a sense of normalcy, we must ensure the vaccine distribution is equitable and that inequality does not grow and that we also focus on these health conditions that affect mainly black, Latino, Asian, and working other poor New Yorkers. I would like to thank the city's essential workers, many of whom are from underserved minority communities. Without the work, our city would not be able to function. Thanks to their dedication and sacrifice, our trains and buses have continued to run. Our cops are able to drive medical staff to hospitals and deliver food to the needy. Our grocery stores remain stocked and our nurses and doctors have been able to save lives.

However, far too many workers have passed away, including more than 100 transit workers. I would like to take a moment of silence to recognize the honor the sacrifice of all these workers as well as the many thousands of New Yorkers who have fallen into the virus. Thank you. Through today's hearing, we hope the start of the budget process will lead to the adoption of the budget that is progressive, responsible, and fair to all New Yorkers, especially the poorest ones. The ones that gave the victory to this administration when he got the mandate to close the gap between the poor and the rich. The budget, we also hope, will effectively meet the cities need while helping to lead it through this pandemic. We will start by hearing testimony from the city Department of Transportation. Following the DOT, we will hear from the Taxi Limousine Commission and, like in the past, we will be conducting our hearing with the MTA on a different day due to a scheduling difficulty. Now, of course, this day should be happening in the next two weeks. The DOT's executive expense budget for fiscal 2022 is approximately 1.1 billion. In addition, 10.4 billion is budgeted for the Department's capital program. We look forward to

the Commissioner updating the committee on the Department's effort to maintain and improve pedestrian safety and the city's [inaudible 00:08:10] infrastructure during this pandemic. Additionally, we hope the Department will discuss its four year capital plan, particularly in terms of its goals and priorities once we recover from this pandemic and its strategy to resume many project that has been halted. Finally, the Mayor has announced that the Open Restaurants program will become a permanent feature in New York City. We look forward to hearing how DOT plans to continue this program and how we will be carrying out equitable to all community businesses in need of additional space, especially targeting those communities that have suffered the most, that have the high numbers of residents with Covid and dying as a result of the Covid. Finally, after we hear from DOT, we will hear from the Taxi Limousine Commission in their report on the industry that has been devastated by the Covid 19 pandemic. Tragically, there was a 66 percent decline in the number of drivers on the street in December 2020 when compared to 2019 before the pandemic. DOT's proposed fiscal 2022 preliminary budget is 54.7 million. The

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2 committee hopes to hear from the commission on the
3 effect of Covid 19 on the taxi industry and how the
4 commission is helping to protect drivers from the
5 effect of coronavirus and how we plan to help the
6 industry recover, especially how they will be helping
7 deliberate taxi bases in local communities that
8 sometimes doesn't get to get the same connections as
9 Uber and Lyft. Next, the committee anticipates
10 hearing about how the commission is following through
11 with the Council legislation to help provide
12 struggling taxicab drivers with financial health and
13 mental services. I will now ask committee counsel to
14 go over some procedural items and swear in the team
15 from DOT. And, before that, if it's possible, to
16 recognize the Council members that have already
17 joined us.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Chair.

19 I am Elliott later, counsel to the Transportation
20 Committee of the New York City Council. We have been
21 joined by Council members Deutsch, Diaz, Menchaca,
22 Riley, Rose, Miller, Lander, Holden, Cabrera, and
23 Koo. Before we begin, I want to remind everyone that
24 you will be on mute until you are called on to
25 testify when you will then be on muted by the host.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

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Please listen for your name to be called. I will periodically announce who the next panelists will be. During the hearing, if Council members would like to ask questions, please use the zoom raise hand function and I will call on you in order. Unless otherwise indicated by the Chair, we will be limiting Council member questions to five minutes, including answers. This hearing will be divided into three sections as the Chair mentioned. First, we will hear from the Department of Transportation followed by the TLC around 1 p.m., and, finally, members of the public around 2 p.m. I will now call on our first panelists from the Department of Transportation. Commissioner Hank Gutman, executive Deputy Commissioner Joseph Jarrin, and assistant commissioner for intergovernmental and community affairs, Rebecca Zach. I will now read the affirmation and then call on each of you to confirm your response allowed for the record. Please raise your right hand. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in your testimony before this committee and to respond honestly to Council member questions? Commissioner Gutman?

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2 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Sorry. I do.

3 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Deputy

4 Commissioner Jarrin?

5 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: I do.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Assistant

7 Commissioner Zack?

8 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: I do.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. You may

10 begin your testimony when ready.

11 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Thank you very

12 much. Good morning, Chair Rodriguez and Chair

13 Rosenthal and members of the Transportation Committee

14 and the Subcommittee on Capital Budgets. I Hank

15 Gutman. I am the Commissioner of the New York City

16 Department of Transportation. With me today are

17 Joseph Jarrin, our Executive Deputy Commissioner, and

18 Rebecca Zach the Assistant Commissioner of

19 Intergovernmental and Community Affairs. Thank you

20 for inviting us to testify on behalf of Mayor Bill de

21 Blasio on the DOT fiscal year 2020 preliminary budget

22 in the fiscal year 21 to 31 capital plan. I am

23 honored to have the opportunity to serve as the DOT

24 Commissioner during this unprecedented moment in our

25 city's history. The DOT's work, it is no

exaggeration to say that the DOT's work touches every aspect of life in the city and is essential to the cities recovery from the Covid 19 crisis. In this final year of the de Blasio administration, we had DOT well help New Yorkers returned to work safely, receive our goods sufficiently, and enjoy access to more open space and to do all of that in an equitable fashion, as the Chair pointed out. I look forward to working with you, Chair Rodriguez, and the entire committee and the entire Council on our urgent work to build a recovery for all of us, focused on safety, equity, sustainability, and resilience. Today, I am testifying on a budget that roof the extraordinary challenges we face as a city and the countless ways the Covid 19 crisis has changed our lives since the agencies preliminary budget hearing one year ago today. In the years since, the DOT and the rest of our sister agencies have felt the impact of the virus directly on both our operations and our budgets and, of course, on a more important level, all New Yorkers have experienced the effect of the pandemic on our health and welfare in our lives. During this difficult year, DOT employees fell ill, had to quarantined, and, sadly, Solomon our ranks were lost

forever. We mourn the loss of colleagues at the DOT, along with other our frontline-- all other frontline city agencies and the MTA and we are grateful to all the essential workers who put their lives at risk each and every day. The DOT, in response to the pandemic, also transitioned many of our staff to the teleworking, redesigned all of our major operations for the Covid era, and worked closely with our union partners to ensure that the workforce remained socially distanced, well-equipped, and fully supported. The DOT also faced significant fiscal challenges due to the pandemic that will continue to impact our work this year and in the years to come. As the Mayor has that, the economic fallout caused by the pandemic hit the city budget hard. The city has lost 10.5 billion and projected tax revenue from fiscal year 20 to 22 and we are in the midst of a hiring freeze. But, despite the many operational and fiscal challenges posed by the pandemic, the women and men of DOT have performed remarkably well. As I said when the Mayor appointed me, the Department of Transportation just completed one of the most challenging transformative and productive years and its history. I made a mistake on that day and

referred to it as the Department of Transformation rather than transportation which the mayor picked on. Having been here for month now, I can say it was no mistake. This is the Department of Transformation. Even during the worst days of the crisis, the agency continued its essential functions, making infrastructure repairs, running the Staten Island ferry 24 seven. To combat a national trend in increased speeding as roadways emptied during the pandemic, the DOT continued to expand the speed camera program, and installing more speed cameras in 2020 than in the first six years of the program combined with now over 1200 speed cameras active across 750 schools speed zones citywide. The DOT also responded to the needs of the moment, working hard to provide reliable and safe alternative modes of travel for New Yorkers, especially the essential workers who could not work from home. This agency installed its highest number ever of new protected bike lanes, 28.9 miles, to enhance cycle and safety is more New Yorkers are choosing to bike. And it installed a record number of new bus lines, 16.3 miles, to shorten commute times for bus riders, many of whom are essential workers. The working in

partnership with Lyft, the DOT expanded the city bike network into upper Manhattan in the South Bronx with locations at multiple medical facilities. The system now has over 20,000 bikes and nearly 1300 stations, more than double the size of the system at its launch in 2013 and city bikes critical worker membership program has provided more than 960,000, almost a million, free city bike rides to over 19,200 critical workers to date. Under the Mayor's leadership and in partnership with the Council and other city agencies, DOT created multiple new programs to reimagine our streets in response to the pandemic. Answering the calls for many of you in the Council and New Yorkers at large, the DOT created 83 miles of open streets. 83. This program is the largest in the nation and it gave New Yorkers space to socially distanced and safely get outside during the pandemic. That DOT launch to be Open Restaurants program through which over 11,000 restaurants were able to set up outdoors on the city's roadways and sidewalks wall indoor dining was banned are limited. This popular program supported the city's beloved-- I would say unique-- restaurant industry and saved over 100,000 jobs. The DOT also established the Open Storefronts program and

allowing businesses to use space outside to conduct business and keep customers safe as they shop. The agency also allowed schools to use additional outdoor space to keep our kids safe through the outdoor learning program and, starting this month, thanks to the Council's leadership, art and cultural groups will begin holding events on designated streets through the Open Culture program. Together, these programs have brought New Yorkers much-needed joy and relief in respite during this difficult time and, again, it is no exaggeration to say that we have been transforming the streets of the city and how we use them. So, now we turn to recover. Some of these historic changes to our streets we intend to make permanent fixtures in our city. As the Mayor announced and the Council codified in local law 114 of 2020, we are working to design the legal and operational structure for a permanent Open Restaurants program with a goal of having it in place before the end of this year. That is, before the end of this year. Before the Mayors term has expired. And mine. This budget provides critical funding for the permanent programs environmental review. In the Mayor's State of the City address set the table for

an even more ambitious year to come as the Mayor announced we are creating a permanent Open Streets program. This year, many of the Open Streets from 2020 will return and we will open applications for new streets with a focus on local partner management and support, as well as equity and inclusion. We will also continue to prioritize accessibility and work towards creating a more accessible city for all. The Mayor believes, and I strongly concur, that if you give people more and more attractive alternatives to the car culture, they will use them and we will continue to support the increased number of New Yorkers traveling around the city by bike. As the Mayor announced, we are creating bridges for the people which will offer expanded cycling infrastructure on the iconic Brooklyn and Queens Borough bridges. We will install five new bike boulevards across the city, streets designed to give bicycles travel priority and to put cyclist safety first and, as the Chair knows, on my first day of Commissioner, the Mayor and I committed to installing 10,000 new bike parking racks by the end of 2022. 10,000 racks providing 20,000 additional bike parking spaces citywide and it was both an honor and a

privilege to have the Chair and join us in the Bronx last Friday up on Pelham Parkway as we unveiled some of the first of those newly installed racks and, as I said at the time, those were six racks, but they were symbolic of the more than 300 that were installed simultaneously during the week all over the city. To build a more equitable recovery, as the Mayor announced, we will create new public spaces in more than 30 of the neighborhoods hit hardest by Covid 19. These spaces will help support small local businesses, foster community ties, provide space for arts and culture, and enhance roadway safety. We will also continue expanding micro mobility options deeper into the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens, including some more low income communities and communities of color. In partnership with Lyft, we will expand city bike further into the Bronx, a story a, Sunset Park, and upper Manhattan, covering the entire borough of Manhattan by the end of the year and, under the leadership of the Council, we are launching an E scooter pilot in the Eastern Bronx neighborhoods from East Chester and Co-Op City to Throgs Neck and Soundview this spring, bringing this new mode of transportation, which has been popular

and successful in various other cities, two and 18 square-mile area home to over 570,000 residents.

This budget reflects the cost for the pilots administrative needs, as well as the projected revenue from the pilot. And while 2020 was a difficult year for Vision Zero, there were encouraging signs, including a record low number of pedestrian deaths on New York City's streets. For the first time since records began, fewer than 100 pedestrians were killed. Obviously, one is too many, but this was one relative bright spot in an otherwise challenging year. Unfortunately, reckless behavior such as speeding and unlicensed operation led to an increase in the number of motorcyclists and motor vehicle occupants killed in 2020. This year we will double down on our reference to enhance Street safety and public outreach and we will follow the data to make the city streets safer. We will continue to install record numbers of bike lanes and bus lanes and we will pursue state authorization to keep our life saving speed cameras on 24 seven, critically important. Together, this urgent work will help our great city come back from this terrible crisis better than ever. We are thankful for the Council's ongoing

partnership and I must say, on a personal level, I look forward to it going forward this year as we work towards a recovery. As the Mayor said, recovery for all of us.

Now, I will give a brief overview of the DOT's proposed 1.1 billion expense budget, as well as our proposed 19.7 billion fiscal year 21 to 31 capital plan and discuss how we found savings to ensure we can continue meeting our mission and following through on our urgent work. Starting with the expense budget, the 1.1 billion expense budget includes-- and there is a pie chart in my testimony if you find it easier to follow along there. The 1.1 billion includes 364 million for traffic operations, including signals, streetlights, and parking. 196 million for roadway maintenance, 108 million for bridge maintenance and inspection, 119 million for transportation planning and management, including installation of street signs and roadway markings. 98 million for ferry operations and maintenance and 247 million for other DOT operations and administration, including sidewalk management and inspection. The proposed 19.7 billion fiscal year 21 to 31 capital plan includes 10.2 billion for bridge

reconstruction and rehabilitation, 3.6 billion for Street reconstruction, 1.8 billion for resurfacing, 2.3 billion for sidewalk and pedestrian ramp repair and reconstruction, 487 million for the Staten Island ferry, 871 million for streetlights and signals, and 538 million for the facilities and equipment needed to support the DOT use operations. Context about our budget and how we were able to identify savings, as Commissioner Trottenberg testified last year. While the DOT's operating budget is 1.1 billion, over 50 percent of that comes from state and federal grants. The capital budget, known as IFA funds, and funds that support revenue-generating programs-- that is funds spent to generate funds such as parking meter operations and automated traffic enforcement. Again, the pie chart included in my printed testimony gives you a graphic demonstration of the point. Thus, making cuts in these points of the budget would generate expense budget savings. Out of the approximately 480 million remaining, large portions are relatively fixed costs such as the electric bill for streetlights and signals and the leases on DOT facilities or support the inspection and maintenance of the essential infrastructure on which all Street

users rely and which it is our obligation to keep it safe. You can find additional information about how we use our city tax levy funds in the next chart on page 12 of my printed testimony which, again, shows the breakdown. To respond to the economic fallout from the pandemic since the April 20 financial plan, the DOT has found targeted savings of over 125 million in fiscal years 21 and 22. Many Marquis DOT programs had to sustain cuts, including, sadly, Fission Zero where we identified for fiscal year 21 and 22 with items such as reduced spending on roadway markings due to current contractor capacity, reduced media spending, and a delay in filling some of the employment positions. While we do not take the savings slightly, with a total of 2 billion spent on Fission Zero thus far, I total investment of 3 billion by this administration, our commitment to eliminating traffic fatalities and serious injuries remain steadfast. Safety is our top priority on this and everything else. We had to take a hard look at our budget and prioritize, identifying and spending that, while important, could be delayed. And though the pandemic added a variety of new operational costs, it also led to some savings. In the

preliminary budget, nearly 12 million of OTPS funding reductions were taken in fiscal year 21 and 22 for items such as delays to the drainage study with the DEP and savings from reduced telephone and printer usage, as well as 6 million in fiscal year 21 savings due to hiring delays and attrition. Additionally, given the success of the city bike program and surges in ridership, we realized over \$500,000 more than originally expected in revenue for fiscal year 21. For DOT's capital budget, we rolled out over 1 billion from the 21 to 24 period to the 25 to 31 period. This is largely comprised of funding for the streets and bridges programs while keeping funds available for critical near-term work. Now to the capital plan. As we work towards recovery, I am happy to say that the Mayor announced last week that the city is restarting 17 billion in major capital projects, including a significant number of DOT projects. These projects will build the future of this city and improve the lives of New Yorkers for generations to come. Again, the Department of Transformation. We are eager to restart some of our projects and to continue our work on others. This year, the DOT has funded for 910 lane miles of

roadway resurfacing, continuing our sixth straight year of record investment in the roads. And we continue to work with our contractors and partners at DDC on our most critical capital projects. These include streetscape improvements by the Rockaway Ferry and one of the most critical segments of the Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway, creating a safe, separated bike path connecting Sunset Park to Red Hook and Gowanus via Hamilton Avenue. We also expect to begin construction on the next phase of our Atlantic Avenue Great Streets project which will continue important safety improvements along the corridor and introduce protected bike paths along the new planet median. We will also begin construction on the West 79th Street Rotunda complex and 79th Street bridge over Amtrak in Manhattan this year, a complex project that includes rehabilitating seven bridge structures, the landmark rotunda itself, and more. And we are continuing other essential bridgework, including upcoming repairs on the BBQ he, as well as continuing monitoring and planning for maintaining a state of good repair along that entire corridor and, by the way, I should add we are also looking at other bridge structures in need of repair.

The BQE is a prominent example, but it is certainly not the only one in the city.

Conclusion. While we face significant fiscal and operational challenges due to the pandemic, I am confident that DOT is creative and resourceful workforce will make the most of our robust resources. We will continue to maintain and improve our infrastructure, manage the city streets, I run the Staten Island ferry and we will continue implementing transformational, pedestrian, bike, bus, and safety projects that will support the city's recovery and improve the quality of life of New Yorkers for years to come. And if I may be allowed one personal note, in my month as Commissioner of the DOT, I want to say that this is the most extraordinary collection of women and men I have ever had the privilege to work for. They are smart, they are dedicated, they are committed to making life better for all New Yorkers and I am proud to be associated with this department and being put into a position where I can work with this extraordinary group of people. So, I would like to thank the Council for the opportunity to testify before you today and I look forward to working with all of you

in this final year of the de Blasio administration to create a recovery for all of us and to help this great city come back better than ever. I would now be happy to answer any of your questions.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you, Commissioner. It has been also a great honor to connect with you, I want to be able to share a lot of good ideas that we all have to make the city the most pedestrian and cycle is friendly and the whole nation and I know that, you know, having a great conversation with you and being, as you said in the press conference in the Bronx, I know that we have a lot of work to do ahead of us in the next couple of months. But, also, thank you for your service in your previous job that you had and, you know, welcome, again, this hearing. I opened to continue to work with you and, as you say, with [inaudible 00:35:37]. So, I have a few questions.

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: But the first one is related to [inaudible 00:35:48] during Covid 19 recovery. Can you speak on how the [inaudible 00:35:55] by the state governor in the Mayor impact the DOT project?

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Sure. We had a number of projects that we had to put on hold. I mean, the effort was not to put on hold things that were time sensitive and critical, but there were a lot of projects where planning was delayed, execution was delayed and, as I said in my testimony, this is something that we are looking forward to coming back to full force now. The Mayor has given the word to put on our track shoes. We got in aggressive list of commitments to meet by the end of the year and now that the pause is over, we are determined to get there.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: How does DOT been able to mobilize to ensure that it keeps the construction project in the important Council initiatives [inaudible 00:36:53] plan get completed?

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Absolutely. Well, with respect to the master plan, the agenda for this year is to come up with a plan to get that done and we have the team working on that and we are ready to be and we will meet that commitment. That is something that we take very seriously and we will get it done.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. And as you say that DOT has been able to start taking back [inaudible 00:37:27] that they were closed as a result of the Covid 19 and you addressed your commitment or the agency commitment also to work on [inaudible 00:37:41] the bridge that we have, the three bridges that you can say that they are in worse condition [inaudible 00:37:50] and the one that needs more attention?

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Chair Rodriguez, you are breaking up some in the transmission, but I think you asked what bridges-- I mean--

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Bridges in worse condition and that we have today in New York City. The bridges being able to give it the attention of the investment [inaudible 00:38:18].

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: So, we are in the process. I have asked our bridges group to come up with bridges other than the BQE, which is a series of bridges in relevant parts that we know about and that we are working on, but I have asked our bridges group to come up with an identification of other bridge is that require attention and I am awaiting the response, but we will certainly keep you informed

and, again, this is a priority. We need to identify the bridges that require our attention. And we will certainly keep you, as Chair, and the Committee advised on that.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. And, if it's possible, so I would like for you to get your team to look at the 207 bridge in my district up town. And not necessarily-- I don't know, again, what is the condition of the bridge, but I know that with major rezoning, that things got-- the state law gave the okay to go ahead and many projects that are ahead of us including a big one in one [inaudible 00:39:38] bridge and that bridge-- again, I don't know about the condition, but I know that the bridge is [inaudible 00:39:45] for the numbers of units that we have been having in the Manhattan side--

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Yep.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Band the 207 bridge connecting Manhattan and the Bronx [inaudible 00:39:56] the condition and if it is possible to include that bridge and a

where we need to build a new one that will be much wider than the narrow one that we have today.

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2 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACH: I took
3 note.

4 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Yeah. Chair
5 Rodriguez, we will make sure that that is on the list
6 that we look at and we will be in touch.

7 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Now, on
8 Vision Zero in the public awareness campaign funding
9 that we have been together and the Council, again,
10 was able to persuade the administration to invest in
11 put like \$5 million for the Vision Zero. [Inaudible
12 00:40:39] include a reduction of 2 million for Vision
13 Zero outreach campaign in fiscal 2022. What is the
14 current level of Vision Zero public awareness funding
15 and the outreach?

16 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Yeah. Let me find
17 those numbers for you. It is interesting that you
18 raise that issue. We are having active conversations
19 within the agency as recently as this morning about
20 what we might be able to do. Mr. Jarrin is shaking
21 his head because he and I had the conversation. What
22 we might be able to do to find a savings somewhere
23 else that we can restore that funding. The current
24 media public awareness funding for fiscal year 2022
25 is 3 million and, starting in fiscal year 2023, the

baseline will be 5 million, but if the Chairs point is that this is critically important in terms of safety and an important component of anything we are doing in that regard, I personally agree completely and we are going to see what we can do to try and restore some of that funding. Again, it was the challenge of Covid and trying to come up with the savings that were required, but this is clearly an important item.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: I don't think that-- the other thing is because of the Covid, it's like we will assume that the city should be leading the effort to invest in that in the outreach initiative every year and we, at the Council have been the ones that have been fighting to restore this funding. So, this is like the budget dancing cycle. Here we are hoping that we can negotiate and we have to celebrate that we got something. So, we understand that piece and that is the culture of New York City, but I just know that in Vision Zero, one of the most important policies of this administration, the week cannot be waiting for the next hearing on this budget for the [inaudible 00:43:10] keep pushing that they should immediately.

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2 And now, that is my suggestion. [Inaudible 00:43:17]

3 complete the budget at least is equal as it was for
4 the one that we will be finished doing.

5 Commissioner, can you-- and, again, I don't know if
6 you have that information with you, but if you don't
7 have it, your team can show it later on, can you
8 provide us with a breakdown of the outreach funding
9 and specifically for media [inaudible 00:43:46] and
10 how that media has included ethnic media.

11 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Sure. I can
12 certainly get you that breakdown. I have a partial
13 breakdown here, but let me get you more complete
14 numbers on that.

15 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: I can
16 follow up.

17 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Yeah.

18 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: But if you
19 something that you can start sharing, whatever you
20 right now, then we can add the additional and that
21 would be good.

22 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Sure. Let me see.
23 I have got, in terms of fiscal year 21-- this would
24 be from the fall of 2020, and estimated amounts from
25 the spring of 2020, we have got contract labor,

production and research was 367,000. Outdoor media was 658,000, radio media was 803,000, print media was 143,000, digital and social media was 30,000, and the breakdown in terms of the outdoor media, the outdoor advertising, I have got a borough breakdown. It was 13 percent in Brooklyn, 20 percent in the Bronx, 29 percent in Manhattan, 18 percent in Queens, and 19 percent in Staten Island. But, again, if there are other details you are interested in, Rebecca can get you whatever further information you're looking for.

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: You are looking for an ethnic media breakdown and we will follow up.

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Oh. I'm sorry. I didn't hear ethnic. Oh. So you want to know-- Yeah. We can certainly get you that.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: There is a big problem that we inherited in New York City, Commissioner. Again, it's not on you. It's not on me, but we need to break the ceiling, break the wall and address that.

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Absolutely.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: It is-- And, again, the I think that with the executive order that

the Mayor put in place which is one of the first times we have had in New York City that mandates this agency to invest, I think, 30 percent on advertising and ethnic media, it's a [inaudible 00:45:57] right now because sometimes agencies think that they have covered [inaudible 00:46:02] on the Latino piece. If they put it on Univision, Telemundo, [inaudible 00:46:07] and two other ones is covered and we have a big entity that is getting most of the advertisement and for the 11 years, that personal one is winning all of the RFPs, [inaudible 00:46:25] and when you look about any media people who read those local newspapers or see those local-- watch TV, zero, Commissioner, and my district.

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Wow. Okay. So, we--

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: And many times, over and over, I had talked to your team and the [inaudible 00:46:43], but they had to come back to say, let's put a conversation. We [inaudible 00:46:47] the local one so that we can connect it with that opportunity. So, with the [inaudible 00:46:53] and the team, whatever we can look at it, I

can tell you the answer would be that in most of the ethnic media is zero investment.

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: Okay.

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Yeah. We will absolutely make that a priority, Chair Rodriguez. And I appreciate you bringing that to our attention in making sure we do.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: And, again, that's Vision Zero. We have a big issue right now and, again, the only Mayor that has made an executive order mandating that is Mayor de Blasio. I give a lot of credit, but from his decision and where that money is going, there's a big gap and there's some people taking advantage and it's really easy to make those numbers. So, let's hopefully we can--

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Absolutely. We will figure out why-- Yeah. I mean, the numbers I was shown show an investment, but if it's not reaching your district and people aren't aware of it, then it is something we need to pay attention to, so we will.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: And my district, as we live in the 21 century and--

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: You know, 35 percent of New Yorkers-- more than 35 percent of New Yorkers has been born and raised in another country. And [inaudible 00:48:13] Ecuadorian, they're Colombian, they're Dominican, they're Puerto Rican-- that they watch that in their media. There's people that are doing TV from before I [inaudible 00:48:25]. No one is approaching those local ethnic medias to say how can we also connect, you know, with those individuals who follow and pay taxes also to have that opportunity to be connected with it. But, again, thank you for, you know, being open and I will definitely welcome to be following up with your team.

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Absolutely. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Pothole repairs, how can we look at that actually with the pandemic? The average time to close a pothole work order improved from 2.5 [inaudible 00:49:06] of fiscal 2021 compared to the same period last year, according to the MMR, DOT repaired 27,920 potholes in the first four months of fiscal 2021. How much funding does DOT allocate for pothole repair? How many potholes

does the department plan to fix this year and how many were done last year?

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Okay. We have allocated over 25 million for this fiscal year. You know, we respond to pothole demand, so the number is not fixed. It's a response to the demand when it is driven by various factors. Obviously, the weather, freeze thaw cycles, wherein crack on the pavement, and the state of the roadway to begin with, whether there was long term capital investment. We are also working to minimize the response to potholes and potholes. We have a program underway to try and do that. And as the spring, I hope, may be approaching, we are gearing up for pothole season and, again, we are happy to-- we do keep track of the pothole repairs. We do have the numbers on an ongoing basis and we prioritize roadways with chronic potholes for resurfacing and, again, we are happy to provide a report and to provide data in whatever form you would find useful as we make our progress through the spring.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. I do you have any, as you look for \$25 million for 2022, do

you have also the numbers of how many potholes were repaired in 2021?

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: The first four months of fiscal 21 I do have a number. It was 27,920 potholes.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. So, let's continue sharing, again, what every month because, as you know, the even those [inaudible 00:51:27] people, this is one of the things that all New Yorkers are looking. You know, potholes, there are repeat offenders and where do we have to focus more and the type of materials that are used in order to be, you know, those potholes don't come back every month, even though we know that many of them is impacted by the--

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Absolutely.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: the MWBE percentage. Can you provide the committee with a minority and women opportunity percentage for DOT contracts for fiscal 2020 and for fiscal 2021?

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Yes. Let me find-- They are in my notes. Let me find them. Sorry. Give me one moment. I know I saw it. Yeah. Thanks. Okay. So, for fiscal year 20, contracts by

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2 ethnicity, a total of 331 MWBE contracts of which 27
3 were awarded to black-owned businesses, 65 Hispanic,
4 165 Caucasian female, and 74 Asian. I also have the
5 dollar amounts. And then, in fiscal year 21, we have
6 got 152 contracts. 10 to black-owned businesses, 26
7 to Hispanic, 33 to Caucasian female, and 83 to Asian.
8 And I have the dollar amounts, as well. If you'd
9 like, we could provide that to your office.

10 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. And again--

11 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Yeah.

12 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: As one area that
13 also we're looking to see how we can make improvement
14 and--

15 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Absolutely.

16 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Do you, by any
17 chance, have those numbers for those who got the
18 contracts also by their address? So like you can
19 also share with us where are those entity location
20 [inaudible 00:54:09] and community board and Council
21 District?

22 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Yeah. I don't have
23 that data handy, but we can certainly look into it.
24 And as to the priority, Chair Rodriguez-- and I
25 think you and I may have discussed this as we were

out in the cold in the Bronx, this, for us, is a very high priority. This is something-- I will be been here a few weeks. We've already had a number of meetings on this subject exploring what we're doing and what we can do better. And this is certainly a priority, obviously, for the Mayor and for this department, as well. So, we will get you the data and it is something that we realize we need to do better on.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. I take your word and to dig your commitment. We are against the clock and [inaudible 00:54:59]. I don't have one person, as you know-- I can say that from a teacher, as a grassroots organizer, I know a lot of people in my community. I haven't [inaudible 00:55:10] that has said I-- and I have many who are women and minority certified. I haven't met anyone from my community that has I've been able. I've applied. I went to the workshop and I was selected as one of those that did [inaudible 00:55:30] and many city agencies. So, hopefully-- I'm more than happy to work with you and your team.

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Yeah. We have a good group working on it and I know that they are

trying lots of innovative things, but, again, if you have got suggestions, we are ready to hear them.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: So, how do you feel-- I have two or three questions before I give it to my colleagues. [Inaudible 00:55:57] how are we doing us today when it comes to crashes, [inaudible 00:56:04] and at this moment with DOT, the agency that is [inaudible 00:56:12] Vision Zero. How are we doing today compared in these months this year compared by [inaudible 00:56:22] 2021?

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Okay. Again, you were breaking up a bit. Were you asking about the results? I've got the numbers. I've got the numbers as of yesterday. Year to date, I mean, again, all of these numbers are too high because they are zero. The point of Vision Zero is zero. 19 pedestrians, one cyclist, no motorcyclists, 10 motor vehicle occupants, and while another motorized person for a total of 31. Compared to this time in 2020, it is five fewer pedestrians, the same on bicycles, and overall eight fewer. So, those are the numbers. Compared to 2013 when the program started, it is 18 fewer pedestrians, one for your cyclist, and 24 fewer people overall. So, obviously, the program has been

a success and, I mean, it is a success so far. Still, we need to make it better-- zero zero. But the program is but a success and we have made great progress since 2013. 2020 was a challenging year, but we are committed to getting back on track and moving in a positive direction for 2021.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay.

Commissioner, as you know, the Council is working with a bill that I am the lead prime together with Speaker Johnson and Council member Lander that is working very hard and committed to the transfer the correlation investigation and the SWAT unit from the NYPD to DOT. And even I got a call, you know, from a reporter saying that, in conversation with the Speaker, he said that the Council will use the power to override, if it is needed. I don't think that we need to go there. I feel that this is something that I hope that we can work together, the Council and that is the administration. I feel the thing with that is that to at this moment with us about, this is speaking about putting DOT to do criminal investigations. That is not DOT's expertise. That is not what we expect. So, the at the moment, the bill is making those changes. While the bill is

speaking is the correlation investigation squad unit should be coordinated or co-coordinated by DOT since the agency in this particular case, as you are the Commissioner, will be the ones that have or we have all the expectation that will be leading all the work related to Vision zero. If and when we pass this bill, again, it will not have an impact on the criminal investigation because that would be under the NYPD. We are not speaking for DOT to hire a DOT staff now added to that unit. My weight, the same men and women in that unit, they should be transferred and they should be coordinated with police officers that will be conducting all the investigations. If we pass that unit to DOT, how do you think that it will have an impact in the budget of the agency?

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Well, again, I look forward to working with the Council on the details of the bill and it sounds like it has changed since the last exposure. As to the impact on the budget, that would depend on what we were asked to do and I don't have those numbers I can say we have a shared objective of making sure that the crashes are thoroughly investigated and that whatever safety

measures are taken and, obviously, the police are the people to do the criminal investigation, as the DAs letter said because they are the people who know how to do that. We don't have that expertise in the agency. But, in the agency, in terms of our agency working closely with the police to make sure that we learn from whatever their investigation uncovers and we make use of that in improving Vision Zero and changing streets if they are unsafe at all of that, absolutely. As to the mechanics of how that works, you know, as I said, we are happy to work with, obviously, our partners in the Police Department and with the Council on coming up with what is best. And as to the budgetary impact, I think that would depend on what the legislation ultimately looks like.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Thank you, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: And let's go back to my colleagues that have questions and Elliott will give the direction and I know that we have Council member Lander and Miller, but I will turn it back to Elliott to give direction on who will be now asking questions.

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2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Chair.

3 We will now call on Council members in the order that
4 they have used the zoom raise hand function. Council
5 members, please keep your questions to five minutes.
6 The sergeant-at-arms will let you know when your time
7 is up. Council member Miller will be first followed
8 by Council member Lander. Council member Miller?

9 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time starts now.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Thank you so very
11 much. And, Mr. Chair, thank you for your leadership.
12 Thank you for certainly acknowledging our essential
13 and frontline workers, particularly those in the
14 transportation industry that keep us moving and
15 having an opportunity to memorialize them. Good
16 morning, Commissioner, and welcome to your first
17 budget hearing.

18 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Good morning.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: While we know that
20 DOT, as an agency, has grown by 10 percent since
21 fiscal year 2019. Are you able to provide us with
22 the breakdown of where we can find the largest impact
23 in this enhancement in your budget and the programs?
24 Similarly, the departments headcount has grown by 500
25 since 2019. Could you provide a breakdown as to

where they are, as well? And then-- I kind of want to get through the questions. The agency plans to install 720 speed cameras by this year, funded \$81 million capital budget. Are you able to provide a breakdown by community boards where these cameras are installed. We have had a great deal of concern in the outer borough, but not just the outer borough but in communities of color on how DOT investments are made, particularly around Vision Zero. It is our contention that we often get speed cameras while other communities get major investment in sidewalk and other infrastructure that supports safety. You have had a difficult time in terms of transparency identifying where this work is being done and where the investment is being done. We have seen throughout the years that budget hearings and the outer borough communities that curbs contract programs has fallen woefully short. For homeowners, this is a big deal and you talked about how lives are touched throughout the city. We have homeowners that are defined by the DOT and forced to repair sidewalks and, meanwhile, the city is responsible for the curbs and they have no curbs. The curb at program, we have been writing. We have been asking over the past few

years and have constituents that call the office, you know, all of the time because of the [inaudible 01:05:05] that occurs because they have no curbs. Or do we anticipate that there will be an investment, a large investment in the curb at program? And then, finally, the Head way program, when do we anticipate that that will and and that workforce transition over to be able to do some of the sidewalk and curb that is needed in the outer boroughs? And I will also say-- I would be remiss because I know that the Cheers talked about MWBE participation and the lack thereof. I think that it starts at the top and we need more diversity in senior leadership, certainly, and you know that, you know, when you walked in the room there. We have been having this conversation for the past eight years and I think the leadership really reflects the values of the community that they deserve. So, I will just fall back and allow you to answer those questions. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Sure. And thank you for the questions, Council member Miller. In terms of diversity within the agency and including at the top, absolutely, absolutely we agree and that is something that we are working on. And, again, we've

got a good group of people working on it. But, obviously, we have more work to do and UNI, I believe, are scheduled to get together later this month and I am hoping that we can have a good conversation in which you can ask specific questions that you would like us to address and I will represent you that we will. As to some of the specific questions you asked concerning numbers, etc., and now, I would like to ask Executive Deputy Jarrin to respond to those because I believe he's got the numbers. I could tell you how many cameras we have. I couldn't tell you the details that you're asking for now. So--

COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Okay.

