

Thank you for the invitation to appear. I'm Janno Lieber, MTA Chair and CEO. I'm joined by MTA Chief Financial Officer Jai Patel, Chief Customer Officer Shanifah Rieara, and Chief of Policy and External Relations John McCarthy. