

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

----- X

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE

----- X

February 14, 2023
Start: 10:22 a.m.
Recess: 2:48 p.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E: Selvena N. Brooks-Powers
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Joann Ariola
David M. Carr
Amanda Farías
Ari Kagan
Linda Lee
Farah N. Louis
Mercedes Narcisse
Lincoln Restler
Carlina Rivera
Althea V. Stevens
Nantasha N. Williams
Julie Won
Kalman Yeger

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

Jumaane Williams
Public Advocate

Priscilla Afokoba
Mother of Davina Afokoba

Amy Cohen
Families for Safe Streets

Monique Williams
Families for Safe Streets

Ydanis Rodriguez
Department of Transportation Commissioner

Eric Beaton
Department of Transportation Deputy Commissioner
for Transportation Planning and Management

Rick Rodriguez
Department of Transportation Assistant
Commissioner for Intergovernmental and Community
Affairs

Julia Kite-Laidlaw
Department of Transportation Director of Safety
Policy

Michael Pilecki

Michael Clarke

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

Sindhu Bharadwaj
Policy Analyst at the New York City
Comptroller's Office

Nick Ross
Families for Safe Streets

Elizabeth Adams
Transportation Alternatives Senior Director for
Advocacy and Organizing

Eric McClure
StreetsPAC

Amanda Berman
Center for Justice Innovation

Sara Lind
Chief Strategy Officer at Open Plans

Jackson Chabot
Director of Advocacy at Open Plans

Patrick Johnson

Glen Belofsky [sp?]

Sprole Love [sp?]

Samir Lavingia
Transportation Alternatives

Laura Sewell
Loisaida Open Streets Community Coalition

1 COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE 5

2 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good morning and
3 welcome to the New York City Council hearing of the
4 Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. At
5 this time, can everyone please silence your cell
6 phones? If you wish to testify today, please go up
7 to the Sergeant's desk to fill out a testimony slip.
8 Written testimony can be emailed to
9 testimony@council.nyc.gov. Again, that is
10 testimony@council.nyc.gov. Thank you for your
11 cooperation. Chair, we are ready to begin.

12 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Good morning
13 and thank you for joining today's hearing of the
14 Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.
15 Today's hearing is about infrastructure that saves
16 lives. Last year, traffic violence killed 255 people
17 in New York City, 16 of them were children. This is
18 unacceptable. It is the City's duty to ensure that no
19 family endures the loss of loved one because our
20 streets are designed to be safe. Every day, millions
21 of New Yorkers walk, bike, drive, or otherwise use
22 our roads to get to where they need to go. They
23 should not have to fear for their lives when they do
24 so. Improving our street infrastructure will help us
25 make this vision a reality. Over the past several

2 years, the Council has passed landmark legislation to
3 add the necessary infrastructure to make our streets
4 safer. It has allocated more than 900 million dollars
5 to the Department of Transportation for that very
6 purpose. Today's hearing is a chance to hear from the
7 Department of Transportation about how it is using
8 that money and how it is implementing the Council's
9 programs. It is also an opportunity to learn from
10 advocates how the City has fallen short and what more
11 can be done. There is no question that the City has
12 made progress on issues of street safety and traffic
13 violence since launching the Vision Zero initiative
14 almost a decade ago. Vision Zero is based on a simple
15 premise: nobody should be seriously injured or
16 killed on our roads. This initiative recognizes the
17 essential role the City can play in preventing
18 traffic violence by engineering streets and making
19 policy to encourage safer road use. Since 2014, the
20 Department of Transportation and the Council have
21 collaborated to expand enforcement against dangerous
22 moving violations, create new street designs and
23 configurations, lower citywide speed limits, and
24 adopt a comprehensive street plan. In the first few
25 years after Vision Zero began largely as a result of

2 these efforts, we saw progress. In 2018, for
3 example, overall traffic fatalities had dropped to an
4 all-time low of 202, but then this trend reversed.
5 From 2019 to 2021 the City saw increases in the
6 number of traffic fatalities each year. In 2021, 273
7 people were killed due to traffic violence, a record
8 high since the implementation of this Vision Zero.
9 We hope 2022 marks a turning point. The number of
10 traffic fatalities dropped for the first time in
11 three years, declining nearly seven percent from
12 2021, but one life lost is one life lost too many. A
13 record number of children were killed last year by
14 traffic violence. We need to do more to protect New
15 Yorkers. We need to do more to protect our kids. We
16 also need to do more to ensure we make equitable
17 investments, that we build and upgrade street
18 infrastructure in neighborhoods that have been long-
19 neglected by the City. For example, in City Council
20 districts where the majority of residents are black,
21 the rate of traffic fatalities is 16 percent higher
22 than the citywide average. These communities deserve
23 better, and I hope to learn more today about how the
24 City is working to prioritize equity as it seeks to
25 improve road infrastructure. To discuss the

2 Administration's efforts to address traffic violence,
3 we are joined today by Commissioner of the Department
4 of Transportation, Ydanis Rodriguez. I plan to
5 question the Administration about their approach to
6 street safety infrastructure and what they have
7 accomplished over this past year. Among other
8 things, I am eager to discuss the work DOT is doing
9 around intersection improvements, its implementation
10 of the Streets Plan including reported non-compliance
11 with the Streets Plan, the resources that DOT will
12 need from us at the Council to accomplish the true
13 goal of Vision Zero, which is zero fatalities, how
14 the City is working with the State to ensure reckless
15 drivers are being held accountable, what DOT is doing
16 to expand protected bike lanes, and how DOT's
17 expansion of the school zone speed camera enforcement
18 programs are going. In addition to the oversight
19 portion of today's hearing, we are hearing several
20 bills that seek to improve the City's street safety
21 infrastructure. Intro Number 369, sponsored by
22 Council Member Velázquez, would require the
23 Department of Transportation to install reflective
24 material, defined as material that is capable of
25 reflecting light and that is in compliance with the

2 manual on uniformed traffic control devices and a New
3 York supplement to the manual on uniformed traffic
4 control devices on bollards, curbs, posts, and
5 roundabouts. DOT would be required to annually
6 install the material on at least 250 bollards, posts,
7 curbs, and roundabouts in each borough. Intro number
8 415, sponsored by Council Member Powers, would
9 require DOT in collaboration with the Police
10 Department and other appropriate agencies to conduct
11 an annual study of driving behavior to determine what
12 behaviors are associated with traffic crashes,
13 injuries, and fatalities. Intro number 555,
14 sponsored by Council Member Rivera, would require the
15 DOT to paint school safety signs and install overhead
16 school safety signs on each street where a school
17 entrance is located to alert drivers to the presence
18 of school-aged children and pedestrian. Intro number
19 679, sponsored by Council Member Joseph, would
20 require the Department of Transportation to annually
21 install at least one traffic common device on no less
22 than 50 blocks that are adjacent to senior centers or
23 naturally occurring retirement communities. Intro
24 number 805, sponsored by the Public Advocate, would
25 require the DOT to accelerate the scheduled on which

2 the agency conducts the study of traffic crashes
3 involving a pedestrian fatality or serious injury
4 required by Local Law from every five years to every
5 three years. Intro number 854 for which I am the
6 prime sponsor would require the Department of
7 Transportation implement day lighting or install day
8 lighting features at a minimum of 100 intersections a
9 year, and must implement day lighting at high-
10 priority intersections, those with a significantly
11 larger number of serious vehicular crashes whenever
12 feasible. Intro number 879 for which I also am the
13 prime sponsor would require the Department of
14 Transportation to install bollards where necessary
15 throughout New York City at sidewalks, curb
16 extensions and pedestrian ramps being reconstructed
17 to make them accessible to pedestrians with a
18 disability. Finally, Proposed Resolution number
19 441A, sponsored by Council Member Farías, would call
20 on the New York State legislature to pass and the
21 Governor to sign Assembly Bill 1416 and the
22 accompanying Senate Bill 315 which would authorize
23 New York City to set a five mile per hour speed limit
24 on streets participating in the Open Streets Program.
25 We will now hear from several of the sponsors

2 regarding their bills beginning with the Public
3 Advocate on Intro 805.

4 PUBLIC ADVOCATE WILLIAMS: Thank you so
5 much, Madam Chair. As mentioned, my name is Jumaane
6 Williams, Public Advocate of the City of New York,
7 and this time last year my baby daughter was born two
8 months early, [inaudible] NICU. She's one today. We
9 plan to take the--

10 [applause]

11 PUBLIC ADVOCATE WILLIAMS: plan to take
12 the day off. She's playing hooky from daycare. I
13 was going to take a day off, but we decided to come
14 because this is such an important issue. Didn't want
15 to miss it. I want to thank Chair Brooks-Powers for
16 her leadership and for holding this hearing, and of
17 course, the same to the Members of the Committee on
18 transportation and Infrastructure for holding the
19 hearing. Before I begin, I think we'd be remiss if we
20 did not acknowledge what occurred in Bay Ridge
21 yesterday. A truck driver endangered and took the
22 life of one person and injured numerous civilians,
23 most of whom were pedestrians. We hope for the
24 speedy recovery and continue to pray for the family
25 of the victim that was lost. Unfortunate, while

2 yesterday had some unique circumstances, it is a part
3 of a greater problem that our city bears witness to.

4 For years, traffic violence has been dubbed a silent
5 epidemic. In 2022, 255 people as was mentioned died
6 from traffic crashes, and our city has not seen this
7 figure go below 200 for years. Even with the launch
8 of Vision Zero, the lowest number of fatalities since
9 the inception of the program was 208 people in 2018.

10 Every person who was a part of these numbers should
11 be alive today. In particular, I think about the
12 children we have lost and how their young lives were
13 regrettably cut short by something so preventable.

14 Our children and all New Yorkers deserve to walk
15 their streets, ride their bicycles, and be on the
16 roads safety not of harm's way. We cannot become
17 desensitized to these numbers. Every traffic death
18 is preventable-- that's what makes it so much more
19 painful-- if we make improvements and change street

20 infrastructure and pedestrian safety. Today, the
21 Committee will hear several bills. One of them
22 Introduction 0805, which is my bill, would require
23 the Department of Transportation to expedite studies
24 of traffic crashes involving pedestrian fatalities or
25 serious injuries from every five years to every three

2 years. DOT will now analyze the conditions and
3 factors behind crashes and develop strategies to
4 improve pedestrian safety. Strategies may include
5 the installation of audible pedestrian signals and
6 devices to support those with sight, hearing, and
7 mobility imparities, and prioritizing roadways and
8 intersections for safety improvements. The bill
9 would also require DOT to make publicly available
10 inspection reports of locations that have encountered
11 four or more crashes involving death or serious
12 injury. These changes will be a starting point for
13 greater transparency and collaboration. Furthermore,
14 we should increase investment and focus on
15 communities that face the most traffic fatalities and
16 lack of street safety investment. According to
17 transportation alternatives in 2022, as we heard some
18 data, the top City Council districts with the most
19 traffic fatalities house a third of black of New
20 Yorkers. That is simply unacceptable. In the top 10
21 districts with the most traffic injuries, 87 percent
22 of residents were residents of more color. To meet
23 the moment in our current street safety landscape, we
24 must invest in our low income working-class
25 communities and communities of more color for our

2 collective safety. We can envision a city free of
3 traffic violence. It is possible. I urge my
4 colleagues in the City Council to join me in
5 sponsoring Intro 805. We all deserve to feel safe
6 and know that leaving our homes and simply crossing
7 the street does not run the risk of injury or
8 fatality. That should be the bare minimum
9 expectation, and I'll continue to fight to surely
10 make this as a reality. As a driver, I know that our
11 society is too focused on infrastructure for the
12 vehicle and the driver who is the most privileged on
13 the road, even as we pose the most danger. That has
14 to begin to change. I want to thank the families who
15 are here. I want to give a specific shot-out to my
16 staff member who is here on her time, Fabiel
17 Mendieta [sp?], who lost her own son and has turned
18 that into amazing purpose. So I want to thank you
19 for you all you do and making sure our office stays
20 as an ally in helping with this issue. Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you.

22 And I'd like to just add that we are joined by
23 Council Members Lee, Won, Narcisse, Louis, Yeger,
24 Williams, and Kagan. And our little new edition to
25 our Committee. She's an honorary member. We now-- we

2 turn now to testimony. I look forward to hearing
3 from the City Administration, advocates and members
4 of the public regarding the oversight and legislation
5 at this hearing. I want to thank my staff and
6 committee staff as well for their hard work. Samuel
7 Breidbart, Counsel to the Committee, Kevin Kotowski,
8 Senior Policy Analyst, John Basile, Finance Analyst,
9 Jorge Nunez Reyes [sp?], Communication, Jack
10 Seigenthaler [sp?], my Policy and Budget Director,
11 and Renee Taylor, my Chief of Staff. Before we
12 begin, I think it is important that we set the table
13 by hearing from those who have been directly
14 impacted by traffic violence, the family members of
15 those who have lost loved ones. I'd like to invite
16 several individuals to the panel who have
17 volunteered to share their stories. Ms. Priscilla
18 Afokoba, the mother of 10-year-old Davina Afokoba
19 who we lost one year ago in my district. This
20 particular crash hit me extremely hard, and I remain
21 committed to getting justice in the memory of
22 Davina. I also want to welcome from Families for
23 Safe Streets, Amy Cohen, who lost her son, and
24 Monique Williams, who lost her father. And we know
25 that Amy Cohen is on Zoom. We will start with you,
Ms. Afokoba, first.

2 So, whenever you're ready. Just make sure you turn
3 on the microphone. While we're waiting, we've just
4 been joined by Council Member Ariola. And Council
5 Member Carr.

6 PRISCILLA AFOKOBABA: Good morning ladies
7 and gentleman. My name is Priscilla Afokoba, mother
8 to Davina Afokoba, my 10 years old daughter was
9 killed in an accessible in Far Rockaway. I stand
10 here today to talk about something that is of great
11 importance to each and every one of us. It is on
12 street safety. My daughter Davina was such a
13 brilliant child, full of energy. She was adorable.
14 She had so much potential. She had so much things
15 that she wanted to achieve in life. She comes to
16 tell me, "Mommy I want to be a medical doctor. I
17 want to save life." But rather, they took her life.
18 And this is something that would have been avoided.
19 I'm a mother and I speak from the experience of
20 losing my 10 years old daughter in a tragic accident
21 that happened in Far Rockaway. It was a horrifying
22 experience that left my family and I with a gaping
23 hole in our lives that can never be filled. The
24 cause of the accident was a learner driver that run
25 across two lanes, crushing my daughter who was on the

2 sidewalk walking home from school with her siblings.

3 The learner driver run through the-- across the road

4 crushing her into an abandoned building, and this is

5 something that would have been avoided if safety

6 rules are put in place. Like on the location where

7 the incident happened, if she made a right turn

8 rather than a left turn going against the traffic,

9 maybe this would have been avoided. And if some of

10 the signs, you know, like the stop sign is placed on

11 busy places like where the incident happened, I

12 believe this would have been avoided also. And other

13 thing is the-- if there was a speed bump probably to

14 reduce the speed, because she was coming out from the

15 parking lot. She was not on the street. She as

16 coming out from a parking lot as a learner driver.

17 With the speed she run across the road to pick a

18 little child who was walking innocently back from

19 school. Davina never knew-- little did I know that

20 this would happen. The accident, this-- the cost of

21 the accident is something that would have been

22 avoided. The loss of a child is something that no

23 parent should ever have to go through. It's an

24 experience that leaves lives-- that leave one with a

25 permanent sense of emptiness, a feeling that

2 something is missing in our lives which can never be
3 replaced. Sometime I wish if I could turn the hands
4 of time, I don't know what I would have done better,
5 but I can't question God. It is an experience that
6 nobody would have ever wished on their worst enemy,
7 and that is why I'm here to talk about the importance
8 of street safety. the agony and suffering that my
9 children and I have gone through and we're still
10 going through is immeasurable, and the thought of my
11 daughter being taken away from us and never to see
12 her again, is simply unbearable, and this has left my
13 children traumatized and has been-- and it has
14 impacted on their lives. Like sometimes my son who's
15 15 years-- that's my first child, Daniel. Since the
16 incident, it's been a year, three days ago, four days
17 ago make it a year when the incident happened and we
18 had the memorial in Far Rockaway. Well he keep
19 asking me, "Mom, at what age should I start driving?
20 Should I, you know, get my driver's license?" I said
21 I think maybe when you're 18, when you're 17, 18.
22 And he says to me, "So, when I start driving or when
23 I start learning how to drive, and God forbid I hit
24 someone and the person die. So nothing will be done."
25 And I don't have an answer to that? How else is

2 there-- nothing was done. There's no law regarding
3 that. It's just empty. So he ask me is negligence
4 permitted in law. I'm not a lawyer, so I couldn't
5 answer that still. Then my daughter, Divine, who is
6 like a twin to Davina, they do everything together.
7 Davina was such energet-- she likes dancing. She
8 like cooking, and in turn she practically could do a
9 lot of things, drawing, reading. She just love to do
10 things. Divine ask me, "Mommy, I don't think I can
11 ever-- I don't think I will ever want to drive." And
12 I don't even know how to talk them out from that.
13 Sometimes I wonder is because she-- they ask will we
14 sit down to have a family discussion weekends, on
15 Sundays basically when we have family time that we
16 interact, and they say so. Nothing has been done
17 about Davina's case. On daily basis they ask me
18 that. Did the driver ever have-- is she not supposed
19 to have a license, the driver beside her? I say
20 yeah, she's supposed to. And then they ask, "So she
21 never had one. So what has been done?" I still
22 cannot answer the question. So, but what is even
23 more heart-breaking is the fact that the driver who
24 caused the accident has not even shown us-- shown any
25 form of remorse, no other offered condolence to us,

2 even though we attend the same church. This
3 demonstrates a careless disregard for human life and
4 highlights the need for more penalties for traffic
5 violence-- violations, sorry. We have all heard the
6 phrase, we says accident happens, but the truth is
7 accidents can be prevented if we all take
8 responsibilities for our action. It's time we
9 realize that our action affects not just but everyone
10 around us. We must pay attention to our
11 surroundings, follow traffic rules, and be mindful of
12 others around us. We need to emphasize more
13 importance. We must not take the lives of others
14 into our hands. We need to invest in infrastructure
15 that prioritizes pedestrian and bicycle safety such
16 as bikes in traffic common measures. We also need to
17 raise awareness about street safety, especially among
18 children. Parents, teachers, and community leaders
19 all have roles to pay in educating our youth about
20 the dangers of the road. We need to teach them to be
21 conscious to follow rules and to speak up if they see
22 something unsafe. The tragic death of my daughter
23 Davina could have been avoided if the learner had
24 taken her driving classes more seriously and paid
25 attention to her surrounding and follow the traffic

2 rules. It is up to each of us to do our part in
3 ensuring that such incidents do not occur. Street
4 safety is not just about following traffic rules, but
5 it's also about being aware of our surroundings. It's
6 about being alert and paying attention to what's
7 happening around us. It's about looking both ways
8 before crossing the streets, staying on the sidewalk
9 while walking, and also wearing helmet while riding
10 bicycles, ensuring the seatbelt is always fastened
11 while in the car, and staying visible in low light
12 condition. Davina's death is a reminder that we must
13 take street safety seriously. We must never forget
14 the importance of street safety, and the devastating
15 consequence that can result from not following the
16 rules. It is our duty to ensure that our family
17 communities our streets are safe. I will conclude by
18 saying street safety is not an option. It is not an
19 option. It is a necessity. We cannot afford to be
20 complacent when it comes to our safety and that of
21 our loved ones. We must work together to create a
22 safe-- a safer world for ourselves and our children.
23 I believe if we all make a conscious effort to follow
24 the rules and stay alert, we can prevent accidents
25 like the one that took the life of my daughter. In

2 New York, for instance, I see this city as a place
3 where everyone is in a hurry. It's as if we don't'
4 value lives. I drive each day and I see the way
5 people, you know, they speed and everything, the way
6 people cuts in, and I wonder if they even think about
7 life itself. Like, I don't know. So, I hope my
8 story has inspired you to take safe-- street safety
9 seriously, and I hope you will join me in making our
10 communities and roads safer for everyone. And I also
11 want to use this medium to beg and plead with all
12 [inaudible] with all the-- I don't know, the people
13 [inaudible] to-- they could put in laws that would
14 guide drivers, people driving on the road, because if
15 they know that they are some form of penalties out
16 there, I think they will be more conscious. Like,
17 what happened to Davina was just an example of this,
18 and nothing was done. The lady that killed my
19 daughter, she moves on like life goes-- moves on.
20 Maybe she killed a piece of furniture, and or
21 something else, and moves on with life. Up 'til this
22 day it's a year. I never saw the lady that killed my
23 daughter. I never even-- I didn't-- I don't know how
24 she looks like. And the reason behind this, there
25 was no report, official report given to my family

2 concerning the incident. Everyone moved on like
3 nothing ever happened while my baby Davina is gone.
4 Thank you for listening to me. God bless.

5 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you,
6 Ms. Afokoba, and yes, Davina's story has inspired us
7 to act on this. this is the very site that
8 Commissioner Rodriguez and I visited days after this
9 tragedy last year, and we thank you for your strength
10 for being here today.

11 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Next, we'll
12 hear form Amy Cohen online.

13 AMY COHEN: Thank you. My name is Amy
14 Cohen and I'm the Co-founder of Families for Safe
15 Streets. It's an honor to be here today and to speak
16 at the start of this very important hearing, and I'm
17 really touched that you're letting me do it
18 virtually. I'm so sorry, I'm out of town. I'm
19 grateful to you, Transportation Chair, for holding
20 this hearing and for introducing two critical bills
21 personally. I also want to thank Public Advocate
22 Jumaane Williams for his leadership on street safety
23 and producing the bill on pedestrian safety
24 reporting. Nine years ago, my 12-year-old son Sammy
25 was killed by a reckless driver in front of our home.

2 I never thought I would be testifying in front of the
3 City Council, speaking with the media, or helping
4 lead this moment of grief-stricken family members to
5 demand change. Yet, somehow I continue to do so,
6 because I can't bear to watch more people like
7 Priscilla whose family members enjoin this horrible
8 club. Even nine years later the grief of losing your
9 child in such a senseless, preventable way is
10 indescribable. I loved being Sammy's mom. It was
11 the best job I ever had. He was incredibly bright,
12 compassionate and loving. New York City's failure to
13 keep our children safe robbed him of a chance to grow
14 up, but it also robbed me of a chance to watch him
15 blossom into the incredible young man he would be
16 today. I miss him every day, and on days like today,
17 Valentine's Day, the pain is even more pronounced. So
18 I want to thank the Council and all the bill sponsors
19 for the bills under consideration today. all eight
20 bills are a step forward, but the truth is they don't
21 go nearly far enough. Yes, we need safety signs, day
22 lighting, slower speed limits on our open streets and
23 studies, but we desperately need bold action. We
24 need rapid implementation of the proven traffic
25 coming and design changes needed to ensure that every

2 street across the city is safe to navigate for our
3 children, our seniors, and all New Yorkers. The
4 biggest challenge we face to achieving Vision Zero is
5 that these critical life-saving design changes are
6 not being implemented quickly enough. We need the
7 City Council to pressure DOT to move more rapidly,
8 adhere to its commitments with the NYC Streets Plan,
9 and prioritize the roll-out of safe street measures
10 on every dangerous street and intersection.

11 Moreover, we need every Council Member to champion
12 these proven safety measures and not be impediments
13 to change when a small group of residents think their
14 parking space is more critical than the life of the
15 residents in their district. I am also counting on
16 the City Council to support Sammy's Law in the New
17 York State Legislature this session. In addition to
18 Reso 441, the Council must also pass a home rule
19 resolution in support of this bill named after my son
20 which would allow New York City to control its own
21 speed limits and lower limits in places where DOT
22 finds it necessary. This would also allow lower
23 speed limits on open streets as proposed in Reso 441.
24 Thank you for the opportunity to speak today and for
25 allowing us to remind everyone why this work is so

2 important. This is not about just numbers or extract
3 ideas. Lives are at stake and people are counting on
4 you to protect their loved ones. Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you,
6 Ms. Cohen. Next, we'll hear from Monique Williams.

7 MONIQUE WILLIAMS: Thank you
8 Transportation Chair Brooks-Powers, speakers, the
9 entire Transportation Committee for convening this
10 hearing and to the New York City Department of
11 Transportation for being here. Again, my name is
12 Monique Williams and I am a member of Families for
13 Safe Streets, a group which should not exist. Two
14 years ago, my father, Jerry Sprigs [sp?], was killed
15 by a driver in a hit-and-run crash in the Bronx. My
16 father was truly a kind and thoughtful person who
17 still should be here, but he's-- he's gone, and he's
18 truly missed and he's truly loved. He enjoyed
19 painting. He enjoyed biking. He enjoyed chess. You
20 know, he just enjoyed being around his family, and
21 I'm proud to call him my dad. My dad, he did have a
22 hard life, but he was never disrespectful to anyone
23 and he was always helpful, and he raised two
24 wonderful daughters and he has five grandchildren,
25 and we miss him. My granddaughter was born a month--

2 basically a month after he was killed. And so, I just
3 want to say that we really need to invest in safe
4 streets. Invest in the Safe Streets Masterplan that
5 was enacted in 2021. Among the other things, the
6 Street Plan mandates that 30 miles of protected bike
7 lanes and 20 miles of bus lanes are constructed every
8 year, things that we know calm traffic down.

9 Encourage people to drive more carefully. It makes it
10 possible for people to safely commute and reduce
11 crashes, senseless crashes, and it saves lives. My
12 dad at 71 years old was still strong and capable of
13 doing so much, and you know, my dad died November
14 12th, 2020. He died a week before my sister's
15 birthday and two weeks before my birthday, and it was
16 just a crushing experience for us. Unexpected and
17 during the-- of course, it was COVID. It was hard to
18 get information regarding his whereabouts. I
19 actually learned about his death on the news, and
20 then received a phone call asking-- I received a
21 phone call from my aunt, but she received a phone
22 call from a donor's organization asking for his body
23 parts. And we basically found out that his body was
24 in Lincoln Hospital, but they gave us the runaround
25 in order to see him, you know, and it was-- it was

2 crushing. It was crushing to hear. But we need not
3 to have these deaths occur any longer. We are
4 advocating for safe streets. We need our city
5 leaders to exercise the powers that they have to be
6 implemented and for safe redesign of our streets and
7 to invest in the projects that they have throughout
8 the boroughs, because every year the City fails to
9 implement the legally mandated number of safe street
10 projects is another year that New Yorkers lose their
11 lives like my dad. Everyone has a right to go to
12 their destinations, get to their destinations safely,
13 whether they are walking, riding their bikes. They're
14 on the scooters, walking with their children.
15 Children coming from school, children going to
16 school, even driving in the passenger in the car, we
17 need to get to our destination safely, and we know it
18 can be done and we know streets can be made safer. So
19 we're asking you to implement safe streets in the
20 bills. And please, Amy's testimony, please read it
21 through. It lists every bill that we're requesting
22 to be implemented. Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you.

24 I'd like to also recognize that we've been joined by
25 Council Member Stevens, Brewer and Restler. Now, I

2 will pass it to our Committee Counsel to swear in the
3 witnesses. Thank you.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you both so
5 much.

6 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: And Council
7 Member Farías.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you both so
9 much. I'm Sam Breitbart, Counsel to the
10 Transportation and Infrastructure Committee of the
11 New York City Council. Our next witnesses will be
12 from the Department of Transportation Commissioner
13 Ydanis Rodriguez, and I will also call up DOT Deputy
14 Commissioner Eric Beaton, Assistant Commissioner Rick
15 Rodriguez, NYPD Deputy Chief Pilecki [sp?], and
16 Michael Clarke from the NYPD. I know we have one
17 more person from DOT. Sorry, can you state your name
18 one more--

19 DIRECTOR KITE-LAIDLAW: Julia Kite-
20 Laidlaw, Director of Safety Policy.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Great, thank you. And
22 we'll now administer the oath, so please raise your
23 right hands. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the
24 whole truth and nothing but the truth before this
25

2 committee and to respond honestly to Council Member
3 questions? Thank you. You may begin when ready.

4 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Good morning
5 Chair Powers and members of the Committee on
6 Transportation and Infrastructure. First of all,
7 happy Valentines to everyone. And we know that, you
8 know, this conversation that we are having today
9 definitely is a big challenge that we have in front
10 of us. But as we heard the story of the mother of
11 Davina to work so hard to be sure that, you know, she
12 turned the pain that's she's going through-- nothing
13 will bring back her child, but you know, for the
14 other generation [sic] of Jumaane child, Amani [sic],
15 my daughters Isla and Yarisa [sp?] for the all the
16 children of the future generation, we have to
17 continue working so hard to improve safety in our
18 street. Mayor Adams said very clear, traffic
19 violence is another type of violence that is in our
20 control, and we can eliminate it. I am Ydanis
21 Rodriguez, Commissioner of the New York City
22 Department of Transportation. After four years of
23 being Council Members, all these members of this
24 committee, in the last eight years I used to be the
25 Chairman of this committee. With me today are Eric

2 Beaton, Deputy Commissioner for Transportation
3 Planning and Management, Rick Rodriguez, Assistant
4 Commissioner for Intergovernmental and Community
5 Affairs, and Julia Kite-Laidlaw, Director of Safety
6 Policy. We're also joined by Deputy Chief Michael
7 Pilecki and Director Michael Clarke from the New York
8 City Police Department. Thank you for the
9 opportunity to testify on behalf of Mayor Eric Adams
10 on Street Safety Infrastructure and Vision Zero at
11 large. I first want to acknowledge the horrific
12 crash that happened in Bay Ridge yesterday. Our
13 deepest condolences are with the family and friends
14 of the person who was killed, and our thoughts are
15 with those who were injured. We wish them a full and
16 a speedy recovery. We will assist NYPD with their
17 investigation in any way we can. Now, I want to turn
18 to the positive trends from last year, and I want
19 everyone to have this in mind. Even with all these
20 challenges that we have in front of us, New York City
21 is the safest city in the United States of America
22 when it came to pedestrians and cyclists. That's
23 what the data is showing. Mayor Adams is very clear,
24 and us too, one death is too many, but still we also
25 have to look at all the work that we are doing. I

2 want to turn to the positive trends. In 2022 where
3 fatalities in New York City dropped for the first
4 time since 2018, and pedestrian deaths were near
5 record lows. New York City is defying the national
6 trends for pedestrian deaths, which are at a four-
7 decade high across the states. We are also defying
8 the pattern for the rest of New York State. These
9 local trends are encouraging and show that the steps
10 we are taking as a city to make our streets safer are
11 working. This includes our work to improve
12 intersections citywide. In January 2022, the Mayor
13 Adams-- Mayor Adams and I announced that the City
14 would improve 1,000 intersections, which we exceeded
15 by completing over 1,600 intersection improvements
16 through different treatments. These included:
17 Installing turn calming treatments at over 220
18 intersections; Installing all-way stop signs at over
19 420 intersections, the most ever in a single year
20 that has been made in our city; Installing a record
21 number of raised crosswalks; Daylighting over 100
22 intersections with bike corrals; and installing over
23 600 leading pedestrian intervals to give pedestrians
24 and cyclists a head start at intersections. In 2022,
25 DOT completed over 26 new protected bike lane miles

2 and reached 1,500 bike lane miles citywide. We need
3 more support from the Council to get more protected
4 bike lane and also to get more bike lane. We also
5 hardened 10 miles of previously delineator-protected
6 bike lanes, and will harden another 10 miles this
7 year. This will keep us on track to harden half of
8 the city's delineator protected bike lanes by the end
9 of 2023. DOT also completed 111 Street Improvement
10 Projects in 2022. Some highlights include: Protected
11 bike lanes and pedestrian safety enhancements on
12 White Plains Road from 214th to 226th Streets in the
13 Bronx; Sidewalk extensions on 8th, 9th, and Lexington
14 Avenues in Manhattan; protected bike lanes on
15 Schermerhorn Street in Brooklyn; intersection
16 upgrades at Homelawn Street and Grand Central Parkway
17 in Queens; and a raised crosswalk at Delafield Avenue
18 and Manor Road in Staten Island. We also secured
19 another win for safety. We succeeded in securing
20 authority from the State to expand the speed camera
21 enforcement program to 24 hours a day, seven days a
22 week. The expansion more than doubled the hours of
23 operation, which were limited from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00
24 p.m. on weekdays. Since the launch of 24 operational
25 August 1st, 2022-- and this is important for all of

2 us to get this data [sic] as we move forward on
3 expanding and fighting for more and other law of the
4 state. DOT has experienced a 25 percent reduction in
5 violations, with month-over-month declines. That's
6 how getting the speed camera 24 hours help New York
7 City to save more lives. While we are encouraged by
8 last year's trends, as Mayor Adams has made clear,
9 the only acceptable number of traffic fatalities is
10 zero. The safety of all New Yorkers remains DOT's
11 number one priority, and we are committed to doing
12 more. And I know that the Council is a great
13 partnership for us to accomplish that goal. New York
14 City's doing this by adopting the Safe System
15 Approach. The goal is to build and reinforce
16 multiple layers of protection to both prevent crashes
17 from happening and minimize the harm caused to those
18 involved on those crashes. Redundancy is key. If
19 one part of the system fails, the other parts still
20 protect people. This approach focuses on five
21 complementary objectives: safer people, safer roads,
22 safer vehicles, safer speeds, and post-crash care.
23 All five elements are essential for achieving Vision
24 Zero. Vision Zero is about combining engineering,
25 educational and enforcement. First, safer vehicles.

2 Vehicles are largely regulated by other levels of
3 government. New York City DOT has succeeded in
4 advocating for seatbelt laws at the State level, and
5 local laws to require sideguards on the City fleet
6 and City contracted vehicles, one of which I was
7 proud to be a sponsor to many-- to co-prime together
8 with many other colleague that we serve together
9 previously. For safer speeds, DOT has expanded our
10 speed camera program and also installs street
11 treatments to encourage slower speeds. Twenty-five
12 miles per hour is the speed limit. Everyone should
13 respect it, and anyone drive 25 they have more
14 visibility and they can protect pedestrian, cyclists,
15 and even protect themselves. Regarding post-crashes
16 care, our agency partners at FDNY and NYPD work to
17 respond quickly when a crash does occur, and DOT's
18 Emergency Response Unit visits fatal crash sites to
19 ensure any infrastructure in need of repair is fixed
20 promptly. For safer roads, DOT is committed to
21 making streets safer, and this is the focus of so
22 much work that we do. Last week, I was happy to join
23 Senator Gillibrand and other members of the
24 Congressional delegation such as Nydia Velazquez,
25 Council Member Rivera and others in celebrating the

2 over \$20 million Safe Streets for All Grant we were
3 just awarded [sic]. This funding will go towards
4 safety enhancements on Delancey Street and the
5 development of a new pedestrian model and micro-
6 mobility planning tool. This morning, we released
7 our-- somewhere here-- we released-- this morning we
8 released our updated Vision Zero Borough Pedestrian
9 Safety Plans, which is a public document. These
10 plans show us where our safety interventions will
11 have the greatest effect and help us determine where
12 to implement projects. The plans identify priority
13 corridors and priority intersections based on
14 locations where most pedestrians were killed or
15 severely injured using multiple years of data. With
16 the first plans published in 2015 and an update in
17 2019, the 2023 plan identify priority corridors and
18 intersections based on the last five years of
19 available data, 2017 through 2021. We will use these
20 new priority corridors and intersections to guide our
21 work over the coming years. And also this morning,
22 DOT released the 2023 Streets Plan Update. Also, it's
23 another public document that we have. We are fully
24 committed to the Streets Plan and are working
25 creatively with available resources to deliver high-

2 quality, high-impact projects. In 2022, DOT met
3 several Streets Plan benchmarks with record-setting
4 numbers in our city. We implemented transit signal
5 priority at a record 781 intersections to reduce the
6 time buses spend stuck at red lights. And we
7 installed accessible pedestrian signals at a record
8 494 intersections citywide. We also improved the
9 lives of 400,000 daily bus riders with projects that
10 have made bus service faster and more reliable. And
11 when we get more support, we even can expand those
12 numbers of bus lanes that we can do in our city. I
13 want to stress that the effect these projects have on
14 the lives of New Yorkers is more meaningful than a
15 particular mileage number. A project that is small
16 in mileage can still improve New Yorkers' lives
17 significantly. One great example is our work with
18 MTA at Pelham Bay Park Station in the Bronx. There,
19 one-tenth of mile of bus lanes will save two and a
20 half minutes per trip for thousands of daily bus
21 riders, and make it more comfortable and seamless
22 connection to the subway, but does little to achieve
23 our overall mileage goals. This Streets Plan local
24 law-- I'm sorry. This is Street Plan, that I was
25 also a co-prime of this Local Law, set ambitious and

2 laudable targets that we will always strive for.

3 While the agency continues to be adequately funded in

4 the Adams Administration, we continue to experience

5 challenges with agency capacity that have affected

6 our input, and by the way, this is not only this

7 agency and this is not only this city. This is

8 national challenges that we are facing across the

9 United States when it came to the challenges to

10 higher staffs [sic]. We also believe that qualified

11 public engagement is central to an equitable process,

12 and we are taking time to make sure we have robust

13 engagement with communities. That's why yesterday I

14 spent my whole day in Staten Island, standing with

15 the Borough President, Council Member in the meeting.

16 We all [inaudible] community, and as I did it also in

17 Queens. I'm going to be going doing my commissioner

18 in each borough when I'm going every month to meet

19 with all the stakeholder and all the elected

20 officials to hear from them what do they need for now

21 to support anything related to transportation.

22 Something little can have a big impact. I did a walk

23 with Council Member Kagan in his district, and he

24 highlighted [sic] to my attention that there was a

25 need to have a stop sign that they've been asking for

2 years and years. We got it done, and I know how
3 important it was for him and for all the senior
4 citizen community in his district. That's what we
5 working at DOT. We have also launched programs like
6 Open Streets and Open Restaurants that were not
7 envisioned at the time the Streets Plan legislation
8 was passed, but that are still critical to today's
9 New York. We don't measure our plan based on those
10 big ambition. We have 12,000 open restaurants that
11 save 100,000 jobs, but we are not again including the
12 program Open Restaurant and Open Street as we look at
13 this program, the program the Street Plan. This
14 means DOT staff are doing more than ever to expand
15 public space for New Yorkers while also trying to
16 meet goals that were set before the pandemic and
17 before we were getting to those other programs.
18 While we are excited to be expanding our operations,
19 like with many sectors of the economic and municipal
20 governments across the country, DOT is facing hiring
21 challenges in the post-pandemic environment. We
22 currently have-- need some water? Okay. Oh, I was
23 going to ask. Again, DOT is facing hiring challenges
24 in the post-pandemic environment. We currently have
25 four percent fewer staff than we did in 2019, and

2 14.3 percent fewer staff in the Transportation
3 Planning and Management Division which is tasked with
4 much of this work. We recently held a job fair for
5 current engineer college students, and we plan to
6 make condition offers to those and those candidate,
7 offer pending their graduation this spring. We also
8 partner with District 37 at another job fair started
9 this past weekend, where hundreds of candidates
10 [inaudible] there, and I know that our HR is also in
11 conversation to also hire from those who apply
12 through the District 37 job fair in Manhattan. We
13 are actively working to bring on new facility space
14 to be able to hire additional in-house implementation
15 crews. For example, a new yard will allow us to bring
16 on additional concrete crews this year, and we are
17 working with our staff and contractors to maximize
18 efficiency. I want to thank all the employees of
19 DOT, all the men and women for their commitment and
20 dedication to getting the work done despite these
21 challenges. They run the largest transportation
22 system in the whole country, one that have been doing
23 so many great job, but there's still there's a lot of
24 more work that we have to do. We also think that the
25 better measure of our work is the real effects on the

2 streets. Our streets are getting safer, more New
3 Yorkers are cycling, buses are moving faster in bus
4 lanes and busways, and we have created wonderful
5 public spaces in all parts of the city. The final
6 piece of the Safe System Approach is safer people,
7 and we continue to work with our agency partners to
8 create safer people through education and as well as
9 enforcement. And when I was there serving together
10 with Gale Brewer and Jumaane Williams and many other,
11 the Council started baselining a million dollars to
12 DOT for the Vision Zero education awareness. Before
13 I left, together with the Chair and others, we
14 increased the baseline to five million dollars. So,
15 the Council working with DOT put those funding so
16 that we can invest in the Vision Zero educational
17 awareness. DOT has a dedicated Safety Education and
18 Outreach team who conduct pedestrian, cyclist,
19 drivers, and child passenger workshops for all New
20 Yorkers throughout the city. This team works with
21 over 600 schools and 200 Older Adult Centers each
22 year. In addition, DOT takes the lead in
23 communication with drivers around the most serious
24 causes of crashes. The Vision Zero Street Team
25 program operates in high-crash areas, with DOT and

2 NYPD representatives talking with New Yorkers in
3 their community with on-the-street education. DOT
4 also teaches Alive at 25, a program at high schools
5 to teach young adults to be safer drivers and better
6 passengers if they are in a vehicle with someone who
7 is driving recklessly. DOT also holds STOP-DWI
8 events and oversees the classes for the Dangerous
9 Vehicle Abatement Program, educating drivers who have
10 received over five red light or fifteen speed camera
11 tickets in 12 months. The Safety Education team also
12 distributes over 20,000 helmets each year, which we
13 are able to-- which we are able to do it thanks to
14 funding that the City Council through each Council
15 Member put the money for us to accomplish those
16 number. We work directly with the Council Member
17 delivering those helmets to the cyclists in their
18 district, and is available to properly install car
19 seats for New Yorkers who drive. This comprehensive
20 work is conducted in every neighborhood with a focus
21 on our most vulnerable New Yorkers in the highly
22 crash areas. Crash data shows why safer people is so
23 important. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic,
24 the number of proportion of fatal crashes involving a
25 driver who has been driving recklessly or on a

2 suspended license has increased nationwide, including
3 in our city. In response, and as Mayor Adams has
4 announced in his past State of the City address, we
5 are calling on our colleagues in Albany to pass the
6 ROADS legislative package which stands for Removing
7 Offenders and Aggressive Drivers from our Streets.
8 These bills aim to increase accountability among
9 dangerous drivers and keep those with a history of
10 dangerous driving behavior off our streets. This
11 package includes bill to lower the Blood-Alcohol
12 Concentration threshold for Driving While Intoxicated
13 from 0.08 to 0.05. Year after year, about 30 percent
14 of fatal crashes in New York State involve drunk
15 drivers. New York has the opportunity to be national
16 leaders in this change that will save lives. If we
17 pass this bill and we will do in the whole nation, we
18 can reduce 10 percent of individual who lost their
19 life because of crashes. Suspend the registration of
20 a vehicle that receives five or more red light camera
21 violations within 12 months. Receiving multiple red
22 light camera tickets is associated with higher risk
23 of being involved in a serious crashes. Combat the
24 persistent problem of driving on a suspended or
25 revoked license due to dangerous driving behaviors,

2 including authorizing a program to impound license
3 plates and bills to strengthen penalties to
4 discourage dangerous driving. Target penalties for
5 drivers who injure or kill while driving dangerously.

6 Now, turning to the legislation before the Council
7 today. We at DOT share your commitment to enhancing
8 safety through street design and support the spirit
9 of this package of bills, and we thank you for your
10 partnership. We are actively following the data to
11 determine the locations most in need of safety
12 enhancements with the Vision Zero Borough Pedestrian
13 Safety Action Plans I mentioned earlier. We then
14 implement targeted safety treatments that produce the
15 greatest safety benefits at those locations. We also
16 continue to evaluate treatments and grow our toolkit.
17 This approach is proven to work. Traffic fatalities
18 in New York City are 15 percent lower than the year
19 before Vision Zero began, despite the pandemic-era
20 rise in dangerous driving. But let me be clear: one
21 is too many. And I also want for the Council to look
22 at 2022 data, and just look about in 2022 how we have
23 one of the lowest year when it comes years to look at
24 pedestrians and cyclists, and then to look at the
25 other numbers, more of those reckless driver and

2 driving in the highway, driving in our street that
3 they were speeding. Those number were higher, and
4 that's why the overall number looks so bad in 2022.
5 But the redesigning of the street has worked, and
6 pedestrians and cyclists in 22 was one of the lowest
7 year that we have. Because we have a robust toolkit
8 of safe street treatments, we urge the Council to
9 allow us to retain flexibility to determine which
10 treatments will be most effective in each location
11 based on our data-driven safety criteria that I share
12 with you that prove that it's working, and our
13 professional engineering judgement. While we support
14 the intent of this package of bills, we have concerns
15 over their effect on the agency's ability to make the
16 appropriate safety changes on our streets. Streets
17 are dynamic and conditions are constantly changing.
18 We need to be nimble. And as always, we welcome your
19 partnership in identifying locations of concern and
20 implementing critical safety projects. Turning to
21 Intro 679 sponsored by Council Member Joseph. This
22 bill would require DOT to install traffic-calming
23 devices at over 50 blocks next to older adult centers
24 or Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities, NORC,
25 each year. Last year, DOT released the

2 groundbreaking Pedestrian Safety, something again
3 that's been public. Everyone has it. We share with
4 the Council, and what we have seen on this study that
5 this study show how DOT's street redesigns have
6 reduced serious crashes for this particularly
7 vulnerable group. When we look at 2022, we have one
8 of the lowest year when it comes to senior citizen
9 losing their life. And again, one is too many. In
10 addition, the study contains a robust and
11 comprehensive action plan which directs DOT to
12 install safety treatments and street redesigns within
13 the Senior Pedestrian Zones where people over 65 and
14 senior pedestrian injuries are concentrated. As I
15 announced in June, DOT is targeting senior pedestrian
16 zones and installing turn-calming treatments at 50
17 intersections annually, new leading pedestrian
18 intervals, and more. We believe the Senior
19 Pedestrian Zones are stronger indicators of safety
20 need compared to the proximity to a senior center or
21 NORC. Therefore, while we support the bill's intent
22 to enhance safety for older New Yorkers, we cannot
23 support this bill as drafted. We would like to work
24 with the Council Members to ensure we can continue to
25 target our interventions where they would have the

2 greatest safety benefit for older adults and all New
3 Yorkers. And I have to recognize that Council Member
4 Joseph have been one of the closer and stronger
5 partner that DOT has when it comes to promote our
6 agenda to improve safety for pedestrians and
7 cyclists. Next, Intro 854 sponsored by Chair Brooks-
8 Powers. This bill would require DOT to daylight 100
9 intersections annually, with priority given to high
10 need intersections. DOT does extensive work each
11 year to enhance safety at intersections. As I
12 mentioned earlier, in 2022 we did this number. We
13 surpassed our goal of improving 1,000 intersections
14 by improving over 1,600, including daylighting over
15 100 intersections. Daylighting is an important tool
16 that we use in our toolbox, but it is not the right
17 solution everywhere. It also must be implemented
18 with physical infrastructure in the newly opened
19 space to prevent vehicles from turning more quickly.
20 While we support the spirit of this bill to enhance
21 safety-- salute [sic]-- at intersections, we would
22 like to retain flexibility to determine which
23 treatments are the most appropriate in each location,
24 and definitely would like to continue having
25 conversation with Chair Powers. Next, Intro 555

2 sponsored by Council Member Rivera, regarding school
3 safety infrastructure. As a parent, former teacher
4 for 50 year, and a co-founder of two schools, I know
5 what it feels like to walk to school each day and
6 think about my daughters and students traveling to
7 and from the schools. Suddenly-- sorry. Student
8 safety is a top priority for me. DOT has a robust
9 School Safety Program. Through this program, DOT
10 completes comprehensive street redesigns in high
11 crash areas near school, and we even get the student
12 to be involved as we do our planning. You can see
13 the work that we have done in this in the first chart
14 here. This is [inaudible] 190. The word, the press
15 conference that I hold at the corners in front of
16 Desavilla [sp?] nursing home, which is not
17 necessarily [inaudible] but that's what the data is
18 showing that most crashes were happening that affect
19 students, senior citizens, everyone. It was a
20 student who I challenged myself, led by Ana [sic],
21 that worked with DOT not only to learn about what
22 they can do to improve safety, but also they share
23 their idea and they work on DOT. They can be future
24 planning of DOT as they will grow up and go to
25 college. Again, DOT has a robust school safety

2 program. Through this program DOT complete
3 comprehensive street re-design in high crashes. To
4 give an example, Alexander Avenue in the Bronx is a
5 wide roadway that separates local NYCHA residents
6 from schools on the other side of the street. To
7 enhance safety, DOT installed new signalized
8 crossings and painted sidewalk extensions. These
9 changes led to a 48 percent reduction in injuries
10 overall, and 67 percent reduction in pedestrian
11 injuries. The data is showing that it's working.
12 And in Sheepshead Bay in Brooklyn, DOT redesigned
13 three miles of parallel roadways in Avenues V, W, and
14 X. We added bicycle lanes, concrete pedestrian
15 islands, medians, and new crossings. These changes
16 reduced overall injuries by 14 percent and pedestrian
17 injuries by 40 [sic] percent-- sorry, I'm sorry, by
18 43 percent. Intro 555 would require DOT to paint a
19 sign on a street and install at least one overhead
20 sign on each street where a school is present. While
21 we support the bill's intent of enhancing safety near
22 schools, we cannot support it as drafted. Our
23 research shows that the specific treatments this bill
24 would require are not necessarily effective at
25 reducing injuries. We look forward to continuing

2 conversation with Council Member Rivera, who had the
3 honor of working with for many years, and we
4 accomplished lot of things when we served together at
5 the Council. We strongly support focusing our school
6 safety work on the treatments that have been proven
7 to be the most effective in delivering safer streets
8 for students and all road users. And we will be
9 happy to work with your office to discuss effective
10 strategy for any affected locations of concern in
11 your district. Next, Intro 879 sponsored by Chair
12 Brooks-Powers, which would require DOT to conduct a
13 study on the effectiveness of bollards in high
14 pedestrian traffic areas, establish guidelines
15 governing installation, and upon determination that
16 installation is necessary, install bollards whenever
17 DOT makes accessibility-related repairs or
18 reconstructs sidewalks, curb extensions, or
19 pedestrian ramps. Crashes that take place on
20 sidewalks are horrific and shocking, but are
21 responsible for a very small percentage of pedestrian
22 fatalities and serious injuries. They are also hard
23 to predict. Moreover, installing security bollards
24 is often complicated and expensive, potentially
25 costing millions of dollars at each location. It may

2 involve moving or accommodating underground
3 infrastructure—water, sewer, power and
4 telecommunications, subway tunnels, and building
5 vaults. It can also interfere with pedestrian ramps
6 and block curb access for loading and unloading of
7 both goods and passengers. Therefore, locations must
8 be chosen with care and input from security experts.
9 As the former Chair who carried a similar bill, I
10 understand and support the intent of wanting to use
11 additional tools to keep pedestrians safer. One
12 [sic], happy to continue conversation with Chair
13 Brooks-Powers about the intent of this bill. Next,
14 Intro 805 sponsored by Public Advocate Williams,
15 which would require additional fatal crash data
16 reporting. DOT currently reports on fatal and severe
17 crashes in two main ways: one that is more immediate,
18 and another that is longer-term. Through the Serious
19 Injury Response, Tracking, and Analysis, or SIRT
20 program, launched in compliance with Local Law 49 of
21 2021 that I also was a co-prime, DOT investigates,
22 analyzes, and reports on all serious vehicular
23 crashes from the previous quarter. This new program
24 is more comprehensive than what the bill proposes,
25 covering thousands of severe injury and fatality

2 locations annually. This includes reviewing street
3 design, infrastructure, and driver behavior at each
4 crash location and making recommendations for safety
5 maximizing changes to street design and
6 infrastructure. DOT also publishes the Vision Zero
7 Borough Pedestrian Safety Action Plans released this
8 morning, which look at multiple years of crash data
9 and help ensure that our street redesign work is
10 proactively addressing the most dangerous locations
11 citywide. Transparency is imperative, but we do not
12 support this bill as drafted because we think these
13 existing crash reports provide sufficient
14 information. We would be happy to speak with the
15 Council further about these reports and also provide
16 additional information about any particular locations
17 of concern. Next, Intro 415 sponsored by Council
18 Member Powers which would require a study of
19 dangerous driving. DOT is currently working on the
20 dangerous driving study required by Local Law 36 of
21 2020. While our agency will continue to closely
22 track dangerous driving behavior on city streets, we
23 recommend that we brief the Council and allow you to
24 review the study first before legislating that it be
25 conducted annually in order to determine its utility.

2 Finally, Resolution 441 sponsored by Council Member
3 Farías-- one of the favorite one. She brought a new
4 energy in her district, more pro-cyclist, more pro-
5 protection than previous one-- which calls upon the
6 New York State Legislature to pass and the Governor
7 to sign A10647 sponsored by Assembly Member Epstein
8 and S9569 sponsored by Senator Salazar. This bill
9 would authorize New York City to set a five mile per
10 hour speed limit on Open Streets. We support this
11 Resolution as it would enhance safety on Open
12 Streets, particularly pedestrians and cyclists, and
13 ensure street remain spaces where New Yorkers can
14 gather in a safer, healthy manner. In addition, we
15 also urge the State Legislature to pass and the
16 Governor to sign the Sammy's Law, which would allow
17 New York City to set its speed limits, including as
18 low as five miles per hour [inaudible]. Chairman,
19 this is something that I hope that we can definitely
20 work fastly as possible. The Governor already
21 committed that she will work until the Sammy Bill--
22 until the bill that is similar to the Sammy Bill on
23 her budget April 1st. If we work together, if we get
24 a [inaudible], there's no doubt that Sammy's Law will
25 be done very soon and will improve the safety to all

2 New Yorkers. In conclusion, I want to thank the
3 Council for the opportunity to testify before you
4 today on issues of such importance to this agency, to
5 the Council and to this city. Achieving Vision Zero
6 will require that we continue to work together to
7 create safer streets, and also safer people, safer
8 vehicles, safer speeds, and better post-crash care.
9 Our data again driving approach is working, and it's
10 working because it's been the result of all the work
11 that we have done together from the Administration
12 and together with the Council. Traffic fatalities in
13 New York City are 15 percent lower than the year
14 before Vision Zero began, and traffic fatalities
15 dropped in 2022 for the first time since before the
16 pandemic, defying national trends. This coming year,
17 we look forward to building on these safety gains,
18 and partnering with you to get our protected [sic] in
19 the ground, projects that will use our broad toolkit
20 to help New Yorkers get where they need to go more
21 quickly and safely. I know that we all share the
22 goal of making our streets safer for pedestrians,
23 cyclists, and all road users. And now welcome any
24 question, but as a Spanish-speaking person, I'm going

2 to speak on it for one minute in Spanish. [speaking
3 Spanish] Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you,
5 Commissioner. Although it sounds unfortunately like
6 DOT doesn't support any of the bills that we're
7 looking to discuss today. So let's dig in. Traffic
8 violence, for the first time since 2019 the City saw
9 a decline in overall traffic fatalities for the year
10 2022. Although encouraging, 2022 also marked the
11 deadliest year on record since 2014 for child
12 fatalities due to traffic violence. This is double
13 the number of children killed in 2020 or 2020--
14 excuse me, 2018. Crashes have killed 94 children
15 since Vision Zero began in 2014. What factors made
16 2022 the deadliest year since 2014 for child
17 fatalities due to traffic violence? And I'm
18 interested in understanding with DOT is doing to
19 address this concerning trend. And let me color it
20 first, Davina Afokoba passed away on February 10th,
21 2022. I immediately reached out to the Department of
22 Transportation to ask for infrastructure to be put in
23 place to ensure that this did not happen again. I
24 also brought you to the site to visit as well and we
25 looked at that corridor. A year and three days later

2 there's no infrastructure change on that street. We
3 now merely received paint from the Department of
4 Transportation. That's an example that I can speak
5 of firsthand sitting here as the Majority Whip, as
6 the Chair for the Transportation and Infrastructure
7 Committee. That's unacceptable. And so I'd like to
8 know what DOT is doing to address this trend.

9 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: [inaudible]
10 being, Council Member, 12 years I know the
11 responsibility that each member has to deliver for
12 their district, and Chairman, as we have done the
13 work in your district, you also know that when we
14 come back, we hear [sic] back to you and our staff
15 share a lot of improvements that have done as a
16 result of the work have done, seeing many
17 intersection that also we've been redesigning. So
18 yes, we can look at that one and see anything that we
19 can do to improve, but also being fair, I can say not
20 only in your district, but in each Council Member,
21 that I have done the work that their members and the
22 advocate that highlighted to us any work that must be
23 done, we usually get back, you know, delivering to
24 the Council Member, because it is a commitment of
25 this Administration let by Mayor Adams that we build

2 two-way [sic] street, that we are there standing with
3 the Council Member working with them to be sure that
4 we improve-- we make any improvement or the major
5 challenges that you have. but when it come to the
6 2022, that question related to the specific, I'm
7 going to be calling on, you know, Eric Beaton who do
8 most of the work on the Transportation Planning
9 Management, he's in charge of that, and they by Julia
10 Kite who also oversee those data to also add more
11 details.

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: Sure, thank
13 you. And you know, as the Commissioner said, even
14 one child killed on our street is too much, and we
15 take this incredibly seriously. We need to address
16 locations where children are getting killed or
17 seriously injured. We put a tremendous amount of
18 work through our School Safety program and to looking
19 not just where fatalities have happened, but where we
20 think that they're likely to happen in the future by
21 looking at crashes and injuries and really trying to
22 look at the types of places where it's likely to
23 happen next time around. And sometimes that's
24 directly in front of a school. Sometimes it's a
25 block away. We want to make sure that we're making

2 our interventions at the places where they're most
3 useful. And you know, obviously we need to do more,
4 we all know that, but we do put a tremendous amount
5 of work. Whether it's daylighting, whether it's speed
6 humps, whether it's road diets and protected bike
7 lanes, we concentrate a lot of that work in the
8 neighborhoods around schools so that children have
9 safe routes to school and have ways to get there.
10 So, we think that last year was really unfortunate to
11 see that increase. We think that it was a little bit
12 of an anomaly as our child fatality rates have been
13 very low year-over-year, but it's something we're
14 watching very closely to see if there's a trend, if
15 we need to do more on design. We also do a lot of
16 work on education, working with schools to make sure
17 that children knew the rules of road. We work with
18 drivers to make sure that they're aware of school.
19 You know, it's our highest priority to make sure that
20 we're doing the work to keep these students safe.

21 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Education is
22 important, but when I look to the case of Davina who
23 was walking home from school, she was walking on the
24 sidewalk. She didn't do anything wrong.

2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: That's
3 right.

4 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: There was no
5 line in the middle of that street when this accident
6 happened.

7 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: If you don't
8 mind, and we can go back to that crash that happened,
9 but if Julia can explain about the data for last
10 year, 2022, and then of course, we get into the
11 challenge of [inaudible]

12 DIRECTOR KITE-LAIDLAW: Yes, as we heard
13 from the Commissioner during his testimony, crashes
14 that result in serious injuries or deaths are often
15 multi-factorial and that's why the Safe System
16 approach combats street safety from so many different
17 angles. We always say there's no one magic bullet
18 that is going to eliminate road deaths. It's all
19 these things working in conjunction. And for
20 example, when we look at the unfortunate number of
21 deaths of people under 18, last year we see that for
22 example we had a slightly-- well, no, a larger than
23 normal number of motor vehicle occupants, and that
24 included three teenagers who were killed in a single
25 crash on Staten Island. They were driven by another

2 teenager who was not appropriately licensed. So in
3 cases like this for example, we see-- and also in
4 that crash there was the involvement of another
5 vehicle driven by a suspended driver. So when we see
6 crashes like this that are taking multiple lives
7 tragically of people who were very young in just one
8 crash, we do realize we do have to come at it in
9 several angles, and this is why the legislative
10 package we're advancing in Albany with the backing
11 and the support of mayor Eric Adams is so crucial,
12 because it's showing that not only are we doing all
13 this crucial infrastructure work here at the ground
14 level in New York City, we're also recognizing that
15 there are factors at the state level, even the
16 federal level, that we also need support on in order
17 to be able to achieve our street safety goals and
18 we're very optimistic that because this is a data-
19 driven package informed by the tragic events of the
20 past several years that we will be able to move the
21 needle on this issue.

22 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Three of the
23 children were killed walking or biking to or from
24 school. How is DOT working to make sure streets
25 adjacent to schools and parks are safe?

2 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: So, the data is
3 showing that most of those crashes that involve any
4 fatality of the precious life of any children, our
5 students, are not happening in front of the school.
6 That happened in the surrounding area. Last year in
7 2022, I held a press conference announcing [sic] 190
8 [sic], and this is one of the typical location. The
9 reason why we decided to redesign that area which is
10 like three blocks from that school that have four
11 academy inside the HEW [sic] Complex, is because
12 we're following the data. So what we are looking is
13 what we have learned that most, again, the challenges
14 that we have is about the redesigning that we had to
15 do in the area around the school, not necessarily in
16 front of the school. So we are following the data,
17 that's what we are doing. So far, and the data is
18 proving that with the work that we are doing not only
19 in that particular site, but in those [inaudible] and
20 other site that we redesigned around the school, we
21 have seen a reduction of crashes.

22 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: In 2021,
23 there were 93 hit-and-runs with critical injuries,
24 twice as many as 2018. What is DOT doing to ensure
25 that hit-and-run incidents are reduced, and how is

2 the Department of Transportation ramping up
3 enforcement after these incidents?

4 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yeah. I got to
5 say what we're doing and the NYPD I think that they--
6 also they're here. They also can add, you know,
7 their experience on how they're working with that.
8 What I can say that, you know, what we saw during
9 COVID and year 21 after COVID was that, you know, the
10 numbers of reckless drivers, you know, speeding and
11 leaving the scene. And as you know, I've been going
12 to the scene because there have been people that they
13 have been the victim of hit-and-run. The young
14 person Rivera that was killed in Mosholu Parkway was
15 deep to my heart. I know his family before he was
16 born. So I've been going-- what DJ [sic] from La
17 Mega [sic]. I also went to Brooklyn. So we've been
18 going after, you know, the epidemic of hit-and-run.
19 So I know that there's also need for all the DA
20 across the five boroughs, they've also been asking
21 for all the strengthening the law at the state level
22 so that they can be able to so to prosecute faster in
23 those cases. We also know [sic] so that the
24 consequences of someone who leave the scene if he's
25 drunk is sometimes even higher than the hit-and-run.

2 So there's a lot of work when it comes to have to be
3 done, I think, at the state level, but when it come
4 to enforcement, going after those cases of hit-and-
5 run, our colleague here from the NYPD, they will
6 explain. Chief?

7 CHIEF PILECKI: I'll just give you some
8 quick data first. So far this year as of February
9 12th, 2023-- I'm Chief Pilecki. Leaving the scene,
10 physical injury cases year-to-date we're 885 versus
11 868, so we're up two percent. Property damage cases
12 we're down 21 percent, 3,100 versus 4,000. In the
13 prior year, we were up two percent in physical injury
14 cases, 8,894 versus 8,873. So what do we do about
15 this? Well, there's a variety of things that we can
16 do. Everything pretty much with regard to Vision
17 Zero is coordinated through our Traffic Safety forums
18 which are weekly meetings, very similar to the
19 CompStat meetings that the Department holds to reduce
20 crime. Similarly, each week the Chief of
21 Transportation pulls down the executive staff of a
22 particular patrol borough. All the captains of those
23 precincts, the executive officers are all responsible
24 for implementation of their traffic safety plan, and
25 that's where they're held accountable before the

2 Chief of Transportation. She stresses leaving the
3 scene and follow-up on leaving the scene cases. She
4 actually goes through each individual case with each
5 precinct that's making a presentation to ensure the
6 detectives are following up to apprehend any, you
7 know, outstanding perpetrators. In addition to that,
8 we focus on covered license plates. There's a
9 concern as people with covered license plates, you
10 can't apprehend them, paper plates as well. So we do
11 a lot of enforcement with regard to the paper plates.
12 We do a lot of enforcement with regard to covered
13 plates, again, to address the whole issue of leaving
14 the scene collisions.

15 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: What more can
16 the city be doing to prevent hit-and-runs from
17 occurring in the first place?

18 CHIEF PILECKI: I think when you-- so you
19 know, if you look to bring down collisions overall,
20 you would certainly decrease the likelihood of hit-
21 and-run collisions, so we strive to bring down
22 collisions overall. So, for example, again, so far
23 this year we're down 15 percent in collisions
24 overall. We're 9,470 versus 11,164. The prior year,
25 2022 versus 2021 we're down in collisions overall

2 again, 102,356 versus 109,526. So the whole thought
3 is that if you bring the collisions down overall,
4 you're going to reduce the likelihood of leaving the
5 scene collision. We think that certainly through
6 monitors, video cameras throughout the City, that's
7 always helpful in tracking down the people who are
8 responsible, and we ensure that to our traffic safety
9 forum. I can say that we focus very, very much on
10 bringing these people to justice. It's an issue
11 that's discussed every single Thursday at our weekly
12 meetings and all of our precinct executive officers
13 are held accountable to ensure that the cases are
14 moving forward and properly investigated.

15 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: but what can
16 we do to--

17 DIRECTOR KITE-LAIDLAW: [interposing]

18 Also--

19 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Sorry, you
20 were saying?

21 DIRECTOR KITE-LAIDLAW: Yes, I also
22 wanted to mention again, that when I talked about the
23 state legislation, the bill that we are supporting to
24 lower the blood alcohol threshold for DWI actually
25 could have quite a beneficial effect on reducing hit-

2 and-runs. While we don't have exact numbers, of
3 course, because people have left the scene, we do
4 know that many hit-and-run crashes, the reason the
5 person is leaving the scene is because they are
6 intoxicated and they know it, and they know there
7 will be a penalty for it. In other places that have
8 lowered their blood alcohol threshold for DWI in a
9 similar way, they've seen reductions in drunk driving
10 not only at that lower level of intoxication, but
11 also at very, very high levels like 0.2, 0.18, at
12 levels that are more likely to result in a crash.
13 They've seen that just the way that the law is passed
14 and the way the law is socialized and the law is
15 enforced, it brings down drunk driving at all those
16 different levels. So if we can bring down drunk
17 driving that way, which the data is showing is very--
18 there's a very robust body of evidence for that, we
19 think it would have a beneficial knock on effect of
20 also bringing down our hit-and-runs.

21 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you.

22 Ninety-seven percent of pedestrians killed have been
23 struck by drivers of vehicles. DOT committed to add
24 exclusive pedestrian crossing time to all feasible

2 new priority intersection by the end of 2019. What
3 is the status of this effort?

4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: Yes, that's
5 right, and we have been adding exclusive pedestrian
6 time either through full-exclusive pedestrian phases
7 or leading pedestrian intervals. We did do that at
8 all of our previously identified priority locations
9 but one of the things that we're doing in identifying
10 the new geographies is pointing out places where we
11 need to go look for that again. So we have done that
12 for our prior locations and with our new geographies,
13 we're going to continue that effort as outlined in
14 our Streets Plan update. We have implemented very
15 large numbers of leading pedestrian intervals and
16 other signal light safety improvements, and we're
17 absolutely going to continue doing that the places
18 where it's most needed.

19 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: So, for 2019,
20 did you meet the goal of doing this for all of those
21 priority intersections already?

22 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: Yes.

23 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Moving on to
24 the New York City Streets Plan. In April of 2022
25 Mayor Adams announced a historic investment of more

2 than 900 million dollars that the Council, you know,
3 was in support of to tackle the City's traffic
4 violence crisis and ensure that New York City is
5 safer, healthier, and greener. The investment
6 included nearly 580 million dollars in capital
7 funding, and more than 65 million dollars annually in
8 expense funding or 327 million dollars over five
9 years in an effort to advance the goals laid out in
10 the New York City Streets Plan, while also building
11 out critical street and public transportation
12 infrastructure. Transportation equity has always
13 been a major concern for me, as you all know.

14 Compared to the city wide average in City Council
15 districts where the majority of residents are black,
16 the rate of traffic fatalities is 16 percent higher.
17 What efforts is DOT taking to prioritize equity in
18 building infrastructure projects across the City?

19 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: I always say
20 that no one will be championing the equity than
21 myself, because I've been living in the under-served
22 community my whole life, and from Council Member
23 Brewer, who we started serving together at that time,
24 2009, to you Chair and many others that I served last
25 year. You know that for me it's not about reward.

2 It's about action. It's about our fight. It's about
3 to be sure that community that was left behind for so
4 many decades for the first time get the necessary
5 attention. So, I've been showing that by action.
6 What we have seen is the numbers of project that
7 under the leadership of Mayor Eric Adams and I and
8 the advocate that you bring and the Speaker and many
9 other who are saying, you know, we have to be
10 progressive by action. We have to be sure that, you
11 know, under-served community get the same attention
12 as the other who are the louder [sic], they're most
13 wealthy, those that are more organized. So, Eric can
14 explain about specific project that we're doing in
15 the under-served community, but what I can tell you
16 is about this is a top priority, not only for us,
17 it's a priority I know for the advocate TA [sic] ,
18 it's a priority for you, and the project that's
19 speaks by itself. How in 2022, as I say, you know,
20 we over pass everything that we committed to do.
21 Like, in-- as I said before, in January 22, Mayor
22 Adams announcement on the citywide-- that the City
23 will be-- City, we will improve 1,000 intersection
24 because we heard from the advocates. We heard from
25 the Council. And even myself as a Council Member

2 before, we know that it was an important number for
3 us to accomplish. However, we overpassed that
4 number. We want to 1,600 intersection improvement
5 through different treatments and that's why were able
6 to end 2022 with better numbers than we have in 20--
7 in the previous year, but Eric can explain with more
8 details.

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: Sure. And
10 something that we're very proud of, in the original
11 New York City Streets Plan, we added this idea of
12 priority investment areas which are parts of the City
13 that have been historically not been invested in by
14 transportation infrastructure. And we look both at
15 where there were concentrations of people with low
16 income and people of color whereas literally where
17 the city had not implemented projects over the past
18 decade, and we use this as a planning tool to make
19 sure that we're giving extra attention to those
20 places that had been historically dis-invested. So
21 that's from a planning perspective, how we're making
22 sure that we actively include that in our approach,
23 but ultimately, we should be measured by our progress
24 and our results, and that's something that we're
25 looking at very carefully is to make sure that the

2 projects that we are implementing as well as what we
3 care most about, reductions in crashes and fatalities
4 are also happening in communities all over the City
5 and not just in whiter or wealthier areas. So that's
6 an analysis that we take very seriously. We're happy
7 to talk about it with you in more detail, but it has
8 become very core under this administration to how we
9 do our work.

10 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: And one, as you
11 know Chair, like 2022, we also took all the project
12 that we were doing that usually they say is someone
13 [sic] street that used to be only up to 79th Street,
14 we took it to 109. Now we are expanding to Brooklyn,
15 to Queens, because we also feel that this is also
16 about engaging all New Yorkers in this conversation
17 about transportation. You know, for the first time
18 again in DOT we have a Director connecting the agency
19 with the immigrant community. We also have for the
20 first time a Director of the Workforce Development.
21 So, I feel that, again, with your leadership and the
22 leadership of the Speaker and each Council Member and
23 those who have really been fighting for equity in the
24 underserved community, we will see much more

2 attention to community that they were never seeing in
3 the past.

4 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Just really
5 quickly, just going back to the question about
6 reducing hit-and-runs, and just theme that I keep
7 hearing in some of the responses, DOT keeps saying
8 that you need Albany to pass laws, but DOT has
9 control over our streets and our street design. What
10 can DOT do now to reduce hit and runs without waiting
11 for Albany? Like what are the tools in the toolbox
12 for right now?

13 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: [inaudible] it's
14 about working around what Vision Zero stand for.
15 Vision Zero combined three aspect. One is
16 engineering, and that's what the team that Eric leads
17 is doing, and that's why if you separate the numbers
18 of pedestrians and cyclists in 2022, only if you just
19 look at those numbers, those data, we have the lowest
20 number of pedestrian and cyclist losing their life as
21 result of crashes. It was speeding [inaudible] where
22 the two young lady who were in a car in the FDR
23 around 93rd Street with a drunk driver at like early
24 in the morning. It was the other two ladies who were
25 in the car under the GW who flipped onto the entry

2 Amtrak rail who also lose their life and many other
3 reckless drivers. So when it come to, you know, hit-
4 and-run-- and as you know, there was important
5 priority to me as previous role as a Council Member.
6 This is an epidemic, you know, that is--
7 unfortunately is hurting our society that is so
8 [inaudible] by reckless drivers. Most drivers who
9 get involved in the hit-and-run, they are drunk when
10 they're driving. They are speeding, and-- when I
11 went to Albany standing with Senator John Liu who is
12 the sponsor of the new bill in Albany that will
13 reduce the level of alcohol that is permitted from
14 0.08 to 0.05, I was standing with this lady whose son
15 was killed when a driver was driving 119 per hours.
16 So those are drunk drivers. Those are drivers that
17 are speeding. So you're right, our agency led by
18 Eric, they're doing the work on really [inaudible].
19 And I share with you and everyone here how the data
20 has shown improvement with the work, the result that
21 we are getting, because of the really outstanding
22 work that we're doing. And that's why in the whole
23 nation, New York City by data had the safer streets
24 when we compare to California, when we compare to any
25 other city here. So a lot of more work will be done.

2 We will continue building on our success, on the
3 success history [sic] that we have, but you know,
4 like I feel that when it come to the hit-and-run, as
5 you say, we control the redesigning. We will continue
6 doing the work. NYPD's doing the enforcement part,
7 and I know that there's going to be other work that
8 Albany have to do to go after those case, the hit-
9 and-run epidemic that is also here, and know that
10 sometime also has something to do with some law that
11 also we need Albany.

12 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: DOT was
13 required by law to publish a report by February 1st
14 providing any changes to the Streets Plan from the
15 previous year, the bicycle lane network coverage
16 index, and the status of the implementation of each
17 benchmark identified in such plan. DOT published its
18 report today which was two weeks late, but I'm
19 interested in knowing-- following up to the fact that
20 DOT announced they would create a database of all
21 data tables to allow users to analyze historical
22 asset data to ensure resources are distributed
23 appropriately amongst priority projects is the
24 greatest need. What is the status of this database,

2 and why is it so hard to track where priority Vision
3 Zero projects are happening?

4 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: I'm going to
5 call on Julia Kite-Laidlaw who's the Director of
6 Safety Policy and oversee that part, what we do, and
7 to explain.

8 DIRECTOR KITE-LAIDLAW: In general, we
9 keep our data available on our Vision Zero View
10 website, vzv.nyc. Speaking specifically to the
11 Streets Plan, Eric, I believe, would you like to
12 speak for it? We could bring up somebody who is a
13 specialist specifically in the Streets Plan.

14 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: Yeah, great.
15 And with the Streets Plan, as you say, we're you
16 know, sorry it was two weeks late, but we are pleased
17 that we did get it out today, and we are committed to
18 following up on everything that's in there. I think
19 what you see in the report is that we exceeded
20 expectations in some areas. As the Commissioner
21 said, we addressed over 1,600 intersections compared
22 to the Streets Plan target of 400. And in other
23 places we're still really working towards those
24 milestones, and so I think we're really trying to
25 make sure that we're putting our effort into the

2 places where it's most beneficial for the most number
3 of New Yorkers, and we're happy to sort of talk more
4 about places that you want more focus or places where
5 you feel like the data could be better available,
6 because we are committed to Open Data and making that
7 available, and if it's not clear enough we can work
8 to make it better.

9 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: And Chair, the
10 two area that we are behind are into bike lane and
11 bus lane. As the Commissioner and previous Council
12 Member, I ask you for--

13 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: [interposing]
14 And bus stop upgrades.

15 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: I ask you for
16 your support and leadership to help me to accomplish
17 those goals, because I know that our team had a plan
18 on how to accomplish those numbers in 23. One
19 challenge that we face on time is that when we go to
20 community, there's some major opposition when we plan
21 to bring bus lane and bike lane. so I hope that we,
22 again, as we have done it before, we work together to
23 build the level of partnership that we need so that
24 we can continue making more progress on building more
25

2 bus lane and bike lane. Those are two of the most
3 important area--

4 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: [interposing]
5 I actually thought that the reason was because of the
6 supply chain issue.

7 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Like, there's
8 many factors involved including that one, including
9 staff, including many things, but we all know that
10 bus lane and bike lane they're not popular in many
11 district. Gale, my friend, former colleague
12 together, when I did the bus lane on 181st I had the
13 opposition of the rest of elected officials. When I
14 did--

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: [interposing] I
16 was supportive.

17 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Gale supported.
18 So the bus lane, the bike lane, those big projects,
19 when we go to some community there's major
20 oppositions. So I feel that, you know, beside other
21 reason why, but in building the support, and what I
22 hope is again that we continue, you know, planning
23 together. But I also would need your support and
24 leadership in the Council to be sure that as we are

2 planning our mile bus lane and bike lane in 23, that
3 also we are on board.

4 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: I've also
5 heard from some of my colleagues that there are areas
6 where they're requesting bike lanes and bus lanes,
7 and they have not received them. So, I think, you
8 know, it's going to be important for DOT to work
9 closely to have conversations and also prioritize
10 where there are members that are saying we would like
11 it in this location, and it seems like it goes on
12 deaf hears, but then we have bike lanes that pop up
13 in communities. Like, we have some that popped up in
14 Rockaway with little to no conversation as opposed to
15 when it's being implemented to say this is where it's
16 going, and that's the pushback that DOT is receiving,
17 because sufficient communication with the communities
18 is not happening in a meaningful way. So, doing a
19 presentation, hearing the community, and then still
20 implementing what DOT wants to implement, that's
21 where you see challenges because the community knows
22 where it's best. Right now, Siegert [sp?] was
23 designed and we've had many near-fatal situations
24 happen since that design has happened a few months
25 ago. But this is something that the community

2 proactively shared with DOT that this would be an
3 issue. When you look on putting the bike lane on
4 Beach 21st Street in Far Rockaway with no protection,
5 and then you have the cars parked there, because it's
6 just literally a hump there an pain, which is also a
7 challenge for the disability community. But there's
8 a lot of conversation that needs to happen. It's not
9 that members do not want this in their community,
10 it's that they want to have the community at the
11 table in real meaningful way to implement this. And
12 then also for the ones that are asking for it, they
13 like to see action happening on it. But I'm going to
14 yield right to Council Member Won--

15 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: [interposing] But
16 if you-- if you don't--

17 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: [interposing]
18 who had a follow-up question.

19 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: If you don't
20 mind on that particular one that you mentioned, we
21 understand the safety concern there, in particular,
22 it's around the safety of the student and teacher at
23 the nearby school. And considering the bike lane was
24 completed in early December, it is too soon to
25 provide data showing the changes in cross data since

2 the installation. But one thing that also because I
3 know that you and I are on the same page, we ask on
4 the equity part. So we also want to be sure-- and I
5 assure that as a typical thing that happen in many of
6 our district, it's about-- bike lane is not popular
7 in northern Manhattan. Bus lane-- bus way was not
8 popular on 101st. There was not that support.

9 However, you know, you're right you want their
10 support in me, but I don't have hundreds members of
11 TA that they went to Community Board to support those
12 project. So I feel again, I agree we will continue
13 again coordinating, having conversation, because one
14 thing that also we want to avoid it. If the-- if we
15 talk about equity, you know, they ask for many of
16 those projects usually happen in a district that
17 already is getting a lot of attention. So we want to
18 be sure that we spread the investment. We want to be
19 sure that-- we know that when we do a bike lane and a
20 bus lane, especially the bike lane, they're important
21 only for the cyclist, but in the corridor that we put
22 a bike lane, there's a reduction of crashes, because
23 drivers are forced to slow down. But again, I will
24 continue planning with you, coordinating with you. I
25 know that our heart in the same place when it came to

2 equity and to be sure that we spread those
3 investment.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER WON: Thank you so much,
5 Chair Selvena Brooks-Powers, and thank you to
6 Commissioner Ydanis and everybody else who's here. I
7 just had a follow-up question on the data piece. I
8 know that OTI and the city overall has spent millions
9 of dollars to make sure that there's data
10 transparency for DOT, because out of my office--
11 since taking office a year ago, I have more than a
12 1,600 cases for constituent services and more than 50
13 percent of them are for DOT. So DOT is probably the
14 most popular category on 311 as well as in my own
15 council tracker. So right now there has been a
16 number of missing reports by DOT and it's overall
17 very concerning for the lack of transparency. Can
18 you share why this is and what steps are being taken
19 to improve data access and timeliness, because this
20 is worse than previous years? For example, I'm going
21 to read all of the missing reports. First time
22 Vision Zero Annual Report was not published this past
23 year. We talk a lot about Vision Zero, then why are
24 we not having transparency on the Vision Zero report
25 that is missing. No annual Cycling in the City

2 report. No annual Green Wave report. No Mobility
3 reports. Serious Injury Quarterly reports as
4 required thanks to the Council legislation. That was
5 two to three months late including quarter four in
6 2022's report which was due January 31st. Streets
7 Plan report, February 1st report deadline was missed.
8 No Open Streets report as required by Council
9 legislation. Loading Zone website was due by January
10 1st. DOT's Vision Zero Dashboard is often two to
11 three months behind. That doesn't even include other
12 motorists, aka e-bike, also known as e-bikes category
13 which started tracking in 2021, and folds those
14 fatalities under motorists. So the total number of
15 fatalities is also about one to two fatalities off
16 for almost every year, and DOT is aware of this. So,
17 can you help me understand why you are being opaque
18 in your reporting?

19 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, we will--
20 Rick Rodriguez who is our Assistant Commissioner for
21 Intergovernmental and Community Affairs, he will take
22 into that question. And if I have to add, then I
23 will add after he explain.

24 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yeah,
25 thank you for your question. I think several of those

2 reports, I think, were published a few weeks late and
3 some have already come out, but I think what would be
4 useful is just give an exchange of what reports are
5 outstanding that you're aware of, and we will make
6 sure that we follow up on each of those. As for what
7 is being done, we cite in our testimony that we have
8 staffing challenges, and that's something that I
9 think that it's not unique to the agency, the city or
10 the country right now. But we're very aware that we
11 want to keep working on that. We want to be
12 providing that information which is why we are trying
13 to publish all those reports that we issued today,
14 because it's important that folks have that, they can
15 ask questions and we want to respond to them.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER WON: Okay, we'll
17 definitely follow up with the full list so that we
18 can understand where the reports are why there's the
19 delay. And I just have one follow-up question about
20 my district. For the Queensboro Bridge, we've seen
21 at least 35 percent increase in bike and other micro-
22 mobility trips since 2020, especially during COVID
23 when people did not feel safe being on the subway or
24 on the bus. Yet, we have not seen any increase in
25 space and we hear the-- we hear and not only hear but

2 we also see photographs and videos of the crashes
3 that are happening on the walkway. Does DOT have
4 data about the number of crashes on this path, and
5 what has DOT done to make this path safer? Because I
6 know, commissioner, you were kind enough to come out
7 with us as well as with the Chair of Transportation,
8 Brooks-Powers, to come and see how dangerous it was,
9 and why have we still not opened the south outer
10 [sic] roadway as promised and as the budget has
11 already been allocated to accommodate the increased
12 traffic to protect pedestrians and people on the
13 bikes?

14 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: So, again, I
15 will start answering the question, and Eric also want
16 to add to that one, but DOT is committed to making
17 the Queensboro Bridge even more cyclist and
18 pedestrian-friendly by providing designated space for
19 each for use. However, we are mindful the increased
20 traffic delays, the conversation of the [inaudible]
21 to pedestrian-only path. The pedestrian-only path
22 would have while the current upper deck replacement
23 project is active. Eric, you like to?

24 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: Yeah, I
25 would just say our commitment remains the same, that

2 we are committed to opening the south roadway as the
3 pedestrian path, and we're committed to doing it
4 immediately following the completion of the upper
5 deck reconstruction. So it's-- we are actively
6 working on it. It's part of the same piece of work,
7 and you know, we want to get that upper deck working
8 as soon as we can.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER WON: The commitment
10 doesn't remain the same because the commitment was to
11 be open this year. So I just want to put that on the
12 record. And then I also just want to close out by
13 saying that I have concerns, and I know that many
14 community members and my colleagues also have
15 concerns about daycares and childcare providers are
16 not protected at schools in this system.

17 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: [inaudible] work
18 again, that you know, after construction on the upper
19 roadway will continue through this year as you said,
20 and I know that this is-- as we are, you know,
21 committed to work toward our goal. DOT will continue
22 working to identify opportunity to expedite a
23 timeline and we will monitor construction on the
24 bridge and address any issues during meantime.

2 DIRECTOR KITE-LAIDLAW: Also-- sorry, I
3 just want to clarify on the data issue. We count e-
4 bikes as bicycles for our statistics. The other
5 motorized category includes things such as e-
6 scooters, illegal mopeds that can't be registered as
7 limited-use motorcycles. If you believe that there's
8 a glitch, please let us know and we'll look into
9 that. But it's been our policy for several years
10 that e-bike with pedals are always included as
11 bicycles.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER WON: That is not a
13 correct way to aggregate data. They should be
14 disaggregated because they're a completely different
15 category, but I'll follow up later, because I know
16 that we have a lot of questions to go through. Thank
17 you. Thank you, Chair Brooks-Powers.

18 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you.
19 So, I'm going to just run through the members'
20 questions and come back to myself because I have a
21 lot of questions. So next we're going to hear from
22 Council Member Farías.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER FARÍAS: Great, thank you
24 Chair. And I'm just going to read a statement prior
25 about my Reso. Thank you Chair Brooks-Powers for

2 hosting this critical hearing and Chair Rodriguez for
3 being here today to testify. I'm the sponsor of Reso
4 441 because the Bronx continues to be

5 disproportionately affected by traffic fatalities.

6 As a proud Bronxite, it's heart-breaking to know that
7 traffic fatalities continue to increase above the
8 pre-pandemic rates. We need safety infrastructure

9 for our drivers and our riders, especially after 16
10 children in New York City lost their lives in 2022

11 due to traffic crashes. That's why I'm a proud

12 sponsor to have introduced Reso 441 to support the

13 state's call to set a five mile-per-hour speed limit

14 on streets participating in the Open Streets Program.

15 Pedestrian industries [sic] fell 42 percent from pre-

16 pandemic levels within the first 12 months of the

17 start of the program, as well as a 17 percent

18 decrease in cyclist industry-- injuries during the

19 same period. This law would not only make our

20 streets safer, but allow families and pedestrians a

21 greater piece of mind when partaking in the loved

22 Open Streets Program. Safety and the expansion of

23 open public space as expressed by all of us here

24 today needs to continue to be the priority. I want

25 to thank advocates like those here with us today from

2 Families for Safe Streets, Transportation

3 Alternatives, Assembly Member Harvey Epstein, DOT,

4 and more who are working with us every day to ensure

5 we're being proactive and protective for Bronxites

6 and all New Yorkers. So, thank you so much. And I

7 just have a couple questions around-- particularly

8 around the Bronx and my district. So, in City

9 Council districts where the majority of residents are

10 Latino, there are 17 percent fewer streets with bus

11 lanes. Traffic volumes are 11 percent higher and

12 buses are 10 percent slower. Making bus speeds in

13 majority Latino districts the slowest buses of any

14 racial or ethnic group in New York City. And in 10

15 council districts with the most traffic injuries, 87

16 percent of residents are people of color compared to

17 67 percent citywide, and there are 42 percent fewer

18 streets with protected bike lanes than the citywide

19 average, including within my district but I know DOT

20 we are working really hard on that. So traffic deaths

21 in the Bronx have continued to rise. The Bronx had

22 56 deaths in 2022 tied for highest in the last 20

23 years and about two times higher than 2019. More

24 Bronx bike riders were killed in 2020, 2021, and 22

25 combined than the 11 years prior to 2020 combined.

2 What's DOT doing to address Vision Zero needs in the
3 Bronx and prioritize safe infrastructure projects in
4 BIPOC communities?

5 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: So, as I said
6 before, you are a champion.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIÁS: Thank you.

8 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: And I hope that,
9 you know, that everyone, all New Yorkers, the 8.6 to
10 be a champion like you. Sometimes they make a big
11 difference. You know, like I say that this is a city
12 where the most wealthy, the most organized, the one
13 that have a lot of voices, they've been getting most
14 attention. But there's a new day Mayor Adams say not
15 any more, not in my leadership. So, but we have this
16 approach from this Administration and myself being
17 someone that's been fighting for equity myself, and
18 still believe in discrimination every day my life,
19 even today. You know, I know what it is to fight for
20 equity. So this is not a privilege. This is not to
21 talk about it, this is about action. But also having
22 leader like you that help enough to bring to your
23 district to let them know to say we have to redesign
24 this intersection. It doesn't matter that the
25 resident that I represent are part of the largest

2 working-class New Yorkers. They need to be-- get us
3 an investment that we do in any community that the
4 average income is 300,000 dollars. So, I feel it's
5 many factors. One is, of course, the commitment of
6 this Administration. Second is the agency vision
7 when it comes to spreading investment. We're giving
8 attention to the 51 Council Member. It's not another
9 one-- it's not the one that have more resources that
10 will be continued getting most attention and
11 investment that happened in the past. So this is a
12 new thing that we're doing, and so we will continue
13 working with you to be sure that your district and
14 those districts where the data is showing that we've
15 been getting the larger numbers of victims in crashes
16 get the same level of investment that any other
17 community in this city.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER FARÍAS: Thank you. I
19 appreciate reaffirming that commitment. Chair, if
20 you don't mind, I just have two questions. Okay. In
21 2022, we have protected bike lane locations in areas
22 where those within 0.25 miles are significantly more
23 likely to be white, significantly less likely to be
24 black than the citywide average of 39.8 percent and
25 23.4 percent for each of those respectively. So the

2 percent of residents earning over 100,000 dollars a
3 year, within .25 miles was 16.8 percent versus the
4 citywide average of about 10.8 percent. Obviously,
5 we know all of these things are interconnected, as
6 you just said, around advocacy and communities. How
7 is DOT working to change some of those percentages,
8 and without safe infrastructure efforts, are efforts
9 to increase City Bike and e-micro-mobility access
10 won't be possible without putting residents at-risk
11 of getting hit by a car, so what are we doing in this
12 area to really focus on changing those percentages?

13 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: So, we are data-
14 driven and Eric can speak into -- [inaudible] part of
15 that one. But most important that the data piece
16 that he will explain is about the new vision that we
17 have at City Hall, is the commitment as I said before
18 from the Mayor. You know, if the five million
19 dollars that we baselined, the Council and this
20 Administration, for the first time as we pass a bill
21 at this Council that make New York City the first
22 city that create an equity [sic] in community media
23 on the administration with Mayor Eric Adams. Fifty
24 percent of those investment are used to educate, you
25 know, all New Yorkers where we advertise about bus

2 lane, bike lane, where we advertise about the benefit
3 of a transportation plan, when we work toward
4 engaging the community and we put that money out in
5 2022 with publish in block [sic], radio, TV,
6 newspaper, in more than 12 languages, because we want
7 to be sure that the conversation about planning and
8 transportation is not just controlled for by one
9 group, but that the average New Yorkers is also part
10 of that conversation. And that's why in my office I
11 have created the Director Liaison between DOT and all
12 the immigrant community because we want to be sure
13 that as I hold a meeting yesterday with Rosanne
14 [sp?], the Commissioner of Staten Island, and more
15 than 40 leader of the interfaith community. And they
16 say it's the first time that Commissioner of DOT has
17 invited the interfaith community to talk about
18 transportation. So as someone that used to be a
19 teacher, that used to be activist, I found out in my
20 12 years as Council Member that the conversation of
21 transportation have been work-- it's including the
22 average New Yorkers, and this is what we're doing
23 this time around. We are coming to your community.
24 We want to follow your guidance and your feedback
25 about who should we meet in your community. How can

2 we integrate? You know, all New Yorkers when it
3 comes to the conversation about how can we invest to
4 improve safety in our streets.

5 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: And I would
6 just say we think you're right. We think there has
7 historically been our protected bike infrastructure
8 in particular has historically been in whiter and
9 wealthier parts of the city. Something that we're
10 very focused on is making sure that we are truly
11 building a citywide connected protected bike lane
12 network, including in Soundview, including in
13 Fordham, including in east New York that places where
14 we need to do the work as the Commissioner said to
15 really engage with communities and talk about the
16 benefits of cycling and why it's important to be in
17 every community. And that's sometimes a little bit
18 harder and more work, but it's work we need to do
19 because it really does need to be a safe network that
20 reaches all parts of the city.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIÁS: Sure.

22 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: We think
23 that we have more coming this year, but there's a lot
24 more work to do.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER FARÍAS: Sure. So just
3 since you've been donned the data guy over there on
4 dais.

5 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: Okay.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER FARÍAS: Are we looking at
7 these percentages, like, you know, comparatively
8 saying predominantly white neighborhoods have this
9 and this is what their communities look like versus
10 black, Latinx, immigrant, and how can we overlay some
11 of this infrastructure. And I ask on-- are we zoning
12 in on the demographic data in that way, because this
13 is how our communities are comparing or viewing their
14 either street safety or their accessibility to micro-
15 mobility options, right? When I hear things on
16 community, I hear folks say, well the wealthy
17 neighborhoods have this, or the white neighborhoods
18 have this, and it's not that we're not deemed value--
19 you know, of value or our communities can't have it.
20 It is obviously folks advocating for it in the past
21 and ensuring that we have safety infrastructure
22 working in. You know, I'm working with my Borough
23 Commissioner really diligently in ensuring we get to
24 roll that out, as you folks know, on where we can
25 provide safety in my communities. But are we back at

2 headquarters, like, looking at this data and saying
3 how do we expedite it in these neighborhoods?

4 Because we know we have black cyclists, and we have
5 Latinx e-bike riders, etcetera.

6 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: So, the answer
7 is yes, that's our approach internally at DOT and led
8 by Eric. That's a big effort. But also the
9 leadership of the other members in this case, the
10 colleagues at the Council is very important. The
11 advocate also play an important role. You know, one
12 of the reason why when I come to my hearing I come
13 with all my four [sic] commissioners, because I want
14 to be sure that they hear the story, that they are
15 sitting here, and it's been everyone from Nicole
16 Garcia to Keith [sic] in the Bronx to Keith [sic] in
17 Brooklyn, to Rosanne in Staten Island, you know,
18 everyone is sitting back there, and they know that we
19 are-- you know, I'm not going to be wasting my time
20 as a Commissioner. I'm using this space that I have
21 after my 12 years as Council Member, my 15 years as
22 teacher to move the needle. You know, equity have to
23 be action, and this is important for us. And that's
24 why for me, we are doing a job. We're getting the
25 support of this mayor. The Mayor's putting his money

2 where his mouth is. He increased 18 percent of
3 budget last year so that we have the resources that
4 we need. But also, we are, as I say before, we are
5 engaging with the community so that nothing wrong
6 [sic] like you know, any particular group of New
7 Yorkers who have the bike lane, but also we have to
8 use culture of value of many New Yorkers. In this
9 case, I was born and raised in 1965-- born in 1965.
10 My father already had a bike. So many immigrants
11 that live in those underserved communities, they also
12 come from places that they were supposed to be
13 cyclist, but what happen is that everything switch.
14 The higher academic group in any society, they learn
15 as [inaudible] transportation [inaudible] say that if
16 you ride a bike half an hour-- if you ride half an
17 hour a bike every day, you have an average of
18 extension of six years in your life. So this is
19 something that is more middle, upper class, the
20 higher academic and the other group of New Yorkers,
21 those who come from country, from Ghana, from Mali,
22 from Nigeria, from Latin America, that they used to--
23 use to come from a family of bike, of cycling. They
24 was told that cycling was equal poverty and the car
25 became a symbol of progress. So we are also working

2 with leader like you to engage the interfaith
3 community, to work with the grassroots community to
4 be sure that the conversation about planning our city
5 around cycling, our pedestrians, also involved the
6 underserved community, and it's not controlled only
7 by one particular group.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER FARÍAS: Thank you so
9 much. I will wait for second round for my last
10 question. Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you,
12 Council Member. Next we're going to hear from
13 Council Member Restler.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Thank you so
15 much, Chair Brooks-Powers, and I just want to firstly
16 thank the women from Families for Safe Streets for
17 sharing their stories, their horrible stories about
18 deaths that could have been prevented, that should
19 have been prevented. Your testimony was incredibly
20 powerful, and I just want to say that it's inspiring,
21 you know, despite the loss and pain that you've
22 experienced, that you've turned that into advocacy so
23 that more New Yorkers don't have to lose loved ones.
24 And I want to thank Commissioner Rodriguez for
25 joining us. It's always good to have you back in the

2 Council and commend you for hiring some of my
3 favorite people like your Assistant Commissioner for
4 Intergovernmental Affairs, but I do want to focus
5 today on just the extraordinary number of vacancies
6 that we're experiencing at the Department of
7 Transportation. I was profoundly troubled to review
8 the PMMR, the Mayor's Management Report from just a
9 couple weeks ago to find DOT has almost 800
10 vacancies. Data from the PMMR showed that the number
11 of leading pedestrian intervals installed declined 43
12 percent. Pavement safety markings installed declined
13 20 percent. DOT added only 18.1 miles of bike-- 18.1
14 bike lane miles in the first four months of FY23 down
15 42 percent from the same period last year. Bus lane
16 miles installed in the first four months of FY23 were
17 down almost half of what were installed in FY22. I
18 know your heart's in the right place, Commissioner,
19 but you can't do the work if you don't have the
20 staff, and I am deeply troubled by this
21 Administration's commitment to financial austerity
22 and shrinking the size of government at the expense
23 of achieving the goals that you are espousing and
24 intending to actually implement. So what
25 conversations are you having with City Hall? How are

2 you going to get this fixed? What is the current DOT
3 headcount, and what is the plan to actually have an
4 adequate DOT headcount to be able to make these
5 obvious safety improvements that are needed to
6 protect our communities?

7 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: First of all,
8 Council Member, and I also appreciate, you know, your
9 leadership on transportation especially in this
10 manner too. As someone that I know have your heart
11 in the right place, that always also been advocating
12 for, you know, the good cause in our city, not only
13 transportation, but in many other areas. So I know
14 that we have a lot of things in common. There's
15 challenges nationwide with headcount, with staffing,
16 people they were in through COVID, working more
17 remote, a lot of people relocating. So, you know, I
18 was in the conference in D.C. There was one of the
19 top [inaudible] was about, you know, initiative that
20 must be taking place in order to create a pipeline.
21 What I did, what that I brought to City College, the
22 President of City College, Vincent Boudreaux [sp?], I
23 brought the Deputy Chancellor of CUNY, Hector Batista
24 [sp?], and they came out with the Dean of the School
25 of Engineer, the School of Architecture, the

2 [inaudible] Power [sic] Institute in order to work
3 closer between DOT and City College. They had the
4 School of Engineer that graduated the largest number
5 of black engineer in the whole nation. So we're
6 taking a step. So, to-- like in months ago, or three
7 weeks ago, we held a job fair, you know, that run by
8 your friend also Paul Achor [sp?] and our HR, you
9 know--

10 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: [interposing] You
11 do have a tendency to hire my friends, I like that.

12 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: They're great.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: That's good.

14 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: They're great.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: They are good.

16 Paul's the best.

17 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: We had a great
18 team.

19 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: And we have
20 to take a look at that, Commissioner.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: [laughter]

22 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: So, I cannot
23 complain. You know, from Margaret, for John and to
24 Paul Achor [sp?], to you know, the rest of the team--
25 Julie Barrow [sp?], another friend of yours. So when

2 I say about, yeah, there's challenges on hiring.
3 They're challenges on headcount. We are taking
4 proactive-- I got Glenn Gomez [sp?], he used to be at
5 DOE. For the first time DOE brought someone in
6 charge of workforce development. We are then-- I'm
7 going to be having a walk with Chancellor Banks, but
8 because-- from DOE, because also I want to create a
9 pipeline between, you know, the New York City public
10 school and the new-- the future planners, the future
11 engineer, the future Commissioner. So, answer,
12 there's challenges, but we are taking proactive
13 action.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Commissioner, I
15 appreciate it. I know there are challenges
16 nationwide, but I am deeply troubled by the specific
17 policies of this Administration, and we're looking
18 for solutions from you and from your team and from
19 the Administration as a whole to start staffing up.
20 If we don't-- you know, we suffered as many deaths
21 from gun violence last year as traffic violence.
22 These are preventable deaths that we can avoid, but
23 we need the staff to actually do the work to install
24 the bike lanes, to install the bus lanes to make sure
25 that the pedestrian safety improvements re happening.

2 And so when it comes to policies like multiple
3 vacancies are required to replace them with one
4 person, when it comes to policies like you're not
5 allowed to hire within the full range of the job
6 posting, when it comes to having to jump through 77
7 hoops from OMB to be able to get a position filled
8 and we know this Administration has deliberately
9 worked to prevent hiring to save money, despite huge
10 budget surpluses, despite record general reserves,
11 and it is making us unsafe and we need to recognize
12 that and we need you to staff up as quickly as
13 possible, and we would love to get regular updates of
14 everything DoT is doing to put the staff in place to
15 keep our communities safe.

16 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: I feel-- I will
17 assure-- I don't know if everyone know, right, their
18 on data. I believe that every branch of government
19 have been dealing with shorter staff, but what I--

20 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: [interposing] Not
21 every agency in the City of New York.

22 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: but--

23 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: [interposing]

24 Take a look at the Department of Sanitation. I could
25 list others. Uniformed agencies--

2 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Let me--

3 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: versus civilian
4 agencies are very different.

5 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: But let me give
6 you the answer, Lincoln, Council Member.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Sorry,
8 Commissioner.

9 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: So my answer to
10 you is I recognize that there's a-- and I say on my
11 testimony that there's a reduction of hundreds of
12 positions at DOT, as we have in the City many
13 agencies, as we're having nationwide. Then you ask
14 the question what are we doing? First of all, the
15 Mayor's putting his money where his mouth is. The
16 Mayor added 370-something million dollars in the
17 state [inaudible] so that DOT will continue having
18 the resources. What are we doing on bringing back
19 the staff? As I said before, we established
20 collaboration between DOT and City College. We hold
21 a job fair where dozens of candidate, they work
22 [inaudible] letter of a job offer already with a
23 condition that they would be graduating in May. This
24 past weekend we joined with DC37 where also they hold
25 hundreds of-- job fair with hundreds of candidate.

2 We also are working with the high schools, with the
3 different high schools, that we provide more
4 internships in our schools. So I feel that we're
5 getting the support that we need from this mayor and
6 we are taking the necessary steps to fulfil those
7 vacancies that we have.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: I know you want
9 to fill these jobs, and I appreciate very much Chair
10 Brooks-Powers, for giving me the latitude to just dig
11 in on this point. I will shut-- I will shut up now.
12 I just want to-- I just want to say I know that you
13 want to have a fully-staffed agency to be able to do
14 this work. I know you want to achieve these goals. We
15 are not keeping New Yorkers safe without the staff,
16 and we can put all the capital money in that we want,
17 but if we don't have the staff to actually implement
18 the programs, it's not going to make a difference.
19 So, I really, really, really hope that we can work
20 together. I will partner with you in each and every
21 way that I can to help send good people to DOT in
22 addition to Paul and Rent [sic] and Riccardo and the
23 other good people you've already hired. So thank you
24 very much, Commissioner. I appreciate your thoughtful
25 response.

2 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

3 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Next we'll
4 hear from Council Member Williams.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you. I
6 had a question about the School Safety program. How
7 are you determining which schools to prioritize?

8 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: And the question
9 is like School Safety in two directions. One is I
10 can share-- first of all, I know if you talk about
11 the crashes that happening around the school or the
12 educational program that we have in each schools. Or
13 do you want me to explain both?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: All of the
15 above.

16 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: So--

17 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: [interposing]
18 Because I've met with the School Safety program at
19 DOT--

20 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: [interposing]
21 Yeah, so I--

22 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: [interposing]
23 And I don't feel that they were really helpful in
24 assisting with a ton of traffic safety concerns
25 around schools, and I asked them how are they

2 prioritizing which schools to provide resources to,
3 and the answer wasn't really adequate.

4 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: so, in any way
5 or how I can follow up with you, more than happy.
6 And gain, I know that we had a great team in DOT. I
7 don't know if there's another city with a-- the city
8 Department of Transportation that have a large
9 program of education that we have in New York City.
10 Of course more than-- a lot of work has to be done
11 and much more, too. In our city we have a person who
12 is in charge about the public safety in our schools,
13 and then we have the other person-- there's the other
14 program that we have that work around everything
15 improving safety. So we do one thing. We look at
16 the data, and Eric will explain that part, and then
17 based on the data, we work around improving safety.
18 In many cases, that doesn't happen in front of the
19 school. They happen around the school. So but Eric
20 will explain more details on that. When it comes to
21 the educational one, I say-- I write in the testimony
22 and I say before,-- King [sic] who is also here is a
23 person who is in charge of the educational components
24 of DOT. They work very closely, hundreds of school
25 every year. If there's any area on how we can

2 improve, more than happy to hear from you, but Eric
3 can explain that.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: And I know--
5 yes, Eric can explain. I know my time is limited, so
6 I just wanted to add just another point, because I
7 know in your testimony, you said that could you not
8 support the bill as drafted, Council Member Rivera's
9 bill. So, if you don't agree with that bill and
10 there's some data that show that signs don't
11 necessarily affect traffic safety, what other
12 measures are being researched or piloted that go
13 beyond an all-way stop or a speed bump or other
14 traffic mitigators [sic] that your agency may
15 decline? So I have quite a few issues with schools,
16 and our office has worked with DOT to try to get some
17 type of mitigator, but unfortunately it was denied
18 because it didn't fit a set criteria. And so I think
19 when it comes to our schools, because as you
20 mentioned we have such a robust program, we should
21 try to find more innovative ways like the ones you
22 show here. But again, just wanted to know how
23 schools are prioritized in the efforts that you all
24 are doing.

2 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yeah. And first
3 of all, thank you for your leadership, too. and as
4 someone, another former teacher, we know how
5 important it is to improve safety around our school
6 on re-designing and near intersection, but also
7 educating, you know, our communities about, you know,
8 the responsibility for someone when they drive a
9 vehicle to know that that does [inaudible] someone
10 get behind the wheel and how they had to-- the driver
11 had-- they are the one that responsible to protect
12 the pedestrian, protect the cyclist. So the
13 educational piece is something that we share. As I
14 said before, father to daughter, [inaudible] school,
15 teacher for 15 year, I get it, but when it come to
16 the technical piece on the redesigning how we make
17 decision, let's hear from Eric at how DOT work with
18 them.

19 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: Sure. And
20 we are very data-driven around how-- both how we look
21 at locations and then which treatments we try to
22 install. So, we look at where are crashes happening,
23 in particular, where are crashes involving young
24 people happening, both as a total number and where
25 are students sort of over-represented in terms of

2 crashes overall. So places where maybe students are
3 walking but not everyone else is. And we use those
4 to focus around the school. Then when we look at
5 that school we say where are the crashes happening in
6 this vicinity. Sometimes it's the block right in
7 front of the school, sometimes it might be the big
8 intersection a block or two away, but we try to make
9 sure that we're focused on the places where the most
10 crashes are really happening. And then we go to our
11 toolbox and we say like what really affects crashes
12 and reduces them. And as you say, sometimes something
13 fits and sometimes it doesn't. But overall, we think
14 that the most effective thing we can do is reduce
15 speeds on our streets. So sometimes the speed bump
16 is the way to do that. Sometimes we do a road diet
17 with-- which might have a protected bike lane, but
18 ultimately it's about making sure that people drive
19 slowly enough that they can be responsive whether
20 they're doing something wrong, whether someone dashes
21 out into the street. If you're driving more slowly,
22 you can react to what's happening there. So that's
23 how we think about it, but if there's a location we
24 need to take another look at, we're always happy to
25 do that with you. We think we do a good job, but it

2 doesn't mean we haven't missed something along the
3 way, and we're happy to take a look at any location
4 you have in mind.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Yeah, I know
6 the real work happens outside of the hearing, so I do
7 look forward to having a follow-up meeting with the
8 School Safety program because, as I mentioned,
9 there's quite a few schools that have a lot of
10 issues. And one of the things that-- and I'll wrap up
11 really quickly, I see the Chair is beaming at me-- is
12 understanding data is important for government to
13 find solutions but it's also reactionary. You're
14 looking at data of crashes and saying, oh, there's
15 been so many crashes here, let's do something. But I
16 always encourage and hope that the agency is also
17 looking at proactive measures. So maybe you don't
18 have, like, horrific traffic fatalities but there's
19 clearly issues that people, particularly the
20 students-- like, I've had student governments, you
21 know, elementary students present to me all the
22 issues, and most of them have to do with traffic
23 safety, and it's very discouraging as their
24 representative to kind of work DOT to try to find
25 solutions to no avail. So I am hoping that I can work

2 with you to try to find, even if it's a creative
3 solution for some of the traffic safety issues we
4 have around schools. And last but not least, it's
5 not a question, but just a statement. I have said on
6 the record multiple times that it is unfortunate that
7 the Queens Boulevard bus lane doesn't come down to
8 Jamaica, and so I understand your commentary around
9 it not being popular, but I don't think that is where
10 we should stop. We should work together to educate
11 the community and make sure that there is even just
12 connectivity to a bus lane that doesn't come down to
13 Jamaica Avenue or other areas of the district that
14 might be more appropriate versus arbitrarily slapping
15 down a bus lane and then getting upset if the
16 community doesn't like it. There needs to be just
17 better engagement. So, thank you and look forward to
18 working with you.

19 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: So, chairman, we
20 work working on that. So, on the Queens Boulevard
21 bus going to Jamaica. So let's be sure that our team
22 will follow with your office. and the other matter
23 that you said that, you know, our team look at it and
24 they explain that cannot be done because engineer has
25 advised that, you know, that we cannot do it. So

2 more than happy to follow with you. and idea, any
3 schools that also you have in your district that you
4 would like for all of us at DOT to engage those
5 students on this conversation about how they see
6 crashes, what idea they may have about improving
7 safety, not only with Council Member Williams but any
8 Council Member. We want to go to the schools with
9 you. We want to be sure-- and again, that's how we
10 can build the pipeline. If we expose our students in
11 this conversation about challenges or improving
12 safety in their community, they will see that being
13 the planners, being the engineer been working at DOT
14 is something that they can see as a potential career
15 in the future. So, let's continue [inaudible].

16 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you.

17 Next we'll hear from Council Member Brewer.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: thank you very
19 much. First I want to say thank you to Ed Pincar as
20 a great Manhattan Commissioner. I want to make that
21 clear. The question just about the plan, because I
22 think we all agree that that plan has some positive
23 aspects that it has already accomplished, but as you
24 suggested, Commissioner, the protected bike lanes
25 benchmark target 2022 is 20 and 4.4, according to

2 your data, and then the-- that's the bus lanes. The
3 bike lanes a little bit better, 30 target, 26.3
4 completed. And of course, there are other things
5 that have even exceeded completion, but there's still
6 a problem with the bus stop upgrades, the benches,
7 and the time clocks. So, my question is-- 2023,
8 we're in this year. Do you expect, and you're under
9 oath, that you can make those benchmarks this year?
10 Because I think we all agree that those benchmarks
11 being completed do stop crashes, and that's the whole
12 general-- we don't know. We obviously have to pick
13 certain locations but the more we do, then the less
14 hopefully we'll have crashes. So how are we going to
15 make the 2023 limited staff-- of course, I think that
16 we should be a hybrid city. The Mayor and I
17 disagree. You should pay people more. That's more
18 of a collective bargaining issue, sometimes. But for
19 God's sake, make it hybrid, and then at least you
20 could hire one person. But to start with, how are we
21 going to get there for 2023?

22 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: [inaudible] to
23 answer the question and Eric also can add to that
24 [inaudible] too. DOT believes that, you know, in the
25 goal of the Street plan it is working continually to

2 meet the benchmark. We are also work-- we are also
3 doing other work, as you know, beyond the Street Plan
4 that is critical, as I mentioned before, that include
5 bike lane hardening. We met with the advocates, you
6 know, at the beginning of last year, and we talk
7 about what was most important, the quantity or the
8 quality, and we focus on doing those 20 hardening
9 bike lanes. We did 10 last year. We're also working
10 to do an additional 10 this year. But also we're
11 doing the Open Street. As you heard from Speaker
12 Adams, there's conversation going on between her
13 staff and Chairman Velázquez and the Administration,
14 and we hope again that Open Street will go the final
15 place. And where we both can agree on making Open
16 Street permanent. We also doing-- I'm sorry, Open
17 Restaurant, I'm sorry.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: We know what
19 you're talking about.

20 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Okay, yeah. So
21 the Open Restaurant, I meant. And then with the Open
22 Street, remember when we were having, you know, the
23 remote call the meeting at the Council and the
24 Administration and we think about Open Street, but
25 during COVID it was about putting barricades. So

2 last year, for the first time we worked with 200,
3 above 200 Open Street. And then where Open Street in
4 partnership with the BID, and the CBO's and this
5 year, we are also working to increase those to go
6 higher with the numbers of the 200. And what I'm
7 doing, so I hold a press conference with Commissioner
8 Cumbo, because we want for Open Street to be seen
9 from the cultural and commissional [sic] perspective
10 which is great, but I also have a meeting with a
11 Commissioner of Public Healthcare [sic] in our city
12 so that also we bring the whole aspect when it came
13 to Open Street. So we're also doing those projects
14 and then [inaudible] announcements including raised
15 crosswalk. This is something that also we've been
16 adding, and [inaudible] advocates to hold the most
17 dangerous driving accountable, but--

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: [interposing]

19 Okay, I appreciate all that, and I know exactly what
20 you're talking about, but I'm interested in the plan
21 and the 2023 and the benchmarks that you're going to
22 make in 2023. Are we going to do it? I know you
23 have staffing issues. I can solve them. To go
24 hybrid, you're done and over. That's up to the Mayor
25 if he wants to hire or not, but the other issue is

2 you've got, you know, supply chain issues, I
3 understand, but how are we going to get to 2023?
4 What are we going to do in 2023?

5 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: [inaudible] Let's
6 hear from Eric who oversee that portfolio.

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: sure, and
8 we're going to work to the best of our ability to
9 meet those targets, but I think we also want to make
10 sure that we're not just guided by the number of
11 miles, but that we're doing projects that are most
12 impactful for the number of people. We know that
13 adherent [sic] to the law is it's measured by miles,
14 but with things like bus lanes and bike lanes, it's
15 just as important to make sure we're doing them where
16 they benefit a lot of people where we're building a
17 connected network all over the city. So we want to
18 be doing both. We want to be working towards those
19 milestones and meeting them to the best of our
20 abilities, but we also want to make sure we're not
21 just measuring our work by miles, that we are--

22 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: [interposing]
23 Alright, I got it.

24 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: doing now.
25

2 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I don't agree
3 with the answer, but I understand. Now, are you
4 monitoring your progress? Is it real-time with some
5 kind of a benchmark? How do you-- or dashboard. How
6 does the public know your progress, specifically
7 real-time?

8 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: So, we do--
9 we have, you know, Open Data and other things, but I
10 think--

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: [interposing] I
12 know what Open Data is.

13 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: But there's a
14 challenge in that when you're building a bike lane or
15 a bus lane, 10 percent of the work doesn't give you
16 10 percent of the miles. You can't 10 percent open a
17 bus lane. It's when you finish the project, which is
18 often at the end of the year, that we count the miles
19 all at once. So, we do our best to keep people
20 updated where that's possible, but the reality is
21 that most of the numbers really do come in at the end
22 of the year as--

23 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: [interposing]
24 Okay, but do you have a map, for instance, that keeps
25 track internally that you could share with the public

2 as to where you are with the-- you know, as far as
3 you've gone? It's something to think about. It
4 would help the public understand that you're getting
5 to this point.

6 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: Okay.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay.

8 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you.

9 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: We'll follow
10 with you--

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: [interposing]

12 Thank you.

13 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: [inaudible] [off
14 mic]

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Your mic's not
16 on.

17 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: For the work
18 that we do on all those projects, usually happening
19 only during the spring and the summer.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay.

21 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Be we also have
22 limitation with the--

23 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: [interposing]

24 Right.

25

2 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: environment, with
3 the--

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: [interposing] And
5 also we have a letter that the Chair and I wrote, and
6 I assume you're going to be answering it. Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you.

8 Next, we are going to have a statement and then
9 followed by questions from Council Member Velázquez.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER VELÁZQUEZ: Good morning,
11 colleagues, DOT Commissioner Rodriguez, Chief Pilecki
12 and members of the public. I want to thank Chair
13 Brooks-Powers for hearing bill Intro 369 which would
14 require DOT to install reflective material on at
15 least 250 bollards, curbs, posts, and roundabouts in
16 each borough. Since becoming Council Member I've had
17 to console families devastated by preventive traffic
18 violence. Listening to the stories this morning, I
19 want to share my sincere condolences to families who
20 shared theirs. Policies like Vision Zero's
21 initiatives have laid a foundation to eliminate
22 crashes, but until 2022 the City has experienced
23 increases in the number of fatalities, making it
24 clear that more must be done. My bill will make our
25 city streets safer for pedestrians and allowed

2 drivers to see pathways more clearly. In tandem with
3 Chair Brooks-Powers' Intro. 879, we can see
4 significant new traffic infrastructure created to
5 make our streets and sidewalks safer. It's
6 unfortunate that so many lives have been lost, but
7 hopefully under the leadership of Majority Whip,
8 Council Member Selevena Brooks-Powers and her
9 Transportation Committee and our colleagues, we can
10 implement protections so everyone feels safe on and
11 off the road. So thank you. Beginning with
12 questions, going back to what Council Member Williams
13 was talking about with the School Safety program, we
14 wanted to discuss-- especially my district when the
15 location of the cameras are placed, especially when
16 the community feels like it's not really capturing
17 all the bad actors because it's actually placed on
18 the wrong corner. We've tried to reach out to you
19 all. Can we have a conversation on that, and
20 separately? Because our community has better ideas
21 and they go through it day-in and day-out.

22 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yeah.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER VELÁZQUEZ: Okay. And
24 then in addition to the School Safety program, there
25 is-- yeah, I'm taking a moment now because my

2 district has a lot of cars and there's a lot of
3 violence as we have seen, and as we still mourn for
4 the passing of a child that we lost last year. When
5 we're talking about also safety measures, can we talk
6 a little bit about how and why it takes so long to do
7 these studies?

8 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Which one are you
9 referring to?

10 COUNCIL MEMBER VELÁZQUEZ: So, there was
11 a study specifically that we had requested in the
12 corner where a child's life was taken, and it took a
13 long time.

14 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Julia, do
15 you want to address that one? Or?

16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: Yeah, and
17 you're talking about a study for a traffic signal or
18 an all-way stop?

19 COUNCIL MEMBER VELÁZQUEZ: Correct.

20 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: Alright.
21 So, we want to make sure that we do it well, and that
22 means we want to collect the data at a time of year
23 when the schools are open, when we have good weather
24 so that-- dates that people are actually out and
25 crossing the street so that we collect the right

2 data. we also just-- we get a tremendous number of
3 requests for these studies every year, and we
4 obviously prioritize them where a fatality or a
5 serious injury happened, but we do get a very large
6 number of these requests, and we prioritize them as
7 well as we can. So, I don't think we want to say
8 yes, it's great that it takes this much time. We
9 always wish it could be faster, but we want to make
10 sure they're done well and make sure we get them all
11 done. So that's what we work on, and we're very
12 happy that in this recent budget there was actually a
13 lot more money for new traffic signals, so we hope
14 that in the future we'll see it going a little bit
15 faster.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER VELÁZQUEZ: When you
17 prioritize, how much time do you cut off from being a
18 study and then ultimate implementation?

19 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: IT's hard to
20 give a precise answer, because it doe depend on time
21 of year and weather, but you know, we try to move it
22 to the top of the list, along with anything else
23 that's also at a similar location.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER VELÁZQUEZ: Okay, thank
25 you.

2 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you.
3 Council Member Avilés?

4 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Thank you,
5 Council Member, and-- Williams, and thank you so much
6 to the Chair Brooks-Powers for holding this hearing
7 today and for the opportunity to speak regarding
8 Intro 805, a bill which I introduced along with
9 Public Advocate Jumaane Williams, which I understand
10 from the testimony the Administration is not in favor
11 of. As many of you know in this room, the Department
12 of Transportation is required to conduct traffic
13 crash-- study of traffic crashes involving a
14 pedestrian fatality or serious injury every five
15 years. Under Intro 805 this timeline would be
16 accelerated, requiring a study instead every three
17 years. In Brooklyn's District 38 which I represent,
18 we have what DOT considers to be, I would say, four
19 priority corridors, although that is not at all
20 reflected on the map. Fourth Avenue-- Third Avenue,
21 a very well-known corridor of fatalities, Eighth
22 Avenue and Ninth Avenue, and I have neglected to even
23 include the corridors in Red Hook which have been
24 inundated by truck traffic. On these stretches, it's
25 been determined that pedestrians are in greater

2 danger of being killed or severely injured for
3 walking down the street when compared to similar
4 corridors in the borough. I know these corridors
5 well and can tell you looking at these landscapes,
6 every five years is a tremendous disservice to our
7 communities who continue to suffer from our city's
8 lack of planning which can and should be informed by
9 more frequent and thorough data collection. I can't
10 agree enough with my colleague, Council Member
11 Nantasha Williams around rightfully pointing out the
12 importance of proactive approaches, and in fact,
13 there is not a day that goes by that a neighborhood
14 residents cannot-- or does not point out very clear
15 places where traffic safety measures should be put
16 into place. Yet, they are often not considered from a
17 macro-perspective-- I'm sorry, Chair, if I could just
18 finish-- from a macro-perspective, all of our
19 communities have experienced a massive and
20 significant change in transportation patterns within
21 the past few years as a result of the pandemic. And
22 I'm sure you have all heard-- I see my colleague
23 Brooklyn Borough Commissioner here as well who we
24 talk a lot. It's been really great. If you haven't
25 heard me say before, in my district we have

2 experienced an enormous uptick in truck traffic,
3 particularly along the Fourth and Third Avenue
4 corridors and in Red Hook as a result of last mile
5 deliveries. Somehow we have ignored looking at the
6 impacts of what these facilities bring to our
7 community before we site them, and now is the burden
8 of proof on the residents to tell you the experience
9 every single day. I think the order of operations in
10 this situation is simply wrong. It should not take
11 15 years and multiple pedestrian deaths and/or
12 injuries for us to say, oh, I think this is going to
13 be a priority corridor we should now study. So in
14 terms of-- in Ninth Avenue in my district, another
15 priority corridor, we've seen significant
16 construction occurring to create a new medical
17 facility across the street from an already heavily-
18 trafficked junior high school. And again, with the
19 school safety, there are a good number of these
20 locations also within our district. What does it
21 mean for children who are walking to school when we
22 add construction vehicles in addition to related
23 obstructions to an area that's already considered a
24 bottle-neck in the community? These patterns will
25 not be able to be captured if we wait every five

2 years to collect the data. Now, I know DOT's
3 mentioned that it has a portal that is collecting
4 more immediate data, but not only-- we don't just
5 want the immediate collection. We want the clear
6 analysis and adjustments and mitigation measures to
7 be immediate in this regard. So we hope that we will
8 figure out a way to have reporting done on a much
9 shorter time frame so that we can get the full live
10 picture of what is happening in our communities and
11 to be able to address it in adequate time before
12 people are injured and get hurt. And again, more
13 proactive planning with the community. We do
14 visioning sessions and then things kind of disappear
15 into the ether. And so with that, I want to thank
16 the Chair and would love to follow up on several
17 school corridors that we have some real issues with,
18 and finally getting a truck traffic study for our
19 district which has been our request for over 20
20 years. We're getting one in Sunset Park and
21 hopefully one in Red Hook, and I'm always adamantly
22 and eager to hear concrete timeframes and outreach to
23 the community in that regard. So, with that, thank
24 you for your time. And I'd love to know with the
25 current portals, what is the feedback? How do you

2 take resident feedback on whether or not your current
3 collection mechanism actually results in the things
4 that people need? Is there a way to provide
5 feedback? Let's say on the SERTA [sic] system of
6 whether or not the reports that come out actually do
7 inform, they're being responded to, or residents say,
8 you know, actually the way these things are put out
9 into the public realm do not help in terms of
10 advocacy and seeing outcomes.

11 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: So, more than
12 happy to follow with you. And of course like, Julia
13 also had other thing to add to what I'm going to say.
14 But on relation to-- in regard to the bill, as you
15 said, we feel that the reason why we don't think that
16 we need to get this bill and we don't support this
17 bill is that drafting [sic], because we think that
18 the assisting [sic] crash report provide sufficient
19 information, but we are more than happy again to get
20 our staff to continue conversation with you on this
21 bill. When it come to, you know, what are we doing
22 to incorporate the voices of the community, I said
23 before this is a priority for me. I want to be sure
24 that for me and for Mayor Adams, we want to be sure
25 that all New Yorkers across different socioeconomic

2 and ethnic background are engaged when it come to the
3 present and the future of improving transportation in
4 the district. You know, not only as you know you
5 work close with our Borough Commissioner, but for me,
6 I also enjoy to be able to walk in your district.

7 This is something that I'm doing having my time to
8 work with as many Council Member as they want for me
9 to work and see directly what is important for you.

10 so beside that, we have our resources at DOT and the
11 team form the planning perspective from the

12 educational, they look at the whole City of New York
13 of how we can make the City-- continue making the

14 city the safest one in the nation. I said before,
15 the data-- and we are New Yorkers, 8.6 million

16 people, 100 different million opinions as Mayor Adams
17 say, but the data is showing by itself, you know,

18 like if the-- a victim of a crash can be one of our
19 family members, can be a colleague, can be any New

20 Yorkers, and they come in different socioeconomic and
21 ethnic background. However, we also know that when

22 any of us go to any city to talk about

23 transportation, the data is also showing that we have
24 the lowest number of fatality in the whole country.

25 so of course, one is too many for us, but I feel

2 because of the leadership of this Council, because of
3 your commitment to invest, because of the leadership
4 of this Administration, we will continue putting your
5 city in the front line of making those, you know, a
6 role model when it come to improving safety. So,
7 more than happy again to continue going back to your
8 districts and hear and listening to what is important
9 for you in order for us to, you know, to have the
10 temperature from your own experience about things
11 that we can do. But Julia also can--

12 DIRECTOR KITE-LAIDLAW: Sure. So, with
13 regard to analysis of the crashes and where they're
14 happening, we announced at the very beginning today
15 that today we're publishing our new Borough
16 Pedestrian Safety Action Plan for Vision Zero. It's
17 actually the third edition that we've done. The
18 first came out in 2015. The first update was in 2019
19 and now we're in 2023. So we've been delivering it
20 on a four-year interval rather than the five. And we
21 think that this actually a good place in between the
22 three that the bill suggests, and the five that is
23 currently mandated, because we do need to have a
24 certain amount of data in order to be able to run
25 these analyses to be able to generate those heat maps

2 that show the hot spots, that show patterns. We look
3 specifically at pedestrians killed and seriously
4 injured, which when you think about, you know,
5 spreading across the entire city, you do need several
6 years of data in order to be able to see these
7 patterns. And then with the changes to our road
8 usage and to injury and death patterns caused by the
9 COVID pandemic, we know that things became slightly
10 unusual starting in 2020. So, we think that if we
11 continue this rolling four-year cadence, it's giving
12 us really good-- not only really good data to work
13 with but also enough time to be able to address those
14 specific locations that we do highlight as priorities
15 before we start recalculating. I can give you a copy
16 here and it's available online, but since the start
17 of Vision Zero we've been able to install safety
18 engineering improvements at 84 percent of priority
19 intersections that we designated in 2019, and 74
20 percent of the total length of the priority corridors
21 there. So, of course, once we have the data and we
22 designate the areas that are really popping in terms
23 of these pedestrian death and serious injuries, we
24 take the time to work on them, and then we take the
25 time to collect the data on how their performing

2 afterward. So if we make this interval too short, it
3 might not actually be showing us what we need it to,
4 and of course, we don't want to make it too long
5 because that could limit how nimble we are. So,
6 we're thinking that right now the four years that
7 we've been able to do this have been very useful for
8 us, but I'm happy to give you this copy and answer
9 any questions you might have.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Thank you so much
11 and certainly four years is moving in a better
12 direction. I hear you around the data. You know, I
13 guess my immediate reaction is living in a district
14 with a Third Avenue corridor, it has been more than
15 30 years that this corridor is well-known as one that
16 had pedestrian deaths. With the increase,
17 significant increase of truck traffic on that
18 corridor, we continue to see the same pattern. So
19 I'm a bit dismayed to see from the little teeny tiny
20 map-- maybe I can't make it out-- that even Third
21 Avenue is not considered a priority corridor here.
22 And the disconnection between what is considered
23 priorities, priority corridor and kind of use [sic]
24 corridor when you're introducing thousands of
25 additional trucks, you know, where we have seen

2 fatalities how those fair. So, more certainly-- be
3 happy to talk more specifically about that. But
4 Hamilton Avenue-- Commissioner, we were there
5 together. Hamilton Avenue, there was a-- there's
6 been consistent fatalities on Hamilton Avenue. Not a
7 priority. Third Avenue, consistent fatalities every
8 year. Not a priority. So I'd love to follow up some
9 more round those measures.