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Let me throw it to him.

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: Can somebody take Joe off mute? You're still on mute, Joe.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: Can you all hear me?

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: Yes.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: Okay. Sorry about that. Okay. Council member Miller, I wanted

to start with your first question, if that's okay, and the growth in our budget. As you mentioned, our budget has grown quite a bit and I can tell you that the major components of that have been definitely, you know, when the Mayor started with Vision Zero being a priority. \$58 million overall has been added to our annual operating budget, so that is a big piece of what you have seen as the increase for DOT over these last many years. Another big part of Vision Zero has been-- and that is Vision Zero for street work and other components to Vision Zero. Just looking at the camera portion of Vision Zero, camera expansion, that has been \$80 million of growth in our annual operating budget going directly to the camera program. For our bus initiatives, it's close to \$10 million per year that our budget has grown under the de Blasio administration for the bus initiatives and, you know, I think you may know our accessibility program has expanded quite a bit. We now have a substantial size of cruise performing pedestrian ramp upgrades on the sidewalks and on the curbs and the corners. That's about \$45 million of annual growth in our budget for that. So, those items really make up the chunk of what you have seen

in our growth and headcount. We have had over, you know, as you have noted, hundreds of positions added to our headcount. So much of that is for those that initiatives I just mentioned. We can give you a detailed breakdown if you would like on that.

COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Could you do it also in terms of investment by community board and what those investments look like?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: We have, absolutely, been evaluating that it and we can provide certainly for the Vision Zero programs that are geographic in nature. That is something we can certainly provide--

COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Transparency is a bit of an issue. You know, we've actually had to foil some of this information, as well. We would hope to have it available on real time on a website, but to see where the investment actually is going, it is believed that in communities of color, it is more punitive and that we get red light cameras and not the type of investment that really keeps people safe. And so, we want to be able to disaggregate that by real data. And I hope that we are wrong and the lack of investment, but we just, you know, if you could

tell us that. And then, finally, like my constituency homeowners are really interested in curbs and sidewalks and street ponding and stuff like that, but we are not-- like that program is almost nonexistent.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: Understood.

And I believe, Commissioner, in our meeting coming up with the Council member, we can certainly provide some of the particular pieces of info that you are looking for there and we will follow up separately, as well.

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Absolutely.

COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: And how could we helpful, right? And, obviously, you know, 75 percent of the city rents, they don't talk about homeowners and curbs. How can we be supportive and helpful in bringing that? So, we just don't want-- you know, we want to be allies and partners.

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: And, Council member Miller, I think you have been doing that with the conversation that you had with Deputy Commissioner Hayward and Associate Commissioner Howard recently and you prioritized locations and we have been quipping through them and I think that has

been a tremendously helpful dialogue between us and the sidewalk division. So, I just want to thank you for that.

COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Council member Miller. Next, we will hear from Council member Lander who will be followed by Council member Deutsch. Council member Lander?

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time starts now.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thank you so much, Chair. Commissioner Gutman, welcome. It's really wonderful to see you. You and I have a long history of working together and I look forward to working I look forward to working with you in this new role and I really appreciate what you said about your misstatement becoming a true statement about the Department of Transformation. This is a moment to transform our city in ways that make it safer and more livable and get past what I think have been some of the kind of-- I don't know-- culture war versions of these critical safety and livable city--

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Right.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: So, I appreciate that energy you're bringing to it. This is an important moment to move forward. I want to start my questions with the dangerous vehicle abatement program. As you said in your testimony, you know, we have just seen the growing number of deaths on our streets as tragic. We had one right here in my district last week, you know, and we are on a path to have the most deadly year and a long time. So, we need to keep ramping up the work for safety and one of those things is implementing the program to combat reckless driving by identifying the very most reckless drivers. I know the program is not in the preliminary budget, but I appreciated the announcement that you and City Hall made last week or the week before that there is a plan to, you know, move forward with it. So I wonder, you know, can you confirm that it's your understanding, as well, that City Hall is going to put in the executive budget and what's the timeline for moving forward with the program?

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: So, again, I'm happy-- well, thank you for the welcome and I, too, look forward to working with you in this new capacity

and the answer is that I can confirm that we are proceeding with this and I believe the Mayor has announced and the DOT is absolutely on board with the proposition that we'll have the classes for those who require them under the program up and running by the fall. So, we are all in. This is on our list of things to get done this year and, you know, we are on exactly the same page there.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thank you. I mean, when it was cancelled for the pandemic, of course, I understood, but I worries that it wouldn't get done during this administration. And so, moving forward to get it done this year and rolled out during this administration, I think, is a really significant step forward. Another question about the budget. I've been seeing more bike racks go up around the city, but some advocates told me that you are running out of bike racks and that there is no new money in the budget to buy more. That you've got maybe 3000 on hand, but the Mayor pledged to put 10,000 more in. Is there money in the budget to meet the Mayors bike rack commitments or is that something that we need to get added in exec?

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Well, let's put it this way. We have ongoing-- We have every intention in the Mayor had expressed his commitment to honoring the commitments that he made in the State of the City and that additional one which we made together the day that my appointment was announced and we are in an ongoing process with City Hall and OMB to make sure that we've got funding for all of them. Your support is, obviously, helpful, but we are working on all of those issues with City Hall and OMB and we're op--

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: [inaudible 01:14:40] commitments and that's great. Green Wave made a lot of new commitments. You've made a lot. And, you know, that's not only things like bike racks, that's getting the inspectors out on bicycles to monitor the bike lanes and doing traffic calming at the intersections and on buses, as well, more enforcement of bus lanes. So I want to make sure that you have the resources you need to do all those things.

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: And we all appreciate the sentiment and we are working on that, as I said, with City Hall and OMB and are optimistic

that we will have the money available to satisfy our commitments.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Okay. But, you know, underline, like optimistic that we will get it added in the executive budget? Like that sounds like you are saying, you know, I am being a good new Commissioner, but I need some more in the executive budget if I am going to meet all the commitments that the Mayor has made. And you are a brand-new Commissioner, so I don't want to get you in trouble in your first month, but I do want to make sure that you have the resources. It's a big agency. I want to make sure that you have the resources to meet them.

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: No. And we certainly appreciate that sentiment and that support. As you can imagine, at this point, there are a lot of moving pieces and that's the reason that my answer is as it is. I mean, we're confident--

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: I appreciate that, but--

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: We're confident that we'll figure this out and--

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Okay. I am glad for your confidence, but we are going to push hard to make sure that more resources are put in the DOT budget. You know, the fact that we are getting 6 billion instead of 4 billion in American Rescue Plan funds, we have got to make hard choices, but they can't be choices that put people at risk on our streets. I have a couple--

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Agreed.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: more questions and I see my time is almost up. Mr. Chair, I'm happy to come back in a second round or can I have one more minute?

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: You can. You can.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Okay. Great. Thank you so much. All right. Two more questions, then. One more citywide question is about the pedestrianized streets program. The Open Streets programs. You know, I have been such a big fan. Open Restaurants has been tremendous. I fought hard for it. I am grateful that DOT did the work for Open Streets for schools, Open Culture is going to make a big difference. On the basic Open Streets program, I do want to as a little what we are learning about how

to win equity in that program. It is my perception and-- and DOT was right about this at the beginning-- that stewardship is just critical. But if you don't have a group to help take care of it, then the odds that the barrier gets hit by a car and starts to collapse and then the whole thing kind of-- we have seen that on a lot of streets. So, what are we learning in terms of implementing that program in a way that kind of learns some of the lessons for this spring and invests in thoughtful approaches to maintenance partners with a special eye towards having, as that program becomes longer-term, that it is really equitable in neighborhoods across the city?

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: I mean, that is a very good question and the answer is that, as you have observed, in situations where you don't have local sponsors-- for example, a local BID that can assume the maintenance responsibilities, we need to find some alternatives and we are working hard at doing that. I think part of the inquiry he is getting a sense of where the streets are popular. Where they are successful. I mean, some have been more successful than others. Some have been more popular in the local communities. So, part of the

equity initiative is not assuming that one size fits all, but figuring out what works because, I mean, that is what it is all about. That is what equity requires. And to the extent that one needs help in providing this stewardship, we are looking for creative ways to do that. But, again, all of that is easier if there is community support and there is popular support for doing whatever it is in a particular location. That just makes all of this easier.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Absolutely. I would urge you to look back at the Neighborhood Plaza program which invested resources in nonprofit and partnered stewardship of plazas and made a big difference in making it possible for communities that would not have otherwise had a BID or volunteer resource partner as one way of may be building on that. All right. My final question is the district issue. DOT is planning on installing a two way protected bike lane on Parkside Avenue, but a segment of the land near Park Circle is deleted only to be 6 feet wide, contained by the barrier and that curb and it's like that is half the width of what NACTO says we need for two-way bikeways it just doesn't feel

sufficiently safe. It's got to be at least 8 feet. The rest of the space-- what can we do to make sure that we get a lane that's not too narrow for genuine two-way bike traffic there?

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Well, I think you've done it by raising the issue. We will talk to-- I will raise this. This is now on my to do list and I will raise this with the appropriate people who are designing it and we do our best to address the issue. And, again, as with all these issues-- and this is an invitation to all the Council members on the call-- we count on you to be eyes and ears in your districts and to report situations that we need to know about and--

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: That's great. And I feel that, you know, this was not like a timed to get you gotcha' question. I just heard about it over the weekend, so to ask, but I will look forward to following up off-line and I really appreciate your willingness to look into it and we will keep raising our voices to make sure that what is in the executive budget provides the resources for the ambitious transformation that you have planned.

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2 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Thank you. Thank
3 you.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Council
5 member Lander. I would like to acknowledge that we
6 are joined by Council members Levine and Yeger. Our
7 next Council member we will hear from is Council
8 member Deutsch. Council member Deutsch?

9 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time starts now.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Thank you.
11 Good afternoon, Commissioner.

12 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Good afternoon.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: I would like
14 to know how the city is responding to ponding
15 conditions based on the budget. Is that something
16 that you are keeping up with? I'm talking about
17 major pond-- we all know that, for the city to say,
18 you know, for the city to come back to say, okay.
19 This is a serious ponding issue, water has to like
20 literally sit there for, I think, seven days. So,
21 how is the city responding to like these major
22 ponding conditions and if the budget has an effect on
23 it?

24 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: We certainly have
25 money in the budget to address these kinds of street

and sidewalk maintenance issues. If you have specific examples where you would like us to look, I would be happy to pass that on to the team.

COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Yes. I have in my district, I have three major ponding conditions that has been ongoing for probably now-- I called them like two and a half years ago and I have been trying to be the eyes and ears for DOT and I am not getting any results on all three conditions and two of them are crosswalks. When we talk about Vision Zero when people need to cross the streets. And I'd like to know if I can get a commitment for someone to come out there like as soon as possible and see if we can correct that. I believe DOT has those three locations already and I could read email them as soon as we get off, but I want to make sure that, when the city does come back and a ponding condition that must be corrected, there shouldn't be any excuses not to repair those conditions no matter how difficult it may be. Yeah. Go ahead, Rebecca.

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: Hi, Council member. It's been a long time. It's nice to see you. I'm assuming that the Brooklyn office has it and if they have been long-standing issues, I am

guessing that one of the things that we have said in the past is that capital reconstruction is something that would be needed. But, can you let me follow up with Keith and see what the latest is that he has on those and then our offices can follow up with yours. Or TOPA [sp?].

COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Okay. I appreciate it because I just want to mention one more thing and, for the last several hearings, I have been bringing this up and I was told that it is in the Brooklyn office and they're going to follow up--

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: I'm sorry. I wasn't aware of that. Apologies.

COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Yeah. If it is in your office, Rebecca, I know you will follow up, but I want to make sure that it gets followed up and that it gets taken care of. This is why I don't have to come to the next hearing--

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: I will follow up with Keith today. But my apologies. I didn't recall you bringing it up been passed hearings, but I will follow up with Keith and Claudette today.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Okay. Great.
3 Thank you so much.

4 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: You're
5 welcome.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Thank you,
7 Commissioner.

8 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Thank you.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Council
10 member. At this time, are there any other Council
11 members that would like to ask a question of the DOT?
12 Okay. Oh. Council member Holden would like to ask a
13 question. Council member Holden?

14 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time starts now.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Thank you,
16 Commissioner. Thank you for your testimony and
17 welcome to the first budget hearing. I just--

18 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Thank you.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: have a few
20 questions. Not too much. I had trouble this past
21 actually two years. For instance, the bus lanes,
22 when they were put in non-Woodhaven Boulevard, there
23 were several errors that were made, especially on
24 corners where there was no turning for the cars. The
25 dotted lines were there to indicate where they could

start to turn. And, as a result, it caused a lot of problems. Not only dangerous conditions, but accident happened at these corners because people were cutting in at different times. And there were a host of other things. Like when DOT made a mistake in turning lanes, we couldn't get them corrected for sometimes six months to a year and I am wondering if, in the budget, or could there be a special unit to correct errors that are made in markings? Because it actually lingers so long and causes so much not only congestion, but pollution over, you know, a period of up to 10 months, I have seen. And my second part of my question is that I have had a number-- you know, I would just like to know the cost of the traffic-- installation of a traffic light because, for some reason, we are getting a lot of traffic lights installed very quickly and many of them-- in fact, I notified the previous Commissioner about the mistakes they make in determining where the traffic light should go. Many times they are put on the wrong corner. Can you address the cost of installing a traffic light in New York City?

2 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Sadly, that is a
3 number that I don't have at my fingertips, but I
4 suspect that Mr. Jarrin might. So, if I could--

5 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Okay.

6 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: ask him. If not,
7 we can certainly get it for you. Jeff?

8 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: He's on
9 mute.

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: Commissioner,
11 I want to get you that number. It will depend on
12 whether it is a full capital installation or own more
13 minor type of installation. There is a range of what
14 the cost might be, but--

15 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Got it.

16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: If we can get
17 back to you.

18 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Why don't--

19 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: I heard-- and you
20 can correct me if I'm wrong. I heard it was between
21 a quarter of a million and half a million dollars per
22 installation. Is that like reasonable?

23 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: That is a
24 reasonable expectation, particularly when there are
25 obstructions when we have to move other

infrastructure on the sidewalk to install it. So, that can make it very expensive.

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: And there seems to be no rhyme or reason because I just had a couple installed that didn't quite make sense. I had, actually, three lights installed which is good enough for block area in Europe parking and it didn't-- you know, I understand one of them, but the other two didn't make any sense and I never got an explanation. Each time I asked what was the criteria for installing this, well, we got a request and it went through. I checked at the precinct about the accident reports. There were really no accidents. So, I'm just concerned that we are throwing money away sometimes on unnecessary traffic lights which I have observed on residential streets cars seem to speed up when the lights turn yellow. Everybody knows that in New York City that is happening. I mean, everybody can admit to that. When the light starts to change, a motor vehicle will speed up and that is kind of very dangerous on a residential street. So--

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: You know, I could talk to the Queens office because they should

be able to provide you with some volume and crash data that we use. Because we use an incredibly-- you know, it is a federally mandated data-driven approach to where signals go. So, you know, if you need more details on some specific recent installations, I can talk to the Queens office about getting you kind of clearer data on that.

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Great. So, Commissioner, if you could just reply to the question about when mistakes are made in Street markings, why does it take so long to correct it?

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Having been here for just a month, I can't speak to the history but I can tell you that when we conclude this hearing, I will ask appropriate questions. And, again, you know, if you bring things to our attention, I can't speak to the past, but I can say that we will respond and we will try and find out an answer and if, in fact, it is a mistake, we will deal with it promptly. I mean, I certainly--

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: [inaudible
01:29:30]

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: I understand the concern for sure.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Yeah. When, you
3 know, you have the bus lanes put in, there should
4 be-- I mean it's not rocket science, right? It's--

5 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: I agree.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: You know, at the
7 corner you have the dotted lines where the cars can
8 break into the lane and I still have mistakes that
9 haven't been corrected and I shouldn't have to
10 pointed out. There should be a team that goes out,
11 inspects that, says, okay. Here is a mistake. I had
12 to document it in video. I had to show the accidents
13 that happened there and still DOT Queens did not
14 correct it and I was ready to go out with some black
15 paint and paint the dotted lines. I was joking, but
16 I said, what does it take? I made a video about it.
17 It just seems-- and when they make step a turning
18 lane, they made it opposite, again, it wasn't
19 corrected for probably almost a year traffic jams and
20 so, I think we need a budget set aside for mistakes
21 where they can correct it so they don't make it
22 worse. In just another thing. Three years waiting
23 for speed bumps is totally, totally ridiculous and I
24 did, on 76 Street and Woodhaven, I complained a long
25 time. It was finally installed a few months ago.

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2 But I put the speed bumps in in November 2017. The
3 community board approved it, I guess, and that
4 following spring of 2018 and we just got them
5 installed now on a street that had a lot of
6 accidents. Sideswiped because it was very near row
7 and I just think we need to, you know, put safety on
8 the fast track and not back it up to years and years
9 of people waiting. Thanks, Commissioner.

10 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: Thank
11 you. I agree.

12 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Yeah. And thank
13 you for raising the point. We will certainly pursue
14 it.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Thank you, Chair.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Council
17 member Holden. Our next Council member will be
18 Council member Rose. Council member Rose?

19 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time starts now.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you. Hi,
21 Commissioner, and welcome.

22 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Thank you.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: I look forward to
24 having a meeting with you specifically about Staten
25 Island issues, but--

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Absolutely.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: I noticed in the budget that there is a reduction in fairy administration and surface transit. What and where are these reductions? What is the impact and just what are these reductions?

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Again, if I--

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: Do you mean MTA reductions in bus service?

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: No. It says-- Under this budget, it says DOT fairy administration and surface--

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK:
Apologies.

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Oh.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: I can answer that.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Yes.

COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Yeah. Mr. Jarrin has the details.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: We had savings from grant fundings that were then not following through in the following year. So, in the document

2 you're looking at, Council member, this is from the
3 January plan that you're looking--

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Yes.

5 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: We reflected
6 some savings that we were able to reduce our
7 expenditures for February administration from one
8 year to the next. So, the state funding that comes
9 in that helps pay for our Staten Island ferry program
10 is, as you have probably seen in the state budget,
11 the changes from year to year. So, our city budget
12 is continually reacting to that and where state funds
13 come in, we are able to reduce city funds
14 accordingly.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay. So, there is
16 not going to be any reduction in service or impact
17 or--

18 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: From that
19 initiative, no.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Or headcount? No.

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: No.
22 Absolutely not. Service is handled completely
23 separately.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay. I'm sorry?
25

2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: There's no
3 planned service reduction, just to be clear, relating
4 to that.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Yeah. I'm glad to
6 hear that. You'd have a problem if there was. But I
7 wanted to also ask you about the status of the two
8 arles class ferries that, you know, were being built
9 and almost completed, but because of the hurricane,
10 they were damaged. You know, what is the status of
11 that and when can we look forward to them being, you
12 know, put into service?

13 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: We are back on
14 track with that. I mean, one problem we had was
15 Covid travel restrictions slowed up our ability to
16 send people down to do the inspections, but both
17 boats are on track to be delivered this year. We
18 will keep you posted and you are invited to the
19 launch or whatever the ceremony is when we put a new
20 fairy into service. We will make sure that you have
21 advanced notice and we look forward to welcoming you
22 for that event this year. It is on our list. Before
23 the administration leaves, this is going to happen.

24 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: It is so
25 exciting.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you. I was
3 trying to unmute and say thank you very much. Thank
4 you.

5 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Happy to be able to
6 deliver good news.

7 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you,
8 Commissioner. Link you to the whole team. With
9 this, were coming to the end of the section of DOT.
10 We are going to be taking a break and then we are
11 coming back at 1 p.m. with the TLC Commissioner.
12 Thank you, Commissioner.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you very
14 much, Chair Rodriguez and thank you to the whole
15 committee. Look forward to working together.

16 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Goodbye.

17 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Goodbye.

18 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Commissioner Aloysee,
19 we'd like to check your audio. Still can't hear
20 you.

21 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: Can you
22 hear me now?

23 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Yes. Yes. Thank you.

24 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK:
25 Wonderful.

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2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: While we are here, can
3 we do the Assistant Commissioner Vincent Chen's
4 audio, as well?

5 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER CHEN: Hello.
6 Check.

7 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Yes.

8 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER CHEN: One.
9 Two.

10 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Thank you.

11 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER CHEN: Thank
12 you.

13 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Chair, whenever you are
14 ready.

15 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Give me one minute,
16 okay?

17 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Okay, sir.

18 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. Okay.
19 I'm ready.

20 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: You may begin, sir.

21 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Welcome back
22 to the hearing on the Committee on Transportation.
23 After listening to the DOT Commissioner and his team
24 and now we will hear from the Taxi Limousine
25 Commission as they report on an industry that has

been devastated by the Covid 19 pandemic.

Tragically, there was a 66 percent decline in the number of drivers on the street in December 2020 when compared to 2019 before the pandemic. Taxiing Limousine Commission's proposed fiscal 2022 preliminary budget totals 54.7 million. The committee hopes to hear from the Commission on the effect of Covid 19 on the taxi industry and how the Commission is helping to protect drivers from the effect of coronavirus and how it plans to help the industry recover. I think that, you know, the committee anticipates that we will be hearing about how the Commission is following through with the Council's legislation to help provide struggling financial help and mental health services. Before we ask the committee counsel to go over some and recognizing other Council members who are here now and to administer the oath to the Commissioner, I would like to say that today we are from Mayor de Blasio about his plan to help those medallion owners. And it's a struggle and how they can be supported. However, we do have a lot of concern about the minimum contribution that is in place based on those \$65 million. I will have questions to the

Commissioner. But, as I said before, I recognize the leadership with Mayor de Blasio and all the city of New York by [inaudible 02:18:01]. Someone that I had the honor to be working with him and his administration for so many years and that I recognize the many contributions that he is made to our city and state. But, definitely we have some concern. We have questions we are not happy with the average \$20,000 that will be helping those medallion owners indefinitely, Commissioner, we will have major questions about it. [Speaking foreign language] when I want to recognize, also, and give thanks to the Commissioner for always being accessible when we had have any meeting [inaudible 02:18:58] and our team. And also we saw the stakeholders of the industry, including some owners and presidents and leaders of different sectors, including the taxi delivering industry. So, with that, give it back to Elliott.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Chair.

At this time, we been joined by Council members Miller, Diaz, Riley, and Yeger. I will now call on our panelists from the Taxi in Limousine Commission to testify. Commissioner and Chair, Aloysee Heredia Jarmoszuk, and Assistant Commissioner for finance and

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2 operations, Vincent Chen. I will now read the
3 affirmation and then I will call on each of you to
4 confirm your response allowed for the record. Please
5 raise your right hand. Do you affirm to tell the
6 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in
7 your testimony before this committee and to respond
8 honestly to Council member questions? Commissioner
9 Heredia Jarmoszuk?

