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Int. No. 619

By Council Members Marte, the Public Advocate (Mr. Williams), Won, Hanif, Ung, Hudson, Gutiérrez, Zhuang and Avilés

A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to requiring the department of transportation to install bilingual street name signs

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. Subchapter 1 of chapter 1 of title 19 of the administrative code of the city of New York is amended by adding a new section 19-159.6 to read as follows:

§ 19-159.6 Bilingual street name signs. a. Definitions. For purposes of this section, the following terms have the following meanings:

Bilingual street name sign. The term "bilingual street name sign" means a street sign that provides the name of the street in English and another language.

Chinatown. The term "Chinatown" means the neighborhood in the borough of Manhattan with the borders as determined by the study required by subdivision b of this section.

b. Chinatown bilingual street name signs. The commissioner shall establish a program to ensure that each street name sign in Chinatown is a bilingual street name sign with the name of the street in Chinese and English. As part of such program, the commissioner shall do the following:

1. Conduct a study to determine the borders of Chinatown and issue a report on such study's findings to the mayor, the speaker of the council and the public advocate and publish such report on the department's website;

2. For each street name sign within the borders determined by the study pursuant to paragraph 1 of this

subdivision, add the Chinese name of the street to each street name sign that is not a bilingual street name sign, at a rate of no fewer than 50 bilingual street name signs annually, until each such sign has the street name in Chinese and English; and

3. Beginning 50 years after the effective date of the local law that added this section, and continuing every 50 years thereafter, conduct a study to reassess the borders of Chinatown and the street name signs within such borders.

c. Citywide bilingual street name signs. The commissioner shall establish a program to allow bilingual street name signs to be made available throughout the City. Such program shall include, but need not be limited to:

1. On an ongoing basis, replace any damaged bilingual street name sign in the city with a new bilingual street name sign and enter such replacement on the portal required by subdivision d of this section; and

2. Notwithstanding the program established by subdivision b of this section, add the name of a street on a street name sign in a language other than English, at the request of a council member or the public advocate on the portal required by subdivision d of this section. The council member or the public advocate shall provide documentation on the portal in support of such request, which shall include, but need not be limited to, (i) a letter of approval from a community board, (ii) a statement regarding such sign's necessity from the council member or the public advocate and (iii) the signature of the relevant council member for a request by the public advocate. A council member or the public advocate may not request the addition of more than 15 such signs at one time and more than 60 such signs within a four-year period. The department shall add such signs at a rate of no fewer than 250 bilingual street name signs per year in each borough of the city.

d. Publication required. The department shall publish and maintain a unique page on its website regarding bilingual street name signs in the city, which the department shall quarterly update. Such page shall include, but need not be limited to, the following:

1. A portal for a council member or the public advocate to enter a request to add a bilingual street name

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sign pursuant to subdivision c of this section;

2. A searchable map of all bilingual street name signs in the city; and

3. A searchable database of all bilingual street name signs in the city with each separate row of the database referencing a unique bilingual street name sign and providing the following information about such sign set forth in separate columns:

1. The street name on such sign;

2. The languages in which such sign provides the street name;

3. The community district and borough in which such sign is located;

4. The date that a council member or the public advocate requested the department add such sign, if applicable; and

5. The date that the department added or replaced such sign, if applicable.

e. Each street name sign subject to this section shall be installed and maintained to the satisfaction of the department.

§ 2. This local law takes effect 120 days after it becomes law, except that the commissioner of transportation shall take such measures as are necessary for the implementation of this local law, including the promulgation of rules, before such date.

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