10 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: [inaudible] Eric
11 can--

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON:
13 [interposing] Chair, and just briefly on Third
14 Avenue. We do know and it was actually one of the
15 things we flagged when we were doing the analysis,
16 that even though we know it's a dangerous street, for
17 whatever reason in the past five year period did not
18 have a lot of serious pedestrian injuries, but we
19 know it's the kind of street that has had and will
20 have again. so that's why even though it's not
21 identified as a priority street from that data
22 analysis, we are undertaking a new corridor study of
23 third Avenue this year and are really focusing on it.
24 In addition to the Sunset Park and in addition to the

2 Red Hook studies, make sure we're really giving it
3 the attention we know it deserves.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Great thank you.
5 While there may not have been one in this year, the
6 residents that live there can tell you the 30
7 individuals who have died on that corridor.

8 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: Right. We
9 are very aware and that's why there's the data and
10 then we have to look at it carefully to see if--
11 because there can be a dangerous street that just has
12 had a lucky few years. That doesn't make it not a
13 dangerous street, and it's why we do need to focus
14 there.

15 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you.
16 So, I just want to jump back into the questions that
17 I had. I wanted to allow my colleagues the
18 opportunity to ask theirs, and I'll try to be quick
19 because I know we have folks from the public that
20 also have testimony that they wish to give. So, will
21 the Department of Transportation looking to request
22 additional funding this year to support achieving the
23 Streets Plan benchmark goals?

24 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: We always
25 welcome any additional resources to our agency.

2 However, I got to say that, you know, when the Mayor
3 added 18 percent increase on our budget in the middle
4 of last year, and then when hold the State of the
5 City event he added almost 400 additional million
6 dollars to DOT, we appreciate the support that the
7 Mayor is providing to our agency so have the
8 resources that we need to continue accomplishing our
9 goal. And I also know that, you know, at the end of
10 day, all the investments is the Mayor together with
11 the council-- we have Speaker Adams who that allow
12 for us as an agency to have what we need in order to
13 continue making our city the safest one in the
14 nation.

15 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: And how much
16 are you looking to request?

17 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: No, I'm not
18 looking. I'm fine with the resources that we have.

19 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Okay.

20 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Any additional
21 resource anyone may add, I always welcome.

22 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: So you're
23 fine with the resources you have, but also there are
24 challenges with the resources and being implemented

2 because the staffing is not there. Am I following it
3 correctly?

4 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Like, I-- one
5 thing that I learned in my 12 years after I ended the
6 Council for three years was that New York city had
7 limited resources, that you know, there's not a place
8 where we can-- there's a plan that we can take all
9 the dollar from there, that we have limited resources
10 in order to-- for agencies to have what they need in
11 order to their job. So what I'm saying is that I'm
12 comfortable with the investment that Mayor Adams has
13 made to our agency, but this is a new budget dancing
14 cycle that is going on. That's between the Mayor and
15 the Speaker, and anyone that would like to raise some
16 money in addition to funding to DOT. More than happy
17 to take it.

18 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: The
19 Department of Transportation has noted the overall
20 decrease in traffic violence for 2022 is in large
21 part due to the Administration's new focus on
22 pedestrian safety at intersection and the
23 Administration's work to expand the school zone speed
24 camera enforcement program to 24 hours a day, seven
25 days a week. Thirty-three percent of all fatalities

2 and 44 percent of pedestrian fatalities occurred on
3 Vision Zero priority corridors which account for the
4 most dangerous seven percent of streets in New York
5 City. What efforts is DOT undertaking to improve
6 street safety at priority corridors?

7 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: And I will--
8 definitely, you know, the Deputy chief will share
9 some data on how well we are doing on reducing
10 crashes as a result of speeding, or reducing
11 speeding. And then Eric can add, you know, what we
12 are doing when it come to, you know, taking into
13 biggest progress on transportation. I feel that 23,
14 as Mayor Adam say, is a year for the City that we
15 will be built on all the success that we have done in
16 2022. I shared the data with you before, you know,
17 and back in November I was able to stand with the
18 Mayor around 44th Street and share how we overpass
19 all the expectation that we put in place at the
20 beginning of last year. That's how we're showing
21 that this Administration is putting his money where
22 this mouth is. He's supporting, you know, agencies.
23 In this case, myself as a Commissioner, and therefore
24 I'm able to work with a great team that I have at DOT
25 to deliver. You know, everyone is looking. Like

2 tomorrow is the last day for the Street Design Manual
3 Exhibition. This is exhibition will happen at
4 Fordham University. They're different [sic] days, and
5 I encourage any New Yorkers to go through. They
6 close tomorrow. In 2009, was the first year when the
7 DOT put together a design, a Street Design Manual.
8 That's what we're using at this agency to see the
9 work that we have done and what is the future project
10 and plan that we have. so in 2014, this body when I
11 was a Council Member, we passed a bill that instead
12 of just letting DOT to, you know, come and say we
13 have these-- this Street Design Manual, then the
14 Council asked DOT-- mandate DOT to do like every four
15 year, you know, report of this, updating, upgrading
16 this report. So, when we open this exhibition at
17 Fordham University, one thing that is important is
18 that when we look at this manual in 2009, all the
19 photo that were used in the first manual. There was
20 photo of how New York City wanted to look like
21 looking at all the city. the 2020 manual now-- again,
22 tomorrow is the last day if anyone would like to go
23 and see at Fordham University downtown campus-- all
24 the photo that we have right now are based on those
25 and many other big project that we are doing, that

2 all the city when the-- when the team at DOT, they go
3 to LA, they go to Boston, they go to any place--
4 Washington, D.C. and they present on behalf of
5 Transportation. When we walk in any conference,
6 people are approaching us to hear, to learn how New
7 York City is reimagining the use of public space. So
8 one thing that we need to do-- and we need, you know,
9 your support, all of us together-- is to change the
10 culture on how we see a street. In the past, driver
11 told that the street belong to drivers, and any
12 drivers who-- I have a car, too. But besides being a
13 driver, my family having a car, now what we are doing
14 is working all of us together to change the culture
15 for people should understand that the street doesn't
16 belong to car owners only, that the street also
17 belong to the pedestrian, belong to the cycling.
18 That when we walk at the-- [inaudible] Summer [sic]
19 street last year, and Mayor Adam said let's take it
20 farther for Summer-- Summer Street was only from
21 Brooklyn Bridge to 79th Street. Last year we went up
22 to 109 Street. This year I'm planning even go to the
23 state building in Harlem. When we do the car-free
24 day, and the first time that we did it and it came
25 out from the Council, because I led that initiative.

2 Car-free day was only for Union Square to 23rd
3 Street. In 2022, we went all from Union Square to
4 46th Street. We touch each borough. Went to Third
5 Avenue and 149th Street. So what we are doing is
6 changing the culture on how New Yorkers choose to use
7 the street as a public space. So because if we
8 engage everyone, then everyone will take ownership of
9 all the project that we are doing. But when it come
10 to how we are working on reducing the speed, the
11 Deputy Chief can say--

12 CHIEF PILECKI: Just a very interesting
13 piece of information about the success of DOT's
14 school zone speed camera program. On April 6th of
15 2020 which was the height of the pandemic, DOT had
16 637 speed cameras set up throughout the City. On
17 that date, 1.6 percent of the vehicle that passed
18 those cameras did so in excess of the limit. Now,
19 fast-forward that to February 11th of 2023. DOT now
20 has three times as many cameras, 1,927, but only 0.27
21 percent of the vehicles that pass those cameras did
22 so in excess of the limit. So on April 6th, you can
23 say roughly if you round it up to two, two out of 100
24 vehicles went by in excess of the limit. Now, you
25 figure one-quarter of one vehicle is going by in

2 excess of the limit, which is a really great success,
3 because again, they're all positioned in the
4 proximity of schools and in school zones.

5 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you.
6 and Commissioner, yes, it was good to see the
7 expansion of the Open Streets, and when we talk about
8 changing the culture, I think we also need to look at
9 that and looking to bring a lot of these
10 opportunities and resources to the outer boroughs as
11 aggressive as we do in Manhattan. Like, we can't
12 continue to be Manhattan-centric. And I know we were
13 able to finally bring an Open Streets program to
14 Laurelton through Chay [sic] Corp. And then there
15 are some challenges with these small businesses
16 getting reimbursed from DOT and it makes it
17 challenging for organizations to want to take up and
18 participate in this program. So, while we see it
19 being successful in Manhattan, we have to also look
20 at what that looks like in the outer boroughs and how
21 we can be equally as aggressive and bring in those
22 opportunities to those communities.

23 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: [inaudible]
24 Chairman, that's a priority for us and, again, what
25 we need, and I know that Rick and the team of

2 Intergovernmental, we've been calling, emailing,
3 calling every Council Member asking to help us to
4 identify CBOs and business--

5 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: [interposing]
6 I'm telling you mine hasn't gotten paid, and now I've
7 got a new set of--

8 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: [interposing] We
9 can follow with you, any challenge, any particular
10 one. I can say and two thing with this is also that
11 because I just use my experience as a Council Member.
12 This is one thing that I take, [inaudible] and the
13 same thing that I share with other Council Member.
14 The budget cycle is starting now. You have large
15 number of institution that they approach each Council
16 Member. They are Zoo. They are museum. They are
17 the Barclay. They are, you know, at Carnegie Hall.
18 They are the Lincoln Center. They are everyone.
19 what we want is also what I feel, the only one that
20 will how we can also-- even at Lorn [sic]
21 Institution, Chair, is by asking those institution
22 that they come and ask the Council for support, for
23 them also to take the lead to also be one of those
24 that open of becoming partners of the Open Street.
25 So, we are confident again that with the support that

2 we are providing, more than happy to follow you with
3 challenges. We provide 20,000 dollars for an
4 institution that they don't have the resources--

5 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: [interposing]

6 And know when they get their money, I'm sure they'll
7 be grateful for it.

8 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: we don't-- but
9 we don't want to only rely on that. I also want--
10 you know, when I call Columbia New York Medical
11 School because they are in the district that I still
12 live and they are a big institution, I didn't call
13 and say you can get 20,000 dollars. I just ask the
14 hospital about can you be a partner with the local
15 CBOs. For you to put the resources in order to have
16 an Open Street that also it have component. So I
17 think that by, you know, being engaged in this
18 conversation of planning, in-- I am confident that we
19 will oversee our number of 200 that we did last year,
20 but the support of the Council Member inviting all
21 the CBOs in your district to also use the street.
22 Different from the past that there was a lot of red
23 tapes, that you need to get permit through
24 [inaudible] institution in order for you to close the
25 block. What DOT's telling everyone is about do you

2 want to put an open street in place? Bring it on and
3 we support you.

4 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Okay. I'm
5 going to try to go quickly, because I have a lot of
6 questions left for you. So, I'll try to speed
7 through this. So, on October 30th, 2022, DOT
8 announced that it had completed street safety
9 improvements at 1400 intersections. However, most of
10 the previously identified 293 Vision Zero priority
11 intersections were not among the 1,400 that received
12 improvements. What factors did not use the-- the DOT
13 use to decide which intersections would receive
14 improvements. Why were more priority intersections
15 not included, and has there been any decline in a
16 number of incidents of traffic violence at those
17 intersections which did receive improvements?

18 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yeah. So, let's
19 get Eric to get into that answer, and if anything
20 [inaudible].

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: Sure. And
22 it's a good question, because we-- these Vision Zero
23 priority locations are priority and then you look to
24 see that not all of them were in the 1,400 or the
25 1,600 and there's a few reasons for that. First,

2 many of them had already been addressed in the
3 previous several years as Julia said. This is--
4 we've been coming out with these plans every four
5 years, so--

6 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: [interposing]
7 How many of the 293 were addressed already?

8 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: I don't have
9 that number in front of me, but many of them. So, we
10 obviously weren't going to back and do another thing
11 again just to make sure that we did it again. So
12 that's one lens to it. The other is that we have
13 many ways that we approach this work as an agency.
14 If we're doing a bike lane on a corridor, we don't do
15 the bike lane on this block but not the next block
16 and then do the next block again just because that's
17 where the priority interaction was. We want to
18 redesign the whole corridor, and as we're doing that
19 we make safety upgrades at every intersection along
20 the way. so even though they may not all be priority
21 intersection in the report, we still think it's
22 important that wherever we're doing work we include
23 those safety upgrades as part of our work and not
24 just do it sort of haphazardly spread around the
25 City. so, we-- it's some of the intersections come

2 from us looking at the Vision Zero priority area
3 specifically, but others come from wanting the
4 connected bike network, from wanting to have bus
5 lanes where bus speeds are slowest, and then making
6 sure that we're including the safety improvements
7 wherever redesigning an intersection citywide.

8 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: But shouldn't
9 we be prioritizing the intersections that we know are
10 a priority because they've shown that they have, you
11 know, high fatalities or crashes that may happen
12 there?

13 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: Yeah,
14 absolutely, and we do, and we'll get back to you on
15 the number, but we-- we're over the course of four
16 years, we have addressed the vast majority if not all
17 of those intersections. So we do that, but we don't
18 only do that. In addition to addressing those
19 intersections we make sure that wherever we're doing
20 other work around the City, we're also incorporating
21 the safety improvements.

22 DIRECTOR KITE-LAIDLAW: Eighty-four--

23 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: [interposing]

24 And-- oh, go ahead.

2 DIRECTOR KITE-LAIDLAW: Eighty-four
3 percent of our last tranche of Vision Zero priority
4 intersections have had safety engineering
5 improvements installed and that can be anything from
6 street improvement projects, new signals, turn
7 calming treatments, the leading pedestrian interval,
8 signal retiming, a very wide toolkit of course that
9 we tailor to each specific location's needs. And
10 then you did ask, you know, have seen improvements
11 there? And yes, actually casualties have dropped
12 more at the priority intersections than the citywide
13 average, which I think reflects the impact and the
14 effectiveness of our Vision Zero toolkit.

15 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you for
16 that. And in January of 2022, Mayor Adams announced
17 the City would install 100 raised crosswalk annually.
18 To-date how many raised crosswalks have been
19 installed?

20 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: Last year we
21 installed 45 raised crosswalks which was a new record
22 for the city, and we want to make sure that we're
23 doing it sustainably. So we did about half of those
24 through our in-house program using our concrete and
25 asphalt crews. The other half was incorporated into

2 the Department of Design and Construction Capital
3 Projects, and that's something that we want to do
4 going forward, is both increasing the amount that we
5 do in-house, but also making sure that it becomes a
6 standard treatment in our capital programs, and we're
7 working closely with our colleagues at DDC to make
8 that happen.

9 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: How come it
10 was only less than half of them that were implemented
11 or constructed?

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: so, what we
13 had said is that we were going to start a program,
14 not necessarily that we're going to achieve the
15 hundred in the first year. And we ramped up a very
16 large amount over what we had done. So raised
17 crosswalks, they look simple when they were done, but
18 they can be challenging to implement because if the
19 drainage of the street goes a certain way, we don't
20 want to have a ponding condition at the end. It
21 often means you have to install a new catch basin and
22 deal with the underground infrastructure. So we're
23 looking for as many places as we can where the
24 drainage isn't a problem, and that's what we do in-
25 house, but we also want to make sure that we're doing

2 it at the places with the greatest number of crashes,
3 particularly turning crashes, which raised crosswalks
4 address very well, and those are the ones that have
5 to go through the capital project process, coordinate
6 with DEP, coordinate with other private utilities and
7 make sure that they're done correctly, and that takes
8 a little bit of time but it makes sure that we get
9 the best result at the end of the day.

10 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: In June of
11 2022, Mayor Adams and Commissioner Rodriguez
12 announced that 100 Safe Street redesigns would be
13 completed by 2022. What is the status of these
14 redesigns and where can the public review the
15 completed projects?

16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: So we-- last
17 year, we did 111 street improvement programs. Those
18 are in-house street redesigns. So those are things
19 that are substantial redesigns. You know, they can
20 include signal timing but go beyond signal timing to
21 involve a full re-design of the street. So we did
22 exceed that number, and that should all be available
23 through Open Data, but we're happy to help you find
24 the list.

2 DIRECTOR KITE-LAIDLAW: On Vision Zero, we
3 have a tab that you can click on the top that looks
4 at street improvements and engineering and they're
5 represented, you know, with different colors and
6 shapes. We talk about everything from leading
7 pedestrian intervals, street improvement projects, to
8 corridor re-timings, and then if people want more
9 specifics, on the DOT website we do archive
10 presentations from every meeting that we give in each
11 calendar year separated there. So, that's another
12 way that people can go and reference exactly what
13 we've done where.

14 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: IN terms of
15 the speed camera expansion of ours, I think it was
16 about 20 million dollars if I'm not mistaken that's
17 been generated through the cameras. I wanted to get
18 a sense as to where like the top three communities
19 that are like receiving the most violations. And
20 then I'd also like to know has any infrastructure
21 projects been done, under way, or being planned for
22 those neighborhoods?

23 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: So, we can get
24 back to you into the more specific of those
25 particular location, but what I can tell us that as I

2 said before, I hope that oen day we don't raise one
3 dollar from the speed camera. Because in order to
4 get there, it would mean that we changed the cultural
5 on how people drive. And this is something like
6 yesterday, I was-- I was standing with-- in the room
7 of 40 faith leaders that Rosanne, the Staten Island
8 Borough Commissioner put it together-- you know, when
9 one of the pastor as me the question about how do
10 feel about in which community people get a speed
11 camera, things like that. My answer was it is in
12 your institution that those who lost a loved one,
13 they go and cry with you, and you have to pray with
14 them. so, I just feel that, you know, we all New
15 Yorkers should understand that, you know, in-- we are
16 not competing into, you know, which community get
17 more ticket on speed camera. And as you now, as I
18 said since 83, I only been doing the work that I used
19 to do before I left my island of the Dominican
20 Republic that share with Haiti. But it's about, you
21 know, being sure that-- so equity for me is key. I
22 don't want no community to be singled out on his is
23 getting more than other. What I want-- as someone
24 again that believe that we can bring, as Mayor Adams
25 say, to zero, the numbers of pedestrian of cyclist

2 that we're losing. As Mayor Adams say traffic
3 violence is another type of violence that we can
4 eradicate it. Let's work together to educate all
5 drivers that no one will get a ticket, but they have
6 to drive on the speed limit which is 25 mile per
7 hours.

8 DIRECTOR KITE-LAIDLAW: With regard to
9 finances, over the period of Fiscal Year 14 to Fiscal
10 Year 21, the revenue from speed cameras has been
11 about 555 million dollars and that is about one-third
12 of what we've spent on Vision Zero overall. So while
13 we're continuing to invest the resources back where
14 they're needed, we want to do that in a way that's
15 really regardless of where those camera revenues have
16 come from just because the commitment has been so
17 much greater than what goes in.

18 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you.
19 And when you get-- your agency gets back to me,
20 Commissioner, it'd be great if we could just look at
21 each of the districts. Like, it could be like a
22 heating map that shoes us where it's at just to have
23 a visual. That would be very much appreciated.
24 Moving now to DOT's role in street safety. Does DOT
25 have a specific target per year on implementing

2 traffic calming devices in the City, and if so, what
3 is this target and how many devices were implemented
4 in 2022 and year to date?

5 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: We do and Eric
6 will get into more details.

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: Right. And
8 we have targets around different numbers of things.
9 Like historically our target had been 100 turn-
10 calming devices, for example. Last year we upped
11 that to-- we doubled it to a commitment of 200 turn-
12 calming locations. So we can go through individual
13 things, but we do want to make sure we're both
14 addressing a number of intersections and doing an
15 appropriate number of treatments. That's a-- we do
16 try to make sure that we're doing the right thing at
17 the right place. You know, we don't do a turn-
18 calming just because we need to make our numbers. We
19 spend a lot of effort to make sure we're doing it at
20 the right locations where turn-calming really
21 addresses the types of crashes that we see.

22 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you.
23 In terms of the-- so there is no actual targeting
24 number of goal at all set?

2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: Well, we
3 target 200 turn-calming locations. You know, the
4 official target is-- that was reporting MMR's is 50
5 street design-- redesign projects per year. As the
6 Commissioner said, we did more than 100. So we do
7 have a lot of internal targets that we use for
8 things. We don't roll it all into a single number
9 because sometimes you have multiple treatments at a
10 single intersection, but you know, we committed to
11 doing over a thousand intersection redesigns which I
12 think is probably the best combination of all these
13 different treatments, and in reality we did over
14 1,600 last year.

15 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: What has been
16 the most influential traffic-calming measure in the
17 City for reducing total fatalities and injuries?

18 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: I think it's the
19 combination of all the tools that we have in our
20 toolbox, but Julia will get into more details.

21 DIRECTOR KITE-LAIDLAW: Yes, so like I
22 said earlier to one of your colleagues, we never say
23 that there's one, you know, silver bullet that's
24 going to solve all our problems, but I think that if
25 we look at the safe systems approach in general, we

2 see one common theme, and that's speed management.

3 Anything we can do that addresses speed management is

4 likely to have a positive impact, and we have a lot

5 of different interventions that speak to that. It's

6 not just lowering the speed limit. It's not just

7 enforcing it through both NYPD and through cameras.

8 It's also everything else that we do on our streets,

9 anything from narrowing a lane to putting in a

10 protected bike lane to doing turn calming. All these

11 things have in common is that they slow down motor

12 vehicle traffic. And as I believe one of my

13 colleagues mentioned earlier, when you're traveling

14 slower, you have a longer distance-- it's a shorter

15 distance that you need if you see something and you

16 need to react quickly, both to get the stimulus into

17 your brain, hit the brake, and actually come to a

18 stop. You're going to travel a lot slower distance.

19 And then even if a crash does happen, the impact on

20 the other person is going to be a lot less severe.

21 We've been saying since the beginning of Vision Zero,

22 the reason why we lowered the speed limit from 30 to

23 25 might not sound like very much, but it doubles the

24 chance of pedestrian survival. It's these-- all

25 these elements working together to overall calm down

2 traffic, increase people's visibility and reaction
3 time, and even if a crash does happen, it doesn't
4 have to be fatal. That's why we always focus on
5 death and serious injury and not, you know, a
6 property damage crash or fender bender because we
7 know what's important here. And again and again what
8 we come down to is speed management is one of our
9 most important factors.

10 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: No, I agree
11 with that. I do think that, you know, we have to
12 improve the way our roads are designed which I think
13 will influence the way motorists will drive on the
14 roadway, and I would love to see more emphasis on
15 that. When you look at other states across the
16 United States, there are places that have, you know,
17 less crashes and they have-- like, there are parts of
18 like Florida, for example, where they have more
19 roundabouts and I think there's some studies that
20 support that roundabouts sometimes may reduce vehicle
21 crashes. Also, you know, so I say this to say that
22 it is not only the speed limit or, you know, a
23 traffic camera, but it's also making sure the roads
24 support the outcome we're looking for. so there's a
25 street still on 225th, and I know my Borough

2 Commissioner is here, Nicole-- on 225th, you still--
3 there's still this stretch of road with no traffic
4 light, no stop sign, no speed hump. There's a
5 daycare. I was glad one of my colleagues mentioned
6 earlier about daycares being considered like schools
7 as well, and we have cars flying down that road,
8 because there's nothing that's there to make the
9 motorist think to slow down. It's just a straight
10 stretch of roadway, and so that is important--

11 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: [interposing]

12 And also, it means also, Chair, that you know,
13 everyone and I feel that, you know, like with your
14 leadership and others at the Council and us together,
15 we also have to also work with that private sector to
16 make sure that everyone do their part. Because even
17 let's say the case of the child that we went there to
18 [inaudible], that driver was coming out from a
19 parking garage. You know, that was not just, you
20 know, a thing related to our street redesigning.
21 That was about, you know, the person who-- that
22 driver was coming out from that parking. But I just
23 feel that, you know, that's why Vision Zero is so
24 important because Vision Zero combined the three
25 aspects of engineering. Yes, we don't have to wait

2 for Albany or anybody else to pass any law for us to
3 reading the street. We doing the work in a lot of
4 state look at New York City as a role model on the
5 work that we're doing. But also that's combined with
6 enforcement, and that's why we work shoulder to
7 shoulder with the NYPD to be sure that-- you know,
8 2022 we saw a step in of enforcement. There was more
9 police presence. You know, I went to the One Police
10 Plaza and I saw Chief [inaudible] and Deputy Chief
11 here, you know, meeting with all the inspector that
12 they do, you know, per borough, and this is something
13 that I want to share how you also work with inspector
14 to be sure that they do the enforcement part. And
15 then we do the educational part. And the education
16 is so important also to change the culture. You
17 know, we-- every time when we think about any
18 transportation project in certain community, we hit a
19 big [inaudible], because then sometime we have the
20 car driver's culture which is about don't touch, let
21 us drive, you know, any speed limit. And as you know,
22 we can say the data speak by itself. Twenty-five
23 miles save life.