10 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: I do.

11 Yes.

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Assistant

13 Commissioner Chen?

14 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER CHEN: I do.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. You may
16 begin your testimony when ready.

17 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: Hi. Good
18 afternoon, Chair Rodriguez and members of the
19 Transportation and Finance Committee. I am Aloysee
20 Heredia Jarmoszuk, Commissioner and Chair of the New
21 York City Taxi and Limousine Commission. Thank you
22 for inviting me to attend today's hearing and preview
23 the TLC fiscal year 2022 preliminary budget. With me
24 today is TLC Assistant Commissioner for finance and
25 operations, Vincent Chen. One year ago today, TLC is

preliminary budget. Was the last time I was able to meet in person with members of this committee before many New Yorkers started working from home as a public safety measure. Covid 19 affected TLC licensed drivers, vehicle owners, and businesses in many ways and these impacts will continue to be felt in 2021. We have been terribly saddened to learn of many licensees who lost their lives or who have lost family and friends during the pandemic. Many TLC staff understand this pain all too well, having also lost family and friends, including our colleagues, David Lui and Muka Shulka [sp?] From the licensing division. Since then, the TLC has been focused, like all other city agencies, on our response to Covid 19, supporting our licensees by keeping agency operations running, and connecting them with opportunities for income and relief while supporting the city's relief efforts. In the spring of 2020, the TLC adapted to the crisis with remote work, flexible scheduling, and social distancing to remain fully operational and maintain critical agency services such as licensing and inspections. Staff from the TLC licensed saying and vehicle inspection facilities continued to serve licensees throughout the worst of the pandemic with

over 100,000 vehicles inspected and over 105,000 license applications processed since March 1 of 2020. TLC has worked hard to keep operations running smoothly, not only as a matter of public safety, but also to support our licensees as they have tried to continue operations during this unprecedented economic downturn which has significantly reduced passenger demand. As a part of this support, TLC has focused on providing emergency work opportunities for our licensees, including Get Food NYC that enabled TLC licensed drivers to deliver millions of meals to homebound and immunocompromised New Yorkers. The program was a vital part of the city's effort to address food insecurity that was made worse by Covid 19 as not only income, but also traditional food distribution networks were disrupted. Through October 2020, nearly 10,000 TLC licensed drivers earned a total of \$40 million delivering millions of meals to homebound New Yorkers. This program involved redeployment of TLC staff from every division who staffed food sites, loaded meals into vehicles, signed up licensees, and coordinated payment. Our enforcement officers were a key part of this effort as they continue to serve the city in new

ways, not only working at food distribution sites, but also delivering meals themselves to homebound New Yorkers and assisting the Sheriff's office with business inspections and staffing checkpoints. Our outreach and communications to licensees and the public have been robust and we shared key information with licensees about local, state, and federal programs and resources, as well as health information out about Covid 19 and public health updates related to the masks, Covid testing, and now vaccines. We have posted Covid testing events in four boroughs with our Manhattan events scheduled for later this month. I am eternally grateful that TLC licensees are now eligible for Covid vaccination and have been to for several weeks now, since February 12. TLC licensed staff are working hard to connect licensees with vaccine appointments and I encourage any licensee who is interested to sign up for a vaccine. Covid 19 is still very real and we remain focused on health and safety. We plan to remain focused on our Covid response for as long as it is needed. During the pandemic, the TLC also launched its Driver Resource Center remotely which has served over 800 drivers and 500 medallion owners. At the resource

center, TLC licensees can receive financial counseling, legal assistance, public benefit assistance, and answer some questions about their license for TLC rules. The resource center has helped over 800 licensees apply for payroll protection programs and economic injury disaster loans, unemployment, cash assistance, emergency rent relief, SNAP benefits, and Medicaid. Over 500 licensees have received help to restructure medallion loans and the resource center has helped 45 licensees successfully apply for PPP loans. In total, TLC helped guide our licensees to potentially \$1.4 billion in support through federal, state, and local assistance programs. I strongly encourage all licensees to schedule an appointment with the resource Center through the TLC website or by calling 311 and asking for that TLC driver resource Center. We are excited about this important resource and I welcome any Council members here to join me for a vital tour-- a virtual tour, excuse me-- of our offerings at the resource center. We look forward to opening the resource Center in person as soon as it is safe to do so. We have continued to innovate new programs for licensees. In December, we launched a

new program called Drive NYC New York. Or Drive NYC taxi which connects yellow and green taxi owners with drivers interested in leasing their vehicles. This program is one component of our larger work to modernize and spur innovation in the yellow and green taxi industry and we look forward to marketing the service to our drivers and owners extensively in 2021. As our city has begun to reopen, it is important to stress that TLC licensed drivers have adhered to Covid 19 protections, including mask wearing, social distancing, cleaning of high touch areas in vehicles, and opening windows or otherwise ventilation of vehicles in use. To educate the public about these efforts, that TLC launched a public service announcement campaign on Link NYC kiosks and social medias and inside of our taxicabs. We hope that the campaign is helping to educate the riding public about safety measures and TLC licensed vehicles, but also remind them of the hard work and efforts of our TLC licensed drivers. Moreover, TLC has continued a key source of income for owners and drivers of accessible vehicles. In 2020, over \$20 million in taxi improvement funds were provided to homeowners and drivers of wheelchair accessible

taxis. We look forward to continuing the success of this program, serving TLC licensees as well as the community of passengers that use wheelchairs. Our accessible dispatch program offers trips in yellow and green wheelchair accessible taxis and we are grateful for the drivers who have offered this crucial service throughout the pandemic without disruption. Now, I would like to preview TLC's preliminary budget for fiscal year 2022 which is 54.6 million broken down into 41.6 million in personnel service, PS, and 13 million in other than personnel service, OTPS. This budget reflects the ongoing challenge we face as we set our sites on recovering from the Covid 19 pandemic. TLC will, of course, maintain its daily operations as we have throughout the entire pandemic without disruption , but some crucial or critical goals set forth in prior years, such as recruiting new enforcement cadettes will be delayed. Citywide limitations on hiring will also delay our ability to backfill positions that have become vacant. Last year, I explained that TLC's budget had remained flat since the arrival of the apps, while at the same time, the number of vehicles on the road more than doubled. Currently, the TLC's

authorized headcount is 578 which is lower than it was in 2014 when the apps began operating at scale. As the industry moves forward toward recovery, TLC will need more headcount and funding to address the struggles of our drivers and to deliver on the city's commitment to help stabilize the industry. On the revenue side, TLC's budget is projected to be 56.5 million in fiscal year 2022. During the pandemic, we have seen revenue collection remain stable for licensing and TLC worked hard to ensure licensees could stay on the road were returned to work as quickly as possible if they took a break. Revenue from inspections and enforcement has been lower than normal as a direct result of the pandemic. Many vehicles were not active during the various points of the pandemic, leading to less inspection revenue and TLC enforcement efforts were significantly adjusted to assist in several Covid 19 related emergency response operations as reported in the Mayors Management Report for fiscal year 2021. In fiscal year 2022, we will continue to monitor revenue collections and work with OMB to make adjustments as needed. Looking forward, I would also like to touch on some of our priorities for the future. This was

my first years Commissioner and Chair of the TLC and despite unprecedented economic disruption, I am proud of what the agency was able to accomplish for its licensees and how, throughout this time, that TLC has critically examined the future of the industry and begun to better align agencies services and structure with the realities of the marketplace. In 2021, TLC is actively planning to transition into a post-Covid world and while we remain dedicated to public health outreach and support. We also remain engaged with drivers, owners, and businesses that we license. I had been impressed and hardened to see the industry and our staff work together to convene-- to overcome many challenges and I know this resilient industry and team of passionate civil servants will accomplish great things in the coming year. I have been speaking with licensees daily for the past year and I am very excited that TLC has developed new forums for its licensees to interact with our staff. One of these new forums is a base Roundtable. A virtual roundtable discussion with car services spaces, forum where TLC enforcement, prosecution, and licensing divisions can interact with bases in an approachable way to solve the issues and problems that they face.

Our first roundtable discussion took place last week and was focused on bases in Brooklyn and we are scheduling more events for all of the other boroughs. I have also convened a taxi working group which has begun developing a strategic plan for the yellow and green industry. This group is focusing on several issues including improving the passenger and driver experience, supporting innovation and technology, and, critically reviewing TLC regulations and policies to ensure innovation can thrive. I look forward to continued engagement with licensees, including with the upcoming delivery in black car task force which we hope will produce effective recommendations for these two sectors vital to the many communities throughout New York City. Our goal is to make sure that no one is left behind and that everybody who currently exists in our industry has a place to thrive. All of you know that the complicated issues of medallion debt have been compounded by Covid 19. This has been an issue of extreme importance for the Mayor and for TLC and I know it has been deeply personal for city Council. This is why I am excited to stand with the Mayor to announce the creation of a new taxi owner relief fund

and, while some details are still being developed, the new fund will offer real relief to medallion owners who have been most impacted by unsound lending practices, increased competition, and the economic pressures of the pandemic. The fund will offer a long-term zero interest loan of \$20,000.00 to eligible-- to two medallion owners to use as a down payment on paying down and restructuring their medallion debt. This restructuring will have a multiplier effect in the hundreds of millions of dollars in debt write-downs, debt forgiveness. Additionally, the fund will make available up to \$1500 per month to make medallion loans payments for as many as six months. I have heard too often from medallion owners that, during Covid, they have had to choose between paying down medallion debt and paid for the basic necessities for themselves and their families. We want to provide relief as soon and possible not only to help with their expenses and also to restructure and reduce the amount of debt they face. We will couple this with intensified work that the Driver Resource Center and I encourage all owners to contact the resource center as soon as possible to learn about available benefits, including

the federal PPP loans. The application. For the PPP loans will close on March 31, so it is urgent to apply. These low-interest loans are another way to help manage immediate expenses and restructure debt. We have formulated the relief plan with three guiding principles. One, it must provide financial relief the actual owners. It must have the participation of the lenders to succeed and it must not undermine the value of the medallion or the industry at large. For this reason, we didn't think it was the right course to support a plan that requires loan reduction in down to a fixed amount. As public officials, we have to be very careful about unintended negative impacts on the industry. We already have experiences with that and we need a plan that is both effective and sustainable and that can be implemented immediately. Over the last year, I have heard time and time again that time is of the assets from our medallion owner community. I am excited about the new fund which represents a new day for so many medallion owners who struggle with the burden of debt. It is especially important now as we begin to envision a reopened city that we support the industry so that it can be in a place and operating as the economy reopens and

passenger demand continues to increase. Again, we don't want anyone to be left behind. As you can see, while it has been a challenging year, there is no doubt that all participants in this industry have stepped up to the challenge by feeding New Yorkers, transporting essential workers, and innovating in a variety of ways. Thank you for the opportunity to speak about TLC's work over the past year. I am happy to take any of your questions. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: So, was you and TLC involved in coming up with the Mayor's relief plan?

COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: Yes. absolutely.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. So the relief plan was conceived with-- will be based about providing a \$20,000 as one option and then the second one is a few thousand dollars that will be based on some helping to [inaudible 02:38:10] monthly payments for six months, right?

COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: If the medallion owner is having some liquidity issues after the restructurings occur, they will have access to up to \$9000 to help make ends meet if they are unable to meet their new lower monthly payment.

2 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Based on the
3 review, that's the plan that will not fly to those
4 special 6000 individual medallion owners. Were they
5 consulted in this process?

6 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: I have
7 consulted-- Sorry.

8 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Not brokers. Not
9 lenders.