24 CHIEF PILECKI: You know, the
25 Commissioner had once said a while back that

2 intersections should be considered sacred spaces. I
3 remember you had said that. And when we do our
4 analysis on pedestrian collisions and other
5 collisions, bicycle collisions-- for example, in 2022
6 there were 8,567 pedestrian collisions throughout the
7 City, 5,470 or 63 percent of those pedestrian that
8 were struck were struck in intersections, and then
9 those numbers gone up this year. We've had 711
10 pedestrian collisions so far this year, 502 or 71
11 percent occurred in intersections. So as the
12 Commissioner had mentioned, in our Traffic Safety
13 Forum meetings we discussed this with our captains,
14 and we encourage them to direct their enforcement in
15 intersections with summonses such as failure to yield
16 the right-of-way to a pedestrian, or failure to stop
17 at a red light, or disobeying a sign. There are all
18 things that will help make those intersections safer,
19 along with the engineering that DOT has conducted in
20 the past and continues to implement.

21 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you for
22 that. How widely used is daylighting within DOT's
23 toolbox to reduce traffic fatalities and injuries?

24 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: [inaudible] [off
25 mic] since he also oversee again that part of the

2 plan and that we do it, but we did hundreds of those
3 in 2022, but as I say in my testimony, it's not only
4 about to remove some parking spot. That must happen
5 when we do-- when we do those work it's about losing
6 around eight to 12 parking spot in those
7 intersections, but it's more than removing that. It
8 also require other work, and Eric can explain about
9 what those--

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON:

11 [interposing] Sure, and last year we did a little
12 over 100 locations, but as the Commissioner said,
13 it's a tool in our toolbox, but one we use very
14 carefully, because one of the things that we found
15 very successful in reducing crashes and fatalities is
16 encouraging drivers to turn very slowly, and that's
17 both a big focus of our educational campaigns, but
18 even just in our redesign work. A lot of the work we
19 do is around tightening the radius at a corner so
20 that a driver physically has to turn slowly. As you
21 say, it's not just education but having the street
22 being really enforce what we want people to do. we
23 have a concern that if you just daylight in sort of
24 the lightest touch way by, you know, creating a no
25 standing zone at the corner, it has the unfortunate

2 effect of widening the turn radius that people can
3 actually can take the turn much faster. So when we
4 implement daylighting, yeah, at least where there's a
5 turn allowed, we try to make sure we're putting
6 something in that space, you know, a turn-calming, a
7 bike corral, something that physically occupies the
8 space so that the turn is still one you have to take
9 slowly. So, it's a tool we use. We think it can be
10 very effective in the right circumstances, but it's
11 not the tool we use at every dangerous intersection,
12 we want to use it in the right place and in the right
13 way.

14 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: So, if you
15 did a little over 100 last year, you said that it has
16 been effective, what's the opposition to my bill that
17 calls for a 100?

18 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: We just want to
19 have the flexibility on when and where we use it. As
20 we know, we also do the pedestrian island. We also
21 do the raised crosswalk. Those are the thing that we
22 do. And we're more than happy to continue the
23 conversation with you.

24 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: I actually
25 feel like maybe we should increase it, because if

2 you're already doing a little over 100, we could
3 really be impactful by speeding that process up. I
4 find that, like, when you go into even Long Island,
5 you have a lot of those roads that do have the
6 daylighting also. I do agree in terms of the
7 infrastructure needed to tighten up the turn, but
8 right now, a lot of people are driving like bigger
9 vehicles, right? And at the corners you have the
10 vans, or trucks, or busses, and it really makes it
11 difficult to turn, and it impairs the drivers to some
12 extent. So, I do think that's something that we
13 should discuss. I'm looking forward for the Council
14 to passing bill around that in partnership with DOT
15 recognizing like the infrastructure is important and
16 so that we can really start to address the road
17 design to make the street safer.

18 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: More than happy
19 to continue a conversation with you. Again, we
20 believe that it's much better if we don't have to put
21 a number, for DOT to keep that flexibility, but of
22 course, like you know, we will continue a
23 conversation with you.

24 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: And then, by
25 the end of 2017, DOT planned to modify signal timing

2 to reduce off-peak speeding on all feasible priority
3 corridors by the end of 2017. Which and how many
4 streets have adjusted signal timing according to this
5 goal?

6 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: So, we can
7 get you the full list, but we did meet that
8 commitment where we evaluated all of our Vision Zero
9 priority corridors and looked at, you know-- we look
10 at signal timing in many different ways, but in
11 particularly we looked at the off-peak times when you
12 have a street that's very busy during rush hour, but
13 can feel very open at other times of day, and we use
14 signal timing to sort of create a much tighter pack
15 of cars that it's much harder to speed on those roads
16 overnight. So we did do that. We thought it was a
17 very effective treatment. As we've come out with our
18 new Vision Zero corridors, any of them that doesn't
19 have that treatment, we will look again as well.

20 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: 1.3 million
21 dollars is budgeted for a new 29-person team at DOT--
22 Commissioner, you were still in the Council I think
23 when we did that-- to analyze crashes and answer
24 press questions as part of an effort to avoid NYPD
25 driver bias. How many of these roles have been hired

2 to-date, and what is the status of DOT's analysis
3 team?

4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: Sure, and
5 this is the SERTA team that the Commissioner
6 mentioned in his testimony where in addition to our
7 colleagues at NYPD, [inaudible] have an emergency
8 response unit that goes out and visits the scene of
9 the crash so that as NYPD is studying criminality and
10 other things in their jurisdiction, we are looking at
11 street design, missing signs, anything that we should
12 be fixing immediately. And then in addition to the
13 immediate reaction we have an investigatory team that
14 looks at the data, looks at whether there's a history
15 of similar crashes at the location and makes
16 recommendations for anything either short term or
17 long term that we should do. So, we have been
18 staffing up that team, you know, as with other
19 things. I won't say that we're fully-staffed for all
20 those positions, but we have staffed it up
21 substantially over the past year, and we have been
22 for putting out the quarterly reports.

23 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: How many do
24 you have out of the 29?

2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: I'll have to
3 get back to you on the exact number, but we have been
4 putting out the required quarterly reports that have
5 looked at all in the intersections.

6 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: I'm going to
7 be like Council Member Restler. I may find some
8 people to go in those positions. Send me the job
9 posts. I'll put it in my e-newsletter.

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: Please.

11 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: And I'm sure
12 the other Council Members--

13 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: [interposing] And
14 that bill--

15 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: [interposing]
16 will too.

17 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: [interposing]
18 Thank you.

19 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: That's important
20 for me as the lead prime on that bill. so I also
21 know, you know, now as a Commissioner, you know, I
22 need to be accountable, but I'm confident that the
23 work that we do and at DOT definitely fulfill what we
24 mandate [sic] agency today with that bill.

2 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: And I was
3 definitely interested in how that was going to play
4 out, because there are two motor vehicle crashes that
5 I know of that were in southeast Queens and I don't
6 recall ever seeing anyone from DOT coming. There's
7 some challenges in itself now because DOT's not
8 coming and NYPD not coming, and relying on two
9 drivers to be truthful with insurance. What I've
10 found, and I'm trying to pay attention as people tell
11 me about these things, is that the insurance company
12 will often just say it's like 50/50, and that's it.
13 So everybody has liability, but that may not
14 necessarily be the case. If someone would have gone
15 there and assessed or whatever, also. So, that
16 dynamic is something to probably, you know, discuss
17 at another time, but I did want to--

18 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: [interposing]
19 Chair, you just mention on the bill the DOT is
20 sending their team to the scene together with NYPD
21 when there's a fatal crash or there's one in critical
22 injury condition. And when it come to, you know,
23 NYPD can respond-- you know, will respond by
24 themselves, but I can say that, you know, it could
25 be-- I don't know about the scenario of that

2 particular crash that you say, but if two driver get
3 into a crash and they don't call the police and they
4 resolve among themselves--

5 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: [interposing]
6 No, they have. This is in actually Council Member
7 Williams' district.

8 CHIEF PILECKI: so you're talking about
9 the Department's policy that was changed a few years
10 back where we wouldn't respond to collisions where
11 there was no injury.

12 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Right,
13 actually I will say the 105-- it was in Council
14 Member Williams' district. The 105 did respond to
15 it, but again, like they-- there was another
16 situation. I forgot who's district that one was in,
17 but it was also in Queens, and the police just when
18 you call the precinct says to exchange information.
19 They ask, you know, is anyone injured. No. and I
20 could get more details on it. I could--

21 CHIEF PILECKI: [interposing] What you're
22 saying is there's no investigation conducted at the
23 scene to determine--

24 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: [interposing]
25 Right.

2 CHIEF PILECKI: the possible fault.
3 We'll take it back.

4 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Yep. In the
5 report that was released today, while DOT has been
6 able to reach a number of the targeted goals for
7 2022, I did want to touch on the bus stop upgrades,
8 especially thinking about Council Member Fariás'
9 district from my transportation infrastructure tour
10 last year, where most of the bus stops there I would
11 say have no shelter, and so I just wanted to know
12 what the challenges have been because it's a pretty
13 steep gap from the goal. Like, there ws only 14 that
14 have been completed, and what boroughs were those
15 completed in?

16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: And the goal
17 there is-- requires 500 bus stops per year with real-
18 time information upgrades and either a new shelter or
19 a new bench at the location. And the biggest
20 obstacle for us has been the real-time information.
21 We had a program over several years where we
22 installed the electronic countdown clocks that say
23 how far away the next bus is, and the equipment we
24 have is very expensive. They were costing more than
25 50,000 dollars per location.

2 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Sound like a
3 budget ask [inaudible] enough.

4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: And we did
5 get a lot of Reso A money over the years, but
6 ultimately that was very expensive product for what
7 we were delivering, and the main driver of that cost
8 was the need to trench underground to bring
9 electricity to the sites. So we decided to take a
10 step back and looked at some global best practices,
11 and what's happened over the past several years is
12 that solar technology has gotten better. There are
13 more companies that are providing solar solutions
14 which don't require all that underground work to
15 bring the power to the site. So we decided it made
16 sense to take a step back to a new procurement for a
17 solar screen that we could install and that's
18 something that, you know, we're still finishing up
19 the procurement, but it will be substantially cheaper
20 and allow us to install many more locations for the
21 same amount of money. So we're-- we think we're
22 doing the right thing there, even though
23 acknowledging that it meant that we were short of
24 that goal for last year.

2 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Yeah, because
3 I remember when we were doing a tour there was an
4 elderly man just like sitting on the ground leaned up
5 against I think it was like a wall or a gate or
6 something waiting for the bus, and then a few blocks
7 there was another person leaning on a hydrant waiting
8 for a bus because there was nowhere to sit down and
9 it was hot because it was the summer. And the person
10 was like this, because again, there's no shelter.
11 And we think about the community that Council Member
12 Fariás represents, you know, it shows again the gap
13 in resources, and so I wanted to highlight that. And
14 then I'm in the final section now and then we're
15 going to go to-- and I thank the public for being
16 with me for these important questions. I just want
17 to ask a few questions around Intro 879. So, as
18 currently structured, Intro. 879 would require the
19 creation of guidelines for the installation of
20 bollards at sidewalks, curb extensions, and
21 pedestrian ramps. How does DOT currently make
22 determinations about where to install the bollards,
23 and does DOT have written guidelines that guide
24 determination about the installation of bollards, and
25 has DOT set goals for future bollard installation?

2 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: I had a similar
3 bill when I used to be a Council Member and the
4 Chairman of this Committee of Transportation.

5 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: I may have
6 borrowed it.

7 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: And what we feel
8 is that for the installation of the pedestrian
9 bollards, it's something that we do in collaboration
10 the feedback of the NYPD Counter-terrorism, too. So,
11 the bollards are one of the tools that can be used.
12 Because bollards are complicated and expensive to
13 install, we are concerned that tiny bollard
14 installation to be other critical safety and
15 accessibility work will slow down and prevent the
16 work from happening. So, what we feel is that more
17 than happy, again, to continue the conversation with
18 you, but we believe that we shouldn't put numbers on
19 the pedestrian bollards. We feel that it is
20 important for the agency to continue having the
21 flexibility to working with the feedback of the NYPD
22 to decide when and where pedestrian bollard is
23 needed.

24 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: So, for the
25 last two parts of that, does DOT have written

2 guidelines and do you have set goals for future
3 installation?

4 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Location for
5 security-rated bollard that are designated to stop
6 vehicles must be chosen with the utmost care, and the
7 input from the security [inaudible], and I defer to
8 my colleague here at the NYPD, Deputy Chief, to
9 answer that question.

10 CHIEF PILECKI: Can you just repeat it to
11 me, please?

12 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: So, does DOT
13 have written guidelines that guides determination
14 about installation of bollards, and has DOT set goals
15 for future bollard installation?

16 CHIEF PILECKI: I mean, the Commissioner
17 had-- beg your pardon. The Commissioner had
18 referenced that he makes these determinations in
19 conjunction with our Counter-Terrorism Bureau. I
20 cannot speak for the Counter-Terrorism Bureau at this
21 point, but we can certainly get the information back
22 or the question and we could try to answer it as best
23 we can for you. Generally, there are security
24 installations that they're concerned with. Not so
25 much, you know, making individual intersections safe,

2 the high-profile locations that the bureau determines
3 need to be enhanced with regard to security, physical
4 barriers and so forth.

5 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Okay. The
6 bill would-- in this, again, Intro 879 would require
7 DOT to install bollards as the DOT makes
8 accessibility-related repairs. In 2019 a judge
9 approved a settlement requiring the City to survey
10 its sidewalks and curbs and upgrade street corners to
11 ensure citywide accessibility. What progress has the
12 City made pursuant to the settlement? How much of
13 the City has been surveyed?

14 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: Thank you
15 for the question. I know that that's an area that we
16 actually focus on very, very closely. We are
17 currently pretty positive we're in compliance with
18 the latest targets, but again, it's super resource-
19 intensive effort. So, anything that, you know,
20 interacts with that, we have to take a very hard look
21 at the rate of installation required to maintain a
22 certain pace.

23 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: So, what's
24 the target?

2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: Off-hand I
3 don't know. I would have to ask--

4 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: [interposing]
5 So you'll get that back to us.

6 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: our
7 Assistant Commissioner for pedestrian ramps.

8 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: so, you'll
9 get back to us?

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: Of course,
11 of course.

12 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Okay. How
13 many upgrades have been made already per the
14 settlement? You don't know that yet either, right?
15 You'll get back on that. I'd like to know how many
16 remain also when you get that information. And how
17 long--

18 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: [interposing]
19 Just a point of clarification, it's an ongoing
20 renewing commitment. So, it's in perpetuity.

21 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Okay. How
22 long do you think that the upgrades in terms of the
23 goals will take?

24 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: We'd be
25 happy to follow up with you.

2 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Okay,
3 alright. Council Member Farías, you had another
4 question?

5 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIÁS: Thank you. Just
6 one. And I'm sorry to bring us back to initially
7 what I was speaking about, but if we can just
8 entertain this last question from me. DOT cut hours
9 on and in 2022 that are all in majority non-white
10 neighborhood, which means today those living within a
11 quarter of a mile of 24/7 busways are 10 percent
12 below poverty level and 34 percent are people of
13 color. While part-time busways, 16 percent live
14 below poverty level and 80 percent are people of
15 color. What is DOT's reasoning for reducing bus lane
16 access in neighborhoods where a higher percentage of
17 people depend on the bus to commute and for daily
18 activities?

19 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: I'm going to
20 start and Eric is going to be adding other
21 information, but I can say that working together with
22 the MTA, you know, that combined the whole operation-
23 - you know, we do the bus lane made by MTA is the one
24 who run the buses. You know, for us to connect all
25 New Yorkers who depends bus services to run the buses

2 on time is a priority for us, but some-- the piece
3 related to the operation is under MTA. What we do is
4 we build the infrastructure.

5 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: Yeah, and in
6 terms of the hours, we know that every street in the
7 city is little bit different and buses often run on
8 the most important streets in a community, and we do
9 work very closely with every individual community to
10 try to find the right balance of bus lane hours
11 versus driving or parking and so we do end up in
12 different places, but it's very much based on that
13 local community conversation. So if-- we're happy to
14 take another look if there's any place where it feels
15 like we're not getting that balance quite right.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: Sure. And do we
17 happen to know like off of top of mind if any of the
18 like busway redesign conversations that happened in
19 that one and two into play have dictated some of the
20 reason why some of this occurred? Or like for
21 example like I know, I requested a review on a couple
22 of stops and we gained two stops recently back on our
23 busway because of the response in the community, but
24 do know if that had dictated or shifted any of this?

2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BEATON: We work very
3 loosely with the MTA on their borough redesigns, and
4 you know, they-- we put up the signs, but they
5 ultimately decide where the stops go, but-- so I
6 don't want to speak on their behalf in terms of the
7 bus stops, but I do know that both we and they work
8 very closely with local communities, and it
9 absolutely affects how we make some of these
10 decisions, and it should in a lot of ways. So we
11 spend a lot of effort to try and make sure we're
12 talking to and hearing from every community that we
13 work in and I think we do a good job, but sometimes
14 we miss something and that's where we-- our
15 commitment is to go back and take another look any
16 place we need to.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIÁS: Great. Thank
18 you. I'll make sure to follow up with MTA.

19 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: thank you so
20 much.

21 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: thank you. And
22 as we are leaving, I wanted to let the public know
23 that we let members of our team to stay here so that
24 they hear directly what the public section will speak
25 about.

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Our next
3 witness will be Sindhu Bharadwaj from the
4 Comptroller's Office. Thanks, and I'm just going to
5 swear you in. So if you could raise your right hand.
6 Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and
7 nothing but the truth before this committee and to
8 respond honestly to Council Member questions? Okay,
9 you may begin.

10 SINDHU BHARADWAJ: On behalf of the NYC
11 Comptroller's Office, thank you to the Committee on
12 Transportation and Infrastructure and to Chair
13 Brooks-Powers for convening today's hearing and for
14 the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of New
15 York City Comptroller Brad Lander. My name is Sindhu
16 Bharadwaj and I am the Senior Policy Analyst for
17 Transportation and Infrastructure in the New York
18 City Comptroller's Office. Traffic fatalities rose
19 sharply after 2018, the safest year since the City
20 first adopted Vision Zero, and more than 250 people
21 lost their lives in traffic crashes in 2022. New
22 York City must reclaim progress made under Vision
23 Zero to reverse the recent surge of traffic violence.
24 And this is achievable by recommitting to the
25 ambitious street design goals of the New York City

2 Streets Master Plan holding reckless drivers
3 accountable, and making the municipal fleet into a
4 model for vehicle safety and safe driving. Street
5 design remains among our most powerful tools for
6 preventing crashes and saving lives, but progress
7 around redesigning streets for safety and multimodal
8 transportation has slowed. The New York City Streets
9 Master Plan, adopted by the Council and embraced by
10 the prior and current Administration, is the City's
11 blueprint for transforming our streets into safe
12 places to travel, regardless of mode. Unfortunately,
13 DOT did not meet its targets under the Streets Master
14 Plan in 2022, and the current and projected pace of
15 project implementation is slower than it was in
16 recent years. With annual targets for bike and bus
17 lane installation set to increase this year, it is
18 essential to speed up the pace of implementation by
19 adding capacity at DOT, filling longstanding staff
20 vacancies at the agency, and resolving longstanding
21 procurement challenges to delivering capital projects
22 more efficiently. Improvements to street design must
23 be complemented by a new, restorative, data-driven
24 framework to hold reckless drivers accountable. New
25 York City's successful automated enforcement program

2 has shed light on the scale of reckless driving
3 occurring in the City. In 2022, over 20,000 drivers
4 received 15 or more camera-issued speeding tickets
5 with some individuals accumulating hundreds of
6 violations. And although these drivers represent
7 less than one percent of the population of drivers on
8 City streets, they are disproportionately likely to
9 cause crashes and endanger the lives of other road
10 users. To begin to hold recidivist reckless drivers
11 accountable, comptroller Lander led the effort to
12 pass the Reckless Driver Accountability Act adopted
13 by the Council as the Dangerous Vehicle Abatement
14 Program or DVAP. Unfortunately, the first year of
15 the program was smaller in scale and scope than
16 originally conceived. Out of the 16,000 vehicles that
17 received enough violations to qualify for the
18 program, as of November 2022, notices were sent to
19 only 1,080 drivers. 437 of these drivers never
20 enrolled in the required safe driving course, and
21 only 12 faced the program's ultimate consequence of
22 having their vehicle impounded. Our office
23 appreciates that there are considerable
24 administrative challenges around implementing this
25 program including limited capacity at DOT to prepare

2 cases and difficulty on the part of the New York City
3 Sheriff's Office locating vehicles if a warrant is
4 issued. We are looking forward to DOT's report on
5 the outcomes of the pilot phase of DVAP due in July
6 of this year, which the Council can use to adjust and
7 extend the program which would otherwise sunset in
8 October of 2023. Beyond revising and scaling up
9 DVAP, the City has an opportunity to utilize this
10 moment to adopt a far more comprehensive approach to
11 reckless driving and impose an escalating series of
12 consequences if they fail to-- if drivers fail to
13 change their behavior, ultimately resulting in
14 license suspension and vehicle booting or
15 impoundment. This would, of course, require changes
16 to state law, some of which the Adams Administration
17 is seeking as part of its Roads Legislative package,
18 along with increased agency capacity. On Intro 415--

19 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: [interposing]

20 If you could just wrap it up. We do have it on
21 record, though, the submission.

22 SINDHU BHARADWAJ: I just wanted to
23 mention that our office also released a report titled
24 Reckless Spending yesterday analyzing trends and
25 claims settled by the City for incidents where city-

2 owned vehicles caused fatalities or injuries, and
3 that cost 653 million dollars to the City over 10
4 years. So I'd like to re-emphasize a combination of
5 implementing safe street design, holding reckless
6 drivers accountable, and making the city fleet safer
7 as a strategy for saving lives in the City. Thank
8 you, again.

9 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We'll now
11 turn to public testimony. Each panelists will be
12 given two minutes to speak. For panelists testifying
13 in-person, please come to the dais as your name is
14 called and wait for your turn to speak. And for
15 panelists who are testifying remotely, once your name
16 is called a member of our staff will unmute you and
17 the Sergeant at Arms will give you the go-ahead to
18 begin. Please wait for the Sargent to announce you
19 may begin before delivering your testimony. We'd
20 like to now welcome Nick Ross, Elizabeth Adams, Eric
21 McClure [sp?], and Amanda Burhman [sp?] to the dais.
22 We can begin with Nick Ross when you're ready.

23 NICK ROSS: Thank you to Transportation
24 Chair Brooks-Powers. It's vital to have these kinds
25 of hearings. My name is Nick Ross and I'm a member

2 of Families for Safe Streets. I am here because last
3 July my girlfriend Carly Mott [sp?] was hit and
4 killed while riding her bike on the streets of New
5 York City on the Upper East Side. She was doing
6 everything right, but she was riding on a street that
7 was not designed with the safety of vulnerable road
8 users in mind. Carly was the light of my life and a
9 light to anyone who knew her. Countless co-workers,
10 friends, and family members' lives were changed just
11 by knowing her. the outpouring of love and support
12 I've seen from so many who knew her is a testament to
13 the way she loved, cared for and every day made
14 people better just by the good fortune they had to
15 know her, and now senselessly she's no longer with
16 us. Carly was one of 255 people killed last year in
17 traffic crashes. This number is appalling. There's
18 good legislation proposed here today, and applaud the
19 sponsors of these bills for their leadership.

20 However, I want to reiterate the call of other FSS
21 members, we need much faster and more consistent
22 implementation of safe streets designs. We cannot
23 let petty politics and squabbling over parking spaces
24 delay safe streets any longer. as an example, we
25 know we still need cross-town protected bike lanes

2 connecting the upper west and east side, but even
3 having a conversation around the issue has been
4 delayed by the Community Board on the west side since
5 last fall. In fact, the very meeting where it was
6 finally supposed to be discussed this evening was
7 postponed yet again. Why are we letting these delays
8 happen? Particularly when it's leading to New York
9 City failing to reach its Streets Plan mandates.
10 Carly and I loved our great city. We talked often
11 about our future together, of getting married, having
12 children someday, children we hoped to raise in New
13 York. As it stands today, I couldn't imagine a world
14 where I'd let one of my children bike on the street
15 infrastructure we have today, and it doesn't have to
16 be this way. We know how to make our streets safer.
17 It's curb extensions, protected bike lanes, longer
18 light timing for pedestrians. We need the
19 interconnected networks of safe streets. We don't
20 need to reinvent the wheel. We just need to do what
21 we know already works. Thank you for the opportunity
22 to share Carly's story here today, and I look forward
23 to the future where we can prevent tragedies like
24 this from happening to any more New Yorkers.