10 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: Yeah. I,
11 personally, have been speaking with medallion owners
12 for the last year. I speak with medallion owners
13 pretty much on a daily basis and what I have heard
14 time and time again is that they don't have enough
15 money to put down to restructure the loans and we're
16 talking about a significant investment. \$65 million
17 is a lot of money and if you consider that we are
18 restructuring and it's not 6000-- but if we are
19 restructuring around 3200 or 4000 medallions and each
20 loan has achieved something in the ballpark of
21 \$250,000 in debt forgiveness. So, erasing a quarter
22 of a million of debt, that creates a pathway for
23 hundreds of millions of dollars collectively in debt
24 forgiveness. And that is what we are trying to
25 achieve. That is the goal. I've heard that from

every single stakeholder and from the advocates in this industry and we have to move forward. I think this is the smart way to leverage limited city resources. We already have seen thousands of loans restructured and now we want to make sure that those that don't have the ability to come up with \$20,000 to be able to-- to facilitate that restructuring so that they can cut their debt, so that they can cut their monthly payments, and so that we can focus on the business of providing for higher transportation to our passengers, to New York City residents, and to our visitors.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Commissioner, I don't know who City Hall heard from when it comes to individual medallion owners. All I can tell you is that I've been getting email through email, call from call of individual medallion owners about this plan and how they were not consulted. So, which leader from the individual medallion owners did City Hall consult and specifically around this plan?

COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: We have been speaking with medallion owners. Individual owners. I have personally been speaking with medallion owners on this. I do it through my working

group. I do it having one-on-one conversations with our licensees and, time and time again, our owners are telling us that they are straddled with too much debt, that they need their principal to be reduced, that they need lower monthly payments, and that they need better loan options and this plan that is funded with a significant amount of money at \$65 million will help achieve that.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Again, Commissioner, this plan that these taxi owner relief fund announced by the Mayor consisted of \$65 million. We provide help that goes up to \$20,000 and then the second piece is to help them with their monthly payment for six months. I have talked to many individual owners that were not consulted based on what I heard and I feel that this doesn't make any connection with the recommendation that came out from the yellow taxi medallion task force. And the fact that City Hall made that announcement without any consultation with the Council when we have been working together. I don't think that it shows any good intention of addressing the crisis, both sides, City Hall and the Council together. How many medallion-- and, again, I know that's my approach.

Very honest with this. I don't think that, again, this plan is even close to the recommendation that came out from the plan that we presented when we had the hearing and when we had our working group. Where is the money coming from?

COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: This will be from city expense dollars.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Where, specifically? Where is this money coming from?

COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: It will come from the city's-- the Mayor's budget expense dollars that will be facilitated from the city as a result of stimulus monies.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Can you mention some of the players that represented individual medallion owners that City Hall had a conversation around this particular plan?

COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: I have personally spoken with over 100 medallion owners since my time here and all the owners that I have spoken to-- and I am not comfortable giving your individual names at a public hearing without having first gotten permission from these individual owners to discuss their personal business on the record, but

I can assure you that I have personally spoken with medallion owners and all the medallion owners but I have spoken to have consistently expressed to me that their loans are too high, that they need lower monthly payments, and that they need to reduce the principal amounts that is owed in this plan that we put forth today will help achieve those three things. If you would like to have a conversation off-line, I would be delighted to bring all the people that I have spoken to personally over the last year into a conversation with you so that you can have the proof that you are requesting.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Oh, no. This is not towards you. I expressed it to City Hall this morning when [inaudible 02:44:26] to share with me that they will be making the announcement. I think that this-- the [inaudible 02:44:33] respect so the Council, as a partner, doesn't show respect to the key player that we have working with us for many months in the medallion task force and I don't think that this announcement by this Mayor, the \$65 million, has anything to do to be close to the recommendation to come out from the yellow taxi medallion task force. So this is not toward you and

I think that we do have leaders that represent and speak out on behalf of the independent medallion owners. And I'm not asking for anything that is confidential between City Hall or any individual. I feel that this plan reflects more conversation between City Hall and lender more than conversation between City Hall and individual medallion owners in the city Council.

COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: If I may just clarify. I would like to clarify on the record that this plan is a city led plan and that it is not a plan that was developed in consult or consort with any lenders.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: By no means did I say it was developed by that. But let me be honest with you. Mayor de Blasio should not be [inaudible 02:45:56], neither his team. Approaching things in a different way, as we have been doing for many years. We are in the middle of a crisis. We have not been able to rescue any medallions. While we have seen a lot of people losing the medallion, what we have seen before, during, and after the pandemic, more medallion started being in the garage. So, unless City All is ready to have a conversation one-on-one

with all of us, all the stakeholders, I feel that this taxi owner relief fund reflects for me a consultation more with lenders than individual medallion owners.

COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: And I understand your position and I respect to you and your opinions and all I can do is continue to reassure you that this plan was not developed in consultation with any lenders. This is a driver owner plan. We want to put money into the pockets of our driver owners. We want to write down their debt. We want to ensure that they allow less and that they have more manageable monthly payments. This is a solid plan. It will create a pathway to the debt forgiveness that a lot of proposals and other individuals have been requiring and I am happy to facilitate any continued conversation and we need your collaboration and your partnership for the health of the industry. And so, we would be very happy to set these one-on-one meetings.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: So, this---

COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: This is the time for us to work together. This is good.

2 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: I have 11 years at
3 the Council. That is what I have been doing my whole
4 life as a member of this committee since last elected
5 in 2009 and as the Chairman of this committee for the
6 last seven years. So, however the [inaudible
7 02:47:54] this announcement came out, this doesn't
8 reflect the level of cooperation that we have had
9 with City Hall addressing this crisis. So, you just
10 said that this plan came out, you know, from you
11 guys, so you didn't have consultations with lenders?

12 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: This plan
13 was not done in consultation with any lenders.

14 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: So, how do you--
15 How do you know that this plan can work when lenders
16 were not able to share the input on individual
17 medallion owners that this can work?

18 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: So, first
19 of all, you know, that restructurings have been--
20 you have learned through the medallion task force
21 that restructurings are a vital path to debt
22 forgiveness and, over the last, you know, years and
23 always, restructurings always assist medallion owners
24 and we know that many lenders over the last year that
25 have written down hundreds of millions of dollars in

loans through restructurings. What we have heard time and time again and what I have heard personally from our medallion owners is that, because of Covid 19, because of the low ridership, they are not generating any income and, therefore, they cannot afford to the down payment that is necessary to restructure the loan. And so, this \$65 million plan will facilitate that so that the medallion owners don't have to worry about stringing \$20,000 together so that they don't have to borrow money from their friends and families or pick into the little bit that they have left in savings. This is a city standing by the yellow taxi industry and investing a material amount and saying, we will help you restructure your loans with the zero percent interest down payment loans. I am confident that this will work.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: I'm going to pause on this question. Definitely, we have different interpretations and, of course, we have never been consulted. You don't have-- [inaudible 02:50:03] City Hall to consult us, but neither expect that something can [inaudible 02:50:06] that we got in the hearing where we didn't have any level of engagement in this conversation is something that neither we had

to have any role as-- and sure based on the input that I've been getting. But a lot of people are not happy with this. What people expect that the City Hall should be working with some other recommendation that came out from the yellow taxi medallion task force. Something that City Hall had not done. Commissioner, why did the TLC-- how is the TLC dealing with those medallion owners who are underwater on their payments besides this plan that you are announcing today?

COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: So, over the last year, we have worked very closely with the majority of the lenders to halt the monthly payments. They are called holiday reprieves. And so, for the last year, at least since April 2020, most individual medallion owners who have outstanding debt had not had to pay their monthly bill because there isn't any business and the lenders recognize that. In addition to a halt and facilitating the halt in some instances, we have worked very closely with our medallion owners through the Resource Center to provide them access to PPP loans, to benefits, to unemployment benefits, as well as rental assistance. And, as you know, we had our Get Food program which

helped put \$40 million into the pockets of our drivers. So, the effort has been significant over the last year.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: And how many are these medallions returned to TLC or any agency entity?

COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: What do you mean by return?

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Those medallions that individual owners can now maintain. How many of those individual medallions have returned to TLC to lend [inaudible 02:52:33]?

COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: So, they're not returned. For anybody that is not operating their medallion, they are able-- and anytime, not just during covid, be able to put their license in vehicle storage. So they don't have to give it up. They don't lose it. They don't have to operate it and they can save costs and insurance and we do have medallion owners who put their medallions into storage and that has been a lifeline for many of our owners over the last year, but I am very pleased to share that over the last couple weeks-- particularly in the last two weeks-- we have seen

more medallions out on the road which is indicative of recovery and that our medallion owners, many of them are in a better position to start working again.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: how many medallions are in storage?

COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: I don't have that number in front of me, but there are probably about four or 5000 medallions in storage presently.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Were those medallions most owned by a corporation or individual owners?

COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: Most of the medallions that are in storage are by corporations. Most of the individual medallions are being operated on the road and, as I said a few minutes ago, we have seen nearly a 300 percent increase over the last couple of weeks and so we have more medallions on the road every day providing service to our riders.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay.

COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: The recovery is underway.

2 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: I don't know if we
3 will have time to help them. I think that we have
4 been losing months or years and, in other words, I
5 feel that we have failed to the individual medallion
6 owners and there has been specific proposal plan to
7 rescue them and we have decided not to do it. And
8 then, Commissioner, going back to the taxi owner
9 relief funds, you said that the money was coming from
10 budget that we have in the city. Is that the source
11 or it is, as I believe it was this is the \$5 million
12 dollars that the stimulus paid. So, is paying--
13 what is the source of those monies?

14 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: So, those
15 monies--

16 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: And why is--

17 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK:

18 [inaudible 02:54:56]

19 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: the stimulus money.

20 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: The
21 stimulus monies, this fund was announced because, as
22 the Mayor has said over time, that relief would come
23 as soon as stimulus monies come and you heard the
24 Mayor make the commitment today that \$65 million
25 dollars in debt relief and to facilitate debt

forgiveness would be set up in the next coming weeks. So this program is proceeding and we're going to set it up as soon as possible so that we can ensure that drivers and owners who are either insolvent or on the path to insolvency have access to money as immediately as possible.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Commissioner, before you take this role leading this agency and that's what I said to the record, it's not toward you, but whatever I say is towards we, as a city, and the agency as TLC, for many years, we told to the medallion owners, especially my major concerns about the individual ones, that they were the ones that had exclusive rights by buying these medallions, advertised by TLC to do [inaudible 02:56:16] everywhere. We, the city, has changed it-- those rules and regulations. How do you pretend that we can bring back the opportunity to the yellow taxi medallion owners to get the numbers of passengers that they need in order to-- not only to pay their monthly payment, but also to make a living. Many of them, they use the medallion, as you know, to get a loan to buy their house, to send their kids to college. And something that has a value of \$700,000

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2 or a million dollars, went down to \$100,000. So,
3 what is the future because [inaudible 02:57:09]
4 saying that help is coming. Where is the plan right
5 now to at least get from the stimulus money, 200--
6 20-- \$50 million? \$55 million would not bring a
7 solution to that industry.

8 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: \$65
9 million will yield over \$400 to \$800 million in debt
10 relief. That is exactly what is needed to be written
11 down for these medallions. So you asked me a two
12 part question. What are we doing? So, we have
13 established this fund, which is significant. It's
14 not an insignificant amount of money. \$65 million is
15 a lot of money and that money will be used to
16 facilitate--

17 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: We know about the
18 money. We know about the money. The Council--

19 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: You asked
20 me a two part question.

21 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: I know, but I want
22 to interject. I'm letting you know. The Council--

23 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: I'm still
24 speaking.

25

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: The Council is the one who approved the budget. So we work with City Hall.

COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: I'm--

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: So, we do the executive budget and by the end of the day, we know about numbers.

COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: Great. And I am not doubting that you know or your knowledge or your experience. And you know that I am a huge collaborator and I've enjoyed working with you and I've enjoyed working with the Council and I look forward to working together to ensure a vital industry across all segments. And if I may respond to your question, I'd like to take the moment now to give you a thorough answer, if you would like to hear it.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Yeah.

COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: So, as I shared, you asked me a question about the debt relief program and you asked me a question about what are we doing to be supportive of the industry. Again, the \$65 million is going to facilitate hundreds of millions of dollars in debt forgiveness and debt

write offs. That's important and significant and it's something that we can move pretty immediately. Secondly, we have to couple that with better or different enforcement. We have to make sure that we are incubating an ecosystem that is inclusive of all sectors of the for-hire industry. For-hire transportation industry. We need to regulate in a way that acknowledges our rules and the yellow taxi segment and that is also recognizing that the black cars and deliveries provide vital service across New York City. So, we cannot be one dimensional. We have to create a system or we have to improve the system where not only are our passengers receiving the rise that they need, but the men and women who work in this industry, who have been working in this industry for decades, can work and we will do that together with you through more effective regulation, through better enforcement, and we have to level the playing field and we have the power to do that together.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: City Hall has refused to work around the recommendation that came out from the yellow taxi medallion task force before you took over this, as the Commissioner. So, again,

it's not about one individual. This is about there is a specific recommendation that came out from the medallion task force that would require much more funding than the \$65 million dollars. And, of course, yes, we will continue conversation with you, with City Hall and the rest of the team because what we need is a more aggressive plan putting more dollars to rescue this industry that will fortunately grow the value medallion for the 100,00 or close to a million to \$100,000 to people that today are struggling. When we, the city, made the [inaudible 03:01:19] saying that they were the ones that had exclusive rights to do pickup and drop off and we changed those laws. We changed the numbers of passengers they would have and, based on that, the value of the medallion went down. Now, we, as a city, had to work harder and had to put more dollars to rescue that industry. With that, I mean, let me go back to my colleagues that have questions.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Chair.

At this time, we will now call on Council members in the order that they used their zoom raise hand function. Council members, as earlier, please keep your questions to five minutes. At this time, are

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2 there any members that have questions for the TLC
3 Chair? Okay. Chair Rodriguez, it seems as if there
4 are no other members that would like to ask questions
5 at this time.

6 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: So, with that, this
7 hearing is adjourned.

8 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: Thank
9 you.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair, we will not
11 have public testimony.

12 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Hello?

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We have you.

14 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Sorry. Can you
15 hear me?

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes.

17 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Yeah. So, I'm
18 sorry that we didn't allow to finish the public
19 session.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay. We can go
21 ahead and finish public testimony now, if that's
22 okay, Chair.

23 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Should I go
24 back and issue you--
25

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I think we are good
3 to go ahead and get started now.

4 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. So, now that
5 we're back on session to finish this hearing with the
6 public and with the public testimony, we will go back
7 to our counsel and who will give instructions and the
8 times that each participants have to give their
9 public testimony. If you will take more than two
10 minutes, please summarize by [inaudible 03:10:39].
11 If it's longer, you can send in written testimony
12 and, if it's longer, please summarize.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Chair.
14 I will now turn to public testimony. I would like to
15 remind everyone that, unlike our typical Council
16 hearings, we will be calling individuals one by one
17 to testify. Each panelist will have two minutes to
18 speak unless otherwise instructed by the Chair.
19 Council members who have questions for a particular
20 panelist should use the raise hand function in zoom
21 and I will call on you after the panelist has
22 completed their testimony. For panelists, once you
23 name is called, a member of our staff will unmute
24 you. Please wait for the sergeant to announce that

you may begin delivering your testimony. Our first panelist will be Amanda Berman. Amanda?

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time starts now.

Amanda, you are muted. Hold on one second.

AMANDA BERMAN: Try again. Can you hear me?

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Yes.

AMANDA BERMAN: Okay. Good afternoon, Chair Rodriguez and esteemed Council members. My name is Amanda Berman. I'm the director of the Redhook Community Justice Center, a program of the Center for Court Innovation. In 2015, the Justice Center launched the Driver Accountability Program. We did this to address vehicular offenses within the criminal court system. The program seeks to improve traffic safety, and increase accountability, and provide alternatives to punitive sanctions such as fines and incarceration and it and today, six years later, I am proud to say that, thanks to the support of this Council, the program has now served over 2500 participants across four boroughs. In addition, we have served as a model for the dangerous vehicle abatement program introduced by Council member Lander and past by Council last year. In the face of this

success, however, we continue to mourn, not only for the lives lost to the pandemic, but for the lives lost to traffic violence. Last year marked the deadliest year on our road to launch of Vision Zero with at least 244 lives lost. The need for more meaningful, effective, and equitable interventions has never been more urgent and we are, therefore, respectfully requesting the Council continue to support our program in the upcoming fiscal year. The funding would support four critical areas of work. First, it would allow us to sustain our program operations at our existing sites in Bronx, Manhattan, Staten Island, and Brooklyn. Second, it would support ongoing research to evaluate programmatic impact. Our existing preliminary findings suggest that the program is effective in reducing risky driving behaviors, but, with support from Council, we are in the process of completing a full evaluation which will continue into the next fiscal year third, renewal funding would allow us to expand our program into Queens, the only borough we are currently not surveying, yet where the need is particularly acute. Traffic fatalities in Queens increased by 22 percent last year, twice the rate of increase for the city

overall. At the Center for Court Innovation, we are well positioned to meet this need in Queens.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time expired.

AMANDA BERMAN: Oh. If I could ask your indulgence and just share one more sentence before I wrap up?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Sure. Go ahead and conclude.

AMANDA BERMAN: Okay. Thank you. Lastly, we were hoping to support the expansion of our program to address more traumatic crashes on our road. And so, thank you very much for the opportunity to testify and we look forward to working with you.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Thank you for your testimony. Do any Council members have questions for Amanda? Okay. Seeing none, our next panelist will be Ira Macner. Ira?

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time starts now.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: There you go.

IRA MACNER: Okay. Hi. Okay. Hello. My name is Ira Macner. I am a volunteer at 350 Brooklyn and a resident of Greenpoint. I am here to advocate

for the inclusion of electric school buses into the budget. All facts that I mentioned, from a 2018 study, *New School Year, Same Dirty Buses*, from the New York League of Voters Conservation Fund., The US first funded school buses nationwide. In doing so, a precedent was set to provide children with safety as they travel to and from school. I remember vividly the vulnerability I felt as a child. Children literally have no choice but to trust the adults around them to preserve their well-being. We must stop subjecting their developing respiratory systems to diesel rod school buses. Not only does diesel exhaust pollute our environment with damaging greenhouse gases, but some of the exhaust, which is a carcinogen, and tours inside of the carriage itself. According to the 2001 NRDC study, the amount of exhaust found inside a bus is four times higher than that of cars. At 2015 study from the Universities of Michigan and Washington showed that after implementing the Diesel Admissions Reductions Act in 2005, there was a 16 percent decrease in lung inflammation of children riding on those retrofitted buses. The study also showed a 20 to 30 percent decrease in lung inflammation among children already

diagnosed with asthma which, as you know, is a prevalent health challenge in New York's underserved neighborhoods. Also, school attendance rates increased by eight percent. Many see natural gas as the obvious solution. All natural gas has no greenhouse emissions, the process of fracking itself creates damaging emissions and a host of environmental problems such as volatile pipelines that threaten our wildlife, or soil, and our water supply. Electric buses are the best possible solution. They will not poison our children or that. The neighborhoods in which they drive--

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time expired.

IRA MACNER: Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Sorry. Thank you for your leadership and your goals and your work around electrical buses. It's something that is very important also for myself and for everyone in the Council. So, thank you.

IRA MACNER: Thank you. May I please have the email again so that I can email my testimony?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We will follow up with you. Thank you. Do any Council members have questions for this panelist? Seeing none, our next panelist will be Linda Nguyen. Linda.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time starts now.

LINDA NGUYEN: Hi. Can you hear me?

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Yes.

LINDA NGUYEN: Okay. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today. My name is Linda Nguyen and I am the senior policy and research analyst at ALIGN, the Alliance for a Greater New York. ALIGN is a long-standing alliance of community, labor, and environmental justice organizations dedicated to creating good jobs, vibrant communities, and an accountable democracy for all New Yorkers. Now, more than ever, year due to the pandemic, without any clear sight, we need the city budget to prioritize investments in job creation for the communities that have been hit hardest from both climate change and the Covid 19 pandemic. Within the city's 2022 budget, we are calling for an investment of 3 million dollars towards New York City S Bus, New York City's municipal electric school bus program. The 3 million dollars would allow the DOE

to expand the current to vehicle pilot program to approximately 16 additional school buses next year and would support the improvements to the necessary charging stations and bus depot infrastructure. As the person mentioned earlier today, the program expansion allows the city to directly target localized pollution in communities that have been disproportionately impacted by both climate change and Covid 19. Air pollution from New York City's aging fleet of 10,000 diesel and gas school buses creates an unequal burden, especially for students with disabilities. Students with respiratory illnesses who are more likely to ride the bus for longer periods of time and also environmental justice communities where hundreds of diesel buses are housed each day. Let's also remember that Harvard study that came out last year linking communities that are more exposed to air pollution with higher rates of death from Covid 19. Electric school buses create zero emissions, can be charged locally using renewable energy sources, and can also create high quality manufacturing jobs which is exactly what our folks need right now, especially during the pandemic. As

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2 the city looks towards an equitable recovery for all,
3 it must continue the practice of community led
4 transportation planning to identify transit issues
5 and priorities for the most mobility burdened New
6 Yorkers, including clean, resilient, and accessible
7 public transportation and Street safety. We believe
8 these investments will move New York City on the
9 path---

10 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time expired.

11 LINDA NGUYEN: towards an equitable
12 recovery for all. Thank you so much.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your
14 testimony. Do any Council members have questions for
15 this panelist? Okay. Before we move on to our next
16 panelist, the address to submit written testimony in
17 his testimony@Council.NYC.gov.

18 Testimony@Council.NYC.gov. Our next panelist will be
19 Terri Carta. Terri?

20 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time starts now.

21 TERRI CARTA: Thank you. Good afternoon.

22 My name is Terri Carta and I am the Executive
23 Director as Brooklyn Greenway Initiative, private,
24 nonprofit that has been focused on, for nearly two
25 decades, on the development, establishment, and long-

term stewardship of the Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway and a proponent of our citywide Greenway network of landscaped, protected, multi-use trails for people of all ages and abilities. Urban greenways create essential public space for human powered transportation and healthful outdoor recreation, provide numerous environmental benefits like stormwater and carbon capture, create jobs and foster acts of tourism, and provide connection to job centers in transit. Greenways offer sustainable, low cost mobility by encouraging more people to travel on bikes, scooters, and other electric and human powered means, significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions and reliance on personal cars. Greenways are also an opportunity to center frontline community leadership and promote equitable, accessible, and resilient transportation and infrastructure solutions. The relationship between infrastructure and health is undeniable and the lives of black and brown and low income communities across New York City depend on the infrastructure investment decisions that are made today. It is with this multitude of benefits and I come to you today to call out the absolute essential need for increased capital

commitments to the closing gaps in our Greenway network in this capital budget cycle. Specifically, BGI asks the New York City Council Committee on Transportation and DOT Commissioner Gutman to advocate and approve necessary capital investments to close these gaps. Currently, greenways run through every district in the city, but they are rarely connected and, therefore, cannot deliver benefits equitably or fully. Our city needs bold and robust investments in public realm infrastructure that will enable all communities to thrive. We need to take a holistic citywide and interagency view. Significant capital investments made by other agencies can't be fully realized until corresponding DOT right-of-way projects are committed.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time expired.

TERRI CARTA: I have one closing sentence that support for greenways is overwhelming across age, gender, neighborhood, and level of physical activity and emphasize the likely rate of return on a relatively modest level of investment. Thank you so much for your time today. We look forward to working with you.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. Are there any questions for this panelist? Okay. Seeing none, Chair, I will turn it back over to you.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you, everyone. Especially the sergeants and everyone behind the screen. The tech team and all members of the finance, the lawyers, in my own team in my office. So, hopefully we will continue again having conversation with the issue related to the relief fund that was announced today by the Mayor, as you heard. I don't think that the \$65 million as a solution to the crisis, especially when we put specific recommendations after we have spent months working in the yellow taxi medallion task force. With that, this hearing is now officially adjourned. Thank you.

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 May 26, 2021