2 ELIZABETH ADAMS: Good afternoon. Thank
3 you to Chair Brooks-Powers and the members of the
4 Committee for holding this important hearing on
5 Vision Zero today. I'm Elizabeth Adams, Senior
6 Director for Advocacy and Organizing at
7 Transportation Alternatives. We believe that our
8 streets belong to the people of New York City, and we
9 work with New Yorkers in every borough to build a
10 future that rises to the needs of our communities. I
11 want to respond to a few things that have been said
12 today at today's hearing. First, the Streets Plan
13 was enacted and signed into law and it is incumbent
14 on the Administration to implement it fully. And so
15 the failure to meet requirements around bike lanes,
16 around bus lanes, and even bust stop upgrades is
17 extremely concerning to us. The plan also requires
18 that underserved communities are prioritized for
19 projects and that can and must be forefronted [sic]
20 in the City's work going forward. There are annual
21 metrics for a reason, because we know that when it
22 comes to Vision Zero, infrastructure saves lives.
23 Street design that is proactive and preventive keeps
24 all of us safe, and the delays highlighted here today
25 are costing people's lives. We need to move past

2 individual responsibility to structural changes, so
3 that no matter your zip code or your income or your
4 race you have access to safe streets, to mobility
5 access and to high-quality transportation. And for
6 far too long in New York City, that has not been the
7 case. I appreciate the Chair's focus on
8 infrastructure and the fact that we need to move
9 forward projects on our streets now. We are
10 particularly concerned that projects that have
11 stalled or not been completed, and for us to get to
12 our 2023 metrics and requirements we need to move
13 forward projects still from 2022. We know the
14 numbers. We know that too many New Yorker's lives
15 are at stake as you've heard here today. As you have
16 heard from families, we cannot wait and every day
17 that we do, we lose another person's loved one. We
18 also appreciate the calls that center equity in
19 street design. There are projects like Adam,
20 Clayton, Powell, phase five of Queens Boulevard,
21 Central Brooklyn, where we know that there has been
22 under-investment for far too long, and we look
23 forward to working with City leaders here to help
24 move those projects forward immediately. With regard
25 to today's legislation, we support the Council's

2 efforts to address street safety needs, and we've
3 included recommendations and support in our longer
4 testimony submitted which, you know, we'd love to
5 talk further about. Disparities in safe streets
6 access are unacceptable. Vision Zero must mean
7 Vision Zero for all New Yorkers, and we must
8 prioritize investments that advance mobility justice.
9 Thank you to everyone here today and we look forward
10 to working together.

11 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you. And
12 Elizabeth, if there's specific adjustments to the
13 bills that you have recommendations for, if you can
14 provide it to the committee staff, that'd be helpful.

15 ELIZABETH ADAMS: Definitely. Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you.

17 ERIC MCCLURE: Good afternoon Madam
18 Chair. Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and
19 I'll just note it's my first time back in the
20 Chambers since March 9th of 2000, and I am very happy
21 to be back here in person. The critical importance
22 of designing safe streets-- and my name is Eric
23 McClure. I am the Executive Director of StreetsPAC.
24 The critical importance of designing safety features
25 into New York City streets was underscored by the

2 horrific events in Brooklyn yesterday in which the
3 driver of a rented U-Haul truck by all appearances
4 intentionally ran down several people in what can
5 only be described as an act of terrorism. It's
6 impossible to say a specific piece of infrastructure
7 could have prevented or reduced any of yesterday's
8 injuries or the death that was incurred, but we know
9 that design interventions work and we must make the
10 commitment as a city and as a society to invest in
11 the safety of our fellow New Yorkers, especially
12 those not wrapped in a couple tons of steel. We know
13 this committee intends to soon hold a hearing on
14 enforcement strategies, but we must also understand
15 that we can't enforce our way to Vision Zero.
16 Therefore, it's crucial that we use design to slow
17 drivers down, improve visibility, and force slower
18 turns at intersections with daylighting, curb
19 extensions, and raised crosswalks and so much more.
20 These efforts should be data-driven with a focus on
21 the streets and intersections with the highest
22 incidences of crashes, injuries, and deaths, but
23 should also account for historical inequities in
24 investment in Safe Street designs. New York City's
25 Streets Plan gets a lot of this right, and we must

2 make sure that the Department of Transportation has
3 the tools and funding it needs to execute the Streets
4 Plan and meet its important benchmarks in a timely
5 manner. We need to push forward with building
6 complete streets that allocate safe, separated spaces
7 for people on foot and bikes, prioritizing transit to
8 make it easier for people to leave cars at home or
9 not have a car at all. We also need to think about
10 how we can use design into vehicles to improve safety
11 outside of vehicles. The City's initial intelligent
12 speed assistance pilot program has been a tremendous
13 success, achieving 99 percent compliance with speed
14 limits, and NYC DOT has won a federal grant to expand
15 ISA to an additional 7,500 vehicles. Is there a
16 legislative solution to requiring ISA in private
17 cars? Is there a way the city can regulate the
18 exploding growth and the size and power of SUVs, or
19 the proliferation of electronic distractions inside
20 cars? What about adopting London's [sic] direct
21 vision stands for trucks? There are all things that
22 this committee and the City Council should explore.
23 Finally, we believe that all the legislation being
24 considered today is well-intentioned, and we prefer
25 that DOT be able to focus-- but we would prefer the

2 DOT be able to focus on doing things rather than
3 creating reports on things for which we largely know
4 the answers. We do however, want to note our support
5 for three items on the agenda today. We support
6 Intro 854 requiring daylighting of a minimum of 100
7 intersections per year. We support Intro 879 which
8 would require the City to install bollards at
9 intersections throughout the City underlying
10 reconstruction for accessibility, and we also support
11 Resolution 441 calling on Albany to pass and enact
12 legislation that would allow the City to set a five
13 mile an hour-- five mile per hour speed limit on Open
14 Streets. Thank you very much.

15 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you.

16 And for the other bills, do you have feedback on them
17 at all, or were you just focused on these particular
18 ones?

19 ERIC MCCLURE: We focused on these three.

20 As I mentioned, we believe the bills are well
21 intentioned, but they seem to kind of work around the
22 periphery and then not really get at the heart of the
23 matter. So, in the interest of time and emphases, we
24 wanted to note these bills and the resolution I the
25 things we very strongly support today.

2 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: That's good to
3 know. Thank you.

4 ERIC MCCLURE: Thank you.

5 AMANDA BERMAN: Good afternoon, Chair
6 Brooks-Powers. Thank you for the opportunity to
7 testify. My name is Amanda Berman. I am the Deputy
8 Director of Regional Programs with the Center for
9 Justice Innovation. For the past 25 years we have
10 been working with communities and justice systems to
11 advance equity, increase safety and empower
12 communities, and we recognize that safety is about
13 much more than the absence of crime. It is the
14 presence of investment, opportunities and resources
15 that allow communities to thrive, and safer streets
16 are a necessary component of that. In 2013 we
17 partnered with Families for Safe Streets and
18 Transportation Alternative I sit beside today to
19 craft an intervention that would hold reckless
20 drivers accountable on lower-level vehicular offenses
21 coming through New York City's Criminal Courts.
22 Historically these cases were resolved with fines,
23 fees, or short-term incarceration, punitive outcomes
24 that fall disproportionately on low-income black and
25 brown New Yorkers, perpetuating the very harms and

2 inequities that we work so hard to undue. Leveraging
3 our experience and footprint in the court system we
4 were able to launch the Driver Accountability Program
5 which provides a meaningful, proportionate and
6 equitable response to offenses such as reckless
7 driving, driving on a suspended license, failure to
8 yield, leaving the scene and more. Thanks to the
9 support from City Council, the program has grown and
10 now operates in all five boroughs. We served over
11 1,000 drivers alone last year. An evaluation that we
12 published last year also found that the program was
13 successful in engaging drivers in meaningful self-
14 reflection and changing their beliefs and behaviors
15 on the road. The Driver Accountability Program
16 represented an important step toward rethinking our
17 justice system's involvement and response to
18 dangerous driving and vehicular violence. Last year,
19 we took this one step further by piloting an
20 expansion of the model to address crashes that
21 resulted in serious injury and fatality. This
22 expansion that we call Circles for Safe Streets uses
23 a restorative justice model to bring together drivers
24 and their victims for a process of accountability and
25 healing. The program addresses a critical gap in the

2 system's response to these cases which had previously
3 left victims of surviving family members feeling
4 unheard and their needs being unmet. Through this
5 process they have an opportunity to tell the driver
6 about the impact of their actions and to listen to
7 the driver as they apologize and take accountability
8 for the harm. Sadly the need for responses such as
9 this only continues to grow. I know I'm out of time,
10 so I'm just going to wrap up quickly if that's okay.
11 We wholeheartedly support the City's efforts under
12 Vision Zero including investments in infrastructure
13 that are so critical. We look forward to a day when
14 interventions like ours are no longer needed because
15 the goal of Vision Zero has been realized. But until
16 that day comes, we must also continue to invest in
17 effective, equitable, and meaningful justice system
18 responses that center the voices of those who have
19 been harmed. Thank you for the opportunity to
20 testify.

21 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you all. We'll
23 next call up Sara Lind, Jackson Chabot, and Carl
24 Mahaney [sp?]. Carl left? Okay. That's what I
25 thought. Whenever you're ready.

2 SARA LIND: Thank you, Chair Brooks-
3 Powers for hosting this important hearing. My name
4 is Sara Lind. I'm the Chief Strategy Officer at Open
5 Plans. While we appreciate the hearing today, we
6 believe a lot more needs to be done to truly make our
7 streets safe, as I know you know. We support Intro
8 584, because we know that daylighting is a critical
9 safety improvement. However, as we heard from DOT
10 earlier, we also know that the City's culture of
11 drivers parking wherever they please, day lit spots
12 are likely to become parking spots without
13 enforcement. Self-enforcing streets are best.
14 Hardening daylighting with things like bollards,
15 boulders, bike racks, or planters would ensure that
16 vehicles cannot park there. Intro 501 would allow
17 civilians to help do the enforcement that we know
18 NYPD is not doing. But even better, more objective,
19 and so reliable that it would create a culture shift
20 would be automated enforcement. Two bills at the
21 state level to give NYC Home Rule for automated
22 enforcement of bike lanes and bus lanes would
23 dramatically increase street safety. This council
24 should pass Home Rule resolutions supporting both of
25 those bills, and automated enforcement at the curb

2 more generally. For example, so many of the trucks
3 that are double parked on our streets creating
4 dangerous conditions do so because there are not
5 enough loading zones and the ones we have are so
6 often blocked by illegally parked car, that they may
7 as well not exist. Automated enforcement would help
8 regulate these spots and reduce double parking.
9 Additionally, while we support Intro 441, what we
10 desperately need is a Home Rule resolution to support
11 Sammy's Law, which would allow New York City to lower
12 its speed limit to 20 miles per hour and would also
13 allow lowering the speed limit to five miles per hour
14 on Open Streets. Finally, I want to touch on
15 electric vehicles. They are green-washing of the car
16 industry that utterly erases the safety impacts.
17 Electric vehicles, especially the bigger and bigger
18 vehicles we see on our streets are heavier, they
19 accelerate more quickly, and they're quieter, so
20 people don't hear them coming, all of which creates
21 especially dangerous conditions for pedestrians and
22 other road users. The only way we can truly make
23 cars safer and greener is to get them off our
24 streets. New York must do all we can to reduce car

2 dependency, to reduce driving and to provide New
3 Yorkers with better alternatives. Thank you.

4 JACKSON CHABOT: Good afternoon. My name
5 is Jackson Chabot. I'm the Director of Advocacy and
6 Organizing at Open Plans, Sara's colleague. This
7 conversation is not abstract, nor pie in the sky.
8 The reality is that an overwhelming majority of our
9 streets and sidewalks are neither safe nor livable at
10 the moment. This year, thus far in addition to what
11 happened yesterday, we've lost two people biking,
12 five people walking, and nine people in vehicles
13 including 62-year-old Tamara Chuchi Kow [sp?] in
14 Astoria, Sara Schick [sp?] a 37-year-old mother of
15 two in Gowanus, and Yun Kwan [sp?], an 84-year-old
16 who author Justin Davidson [sic] said was killed for
17 being too small and walking too slowly. I also want
18 to recognize our Families for Safe Streets members in
19 the room and the family members that they've lost as
20 well. So I'm here today to remember the lives that
21 we've lost and reiterate that we have an ongoing
22 traffic violence epidemic that is largely shrugged
23 off. We need urgency. If there's anything that we
24 take away from today we need urgency, from a policy
25 perspective, from a street redesign perspective,

2 elected officials, although we have none others in
3 the room. Thank you, Chair, for being here. We need
4 to lead these tough conversations including
5 reallocating curb space dedicated presently to
6 parking to ensure cross the street, nor biking, nor
7 other activities are a life or death activity. So I
8 urge electeds please champion street redesigns,
9 including protected bike lanes, bus lanes, and
10 curbside reform locally in your districts at
11 Community Boards, at town halls, wherever it takes.
12 Please hear and pass Intro. 417. It has 39 sponsors
13 and it will improve safety improvements everywhere
14 across the City. To the Department of
15 Transportation, please, think big and futuristically,
16 expanding Summer Street to Brooklyn and Queens this
17 year. Encourage and promote micro-mobility by
18 implementing two-way wider mobility lanes for bikes,
19 scooters, and more as we see them across the City.
20 As Council Members have pointed out, we need the
21 south outer roadway now. There is blood literally on
22 the bridge because we are not expanding it. And so
23 I'll conclude there, but just reiterating we need
24 urgency. I was in Albany with Kayla Santiago's
25 mother who died last October near Prospect Park. Her

2 mother was there with her two other sisters and she
3 showed me the pictures of her two infant children
4 that will literally never know their mother because
5 she was crushed by a tractor trailer driver that
6 should not have been there in the first place. We
7 wait too long to make changes where all of these
8 deaths are preventable. So, please, we need urgency.
9 Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. And we'll
12 now move on to those who are on Zoom. We'll begin
13 with Jeffrey Hubar [sp?].

14 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

15 UNIDENTIFIED: Hello, Jeffrey. I was
16 trying to get in contact with you prior to the
17 hearing. It looks like there's no mic set up for
18 you. He can't hear you.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We can move to the
20 next person and come back to Jeffrey. We'll go now
21 to Patrick Johnson.

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

23 PATRICK JOHNSON: Hi, can you hear me?

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes.

25 UNIDENTIFIED: We can hear you.

2 PATRICK JOHNSON: thank you. You know,
3 I've been listening to thing for hours now. I just--
4 you know, I don't know what's going on, but Vision
5 Zero started in 2014 with the goal of zero traffic
6 deaths and injury by 2024. You're nowhere even close
7 to that number. You keep hearing from these same
8 people from Transportation Alternatives and Families
9 for Safe Streets, no problem. Well, I feel for their
10 loss of their family members and people who lose
11 somebody in traffic violence, but when the truth is
12 being-- we're being lied to, for this-- because in
13 the police report for-- I mean, I hate to talk about
14 Amy who lost her son Sammy, but the kid ran into the
15 ball-- ran into the street to chase his ball. She
16 said it was because of a reckless driver. The driver
17 was not charged, okay? So let's just get that
18 straight. I mean, I feel bad. Listen, it's terrible
19 to lose life, it's terrible. But now you talk about
20 Vision Zero. New York City DOT and New York City
21 Taxi and Limousine Commission do absolutely nothing
22 about people driving with suction cup cellphone
23 mounts on their windshield. You're talking about a
24 six inch by three and a half inch device on the
25 windshield obstructing view. New York City DOT does

2 nothing about handicap tags hanging on a mirror when
3 it clearly says on the handicaps tags that people
4 drive with, do not drive with this thing on your
5 mirror. Okay, so you can't-- these people cannot see
6 obstructions in the road. They can't see people
7 coming off the sidewalks, okay? I see-- I already
8 see-- not Transportation Alternatives-- yeah, maybe
9 them. They're sharing about how daylighting is very
10 good in Hoboken. There isn't many outdoor dining
11 shacks in Hoboken when they're all over the city and
12 on corners blocking stop signs, blocking crosswalks,
13 blocking site lines. I mean, just look at the Taxi
14 and Limousine Commission, when you go outside today
15 when you look at the cars, look how many of them are
16 driving with handicap tags, air fresheners,
17 cellphones, and iPads mounted on their windshield
18 obstructing view. Let's talk about window tints.
19 Window tints are illegal. Okay? Go by any police
20 precinct or drive around any neighborhood, you'll see
21 millions of cars with tints, so don't get me started
22 on that, alright? I like that everybody left this
23 hearing while the public has--

24 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Your time
25 has expired.

2 PATRICK JOHNSON: Yeah, thanks.

3 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We'll now move on to
5 Christine Berthet [sp?].

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

7 UNIDENTIFIED: Christine, I'm asking you
8 to unmute.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, we'll move on.
10 We can circle back. The next person will be Glen
11 Belofsky [sp?].

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

13 GLEN BELOFSKY: Good afternoon and thank
14 you all for the opportunity to be here today. First
15 of all, happy Valentine's to everyone, to Chairman
16 Selvena N. Brooks-Powers to her legislative team,
17 central staff, and district staff as well.
18 Everybody's working really hard to improve safety,
19 and this has been a terrific meeting here on
20 Valentine's Day, and of course, our hearts go out to
21 everybody who's lost family and friends
22 unnecessarily. The main thing that Ydanis is talking
23 about here is a lack of resources. That's kind of
24 ridiculous here, you know. Got a 100 billion dollar
25 plus budget, spending money on all kinds of things

2 they don't need to. But we all know two things are
3 standing in the way. One is small thinking, and two,
4 politics. So, the small thinking is, as many people
5 have said, parking signs don't really mean much if
6 they're not obeyed. And as we all know, the
7 Stipulated Fine program which I keep talking about at
8 every meeting is giving away at least 20 million a
9 year to the biggest offenders who are double parking,
10 obstructing view. And there's a big source of
11 revenue that nobody's talking about, 500 million
12 approximately on taking the metal parking signs and
13 turning them into little billboards, and on those
14 little billboards putting the parking signs in every
15 language and selling advertising space. I want to
16 thank the Chair and her team and central staff for
17 this opportunity to speak, and again, wish everybody
18 a Happy Valentines, and if anyone has any questions
19 for me, be happy to answer them.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thanks, Glen.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We'll now move onto
23 Sprole Love [sp?].

24 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.
25

2 : Hello. Thank you for the opportunity
3 to testify. I can't tell if I need to turn on my
4 video or not? Can you hear me?

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes.

6 SPROLE LOVE: Great. MY name is Sprole
7 Love [sp?]. I moved up to Harlem 25 years ago. I'm a
8 bike commuter, and I'm now a father, and I just
9 wanted to make the point that while we've seen other
10 neighborhoods get a lot of what's been described here
11 today as infrastructure like protected bike lanes--
12 in the 25 years I've lived up here, you know, Harlem
13 still does not have a protected bike lane. so I was
14 happy to hear a lot of discussion about equity when
15 it comes to street safety, and you know, I commute
16 every day by bike down Adam Clayton Powell to work in
17 Midtown, and I would say half a dozen times on that
18 ride-- and we only have an unprotected bike lane for
19 seven blocks from 117th to 110th. I have to-- I file
20 half a dozen 311 reports about drivers parked in the
21 lanes, bike lanes. So, obviously we need
22 infrastructure that physically keeps drivers out, and
23 I just want to say to City Council Chairperson and to
24 the DOT Commissioner I really appreciate you
25 addressing this issue. We've got a good project to

2 fit the equity and street safety requirements that
3 you're talking about, and that's protected bike lane
4 on Adam Clayton Powell for the length of the
5 boulevard. A fifth of all traffic violence in
6 Community Board 10 happens on Adam Clayton Powell.
7 We have a subcommittee, transportation subcommittee
8 for CB10 that has been asking for a--

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Your time
10 has expired.

11 SPROLE LOVE: [inaudible]

12 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you.

13 SPROLE LOVE: Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: We actually--
15 can you submit the rest of your testimony in writing,
16 please, so we can capture it?

17 SPROLE LOVE: I'd be happy to.

18 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you very much.

20 Next we'll call on Samir Lavingia.

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

22 SAMIR LAVINGIA: Hello. Sorry, I was
23 just moving around tabs. Okay, let me pull my whole
24 speech. Okay. So my name is Samir Lavingia. I'm a
25 resident of Manhattan, but I bike everywhere using my

2 own bike, and more frequently Citi Bike. I was
3 Transportation Alternatives Manhattan Activist
4 Committee Advocate of the Year, so I'm definitely not
5 new to this game. The DOT Commissioner is absolutely
6 correct that we do not have equitable investment in
7 our different New York City areas. However, I
8 strongly disagree with the reasons. It isn't because
9 Council Members are not vocal. It is not because
10 Transportation Alternatives does not turn out
11 hundreds of members to Community Board meetings, and
12 I say this as a member myself. We're simply tired of
13 going to meeting after meeting to fight for projects
14 that should be done and dusted [sic]. I still hear
15 people talk about the 14th Street busway and the bike
16 lanes on 12th and 13th Street as if they're still up
17 for discussion. We can't fight these battles project
18 by project, and we need policy and we need the DOT to
19 do the right things. I read through the Pedestrian
20 Safety Action Plan that was just released this
21 morning, that was conveniently just released this
22 morning before this meeting. And the previous
23 edition actually had promises, ideas, pilots and
24 plans such a leading pedestrian intervals, chicanes,
25 offset crossings and more. So there's a grand irony

2 to me that the actual plans are all gone from the
3 newest edition. It's been shortened to just 64 pages
4 of just information about high-priority corridors.
5 The real issue here is that the Administration and
6 the Department of Transportation does not have the
7 conviction to do what is right, to bring these life-
8 saving projects themselves to help our communities.
9 I was in Astoria the other today and there was an
10 issue with the subway. So I took the R and Citi
11 Biked the rest of the way, and you know what I
12 thought? I thought to myself, am I going to die
13 today? It feels like every month I hear about
14 another death in Astoria from a biker. You know what
15 I don't see? I don't see street changes. I didn't
16 see a bike lane when I biked there. I don't see more
17 safe infrastructure and I don't see these life-saving
18 measures. The number of bills that are passed by the
19 City Council related to the DOT are astronomical but
20 necessary, because the DOT simply will not with their
21 own accord. It is hugely ironic that--

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Your time
23 has expired.

24

25

2 SAMIR LAVINGIA: the Mayor's pushing a
3 city of yes agenda, but all I hear is the Department
4 of Transportation saying no.

5 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you.

6 SAMIR LAVINGIA: I urge the City Council
7 to pass legislation to force the DOT to do what is
8 right because we all know they will not do best
9 practices like daylighting intersections without
10 being forced to.

11 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you.

12 SAMIR LAVINGIA: I'm a strong proponent--

13 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: [interposing]
14 We ask that if you could just submit the rest of your
15 testimony in writing.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you so much.
17 We'll next turn to Laura Sewell.

18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

19 LAURA SEWELL: Hi. I'm Laura Sewell and
20 I'm speaking on behalf of the Loisaida Open Streets
21 Community Coalition, the grassroots community partner
22 for the Ave B Open Street. We're here today-- you
23 know, we really appreciate the testimony from the
24 other people who have spoken and what we've heard.
25 We thank Commissioner for our partnership thus far.

2 We desperately need the five mile an hour speed
3 limit, the Home Rule speed limit, and grateful to our
4 elected officials who've introduced it at the state
5 level. We need it. We need it now. We're now on
6 our fourth-- we're going into our fourth year of
7 managing an Open Street with no permanent
8 infrastructure. We're still doing this with metal
9 barriers and temporary speed limit signs which are
10 viewed mostly as just a suggestion. Most drivers take
11 Avenue B at the speed that their skillset allows.
12 We've definitely seen an improvement and reduction in
13 speeds, which is great because we've got four schools
14 with one just below it, parks, playgrounds, people
15 zipping in and out on micro-mobility vehicles. We
16 average 175 to 200 per hour. Avenue B is just a two-
17 lane driving street, one lane north, one lane south.
18 So we get everything, scooters, motorcycles,
19 wheelchairs, e-bikes, and we just really need to slow
20 the speed down. It's critical. So that is-- that's
21 the biggest thing we're asking for today. We also
22 need more permanent infrastructure and support from
23 the Council to push these projects forward as soon as
24 possible. As others have said today, this is urgent.

2 And we really appreciate just the Council
3 demonstrating their support for these initiatives.

4 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time has expired.

5 LAURA SEWELL: And we thank you.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you so much.

7 We'll next to C. Leon [sp?].

8 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

9 UNIDENTIFIED: Looks like they left.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, and we'll turn
11 back to Jeffrey Hubar if Jeffrey is there.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

13 UNIDENTIFIED: Jeffrey, do you have the
14 mic? Are you able to talk? We can't hear you.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, unfortunately,
16 we won't be able to hear you, but you can submit your
17 testimony in written form and encourage you to do
18 that. We'll also see if Christine Brethet is there.

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

20 UNIDENTIFIED: Her video shows she's not
21 there.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, likewise,
23 Christine, if you want to submit your testimony in
24 written form we encourage you to do that. So, with
25 that, if we've inadvertently missed anyone that has

2 registered to testify and has yet to have been
3 called, please use the Zoom hand function if you're
4 testifying remotely. You'll be called in the order
5 that your hand is raised, and if you're testifying
6 in-person, please come to the dais. Seeing no one, I
7 will now turn it over to Chair Brooks-Powers for
8 closing remarks.

9 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you and
10 thank you to all of the champion advocates that came
11 out today and turned their pain into a vehicle to
12 fight for a change to make our streets in New York
13 City safer. I look forward to being an ally and a
14 partner in my role as Chair of the Transportation and
15 Infrastructure Committee. I have full intention of
16 moving forward with these bills today and working
17 with the Administration to make safer streets a
18 reality where we have zero fatalities. Thank you to
19 the staff, and thank you again to all that
20 participated today.

21 [gavel]

22

23

24

25

1 COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE 210

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

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 February 27, 2023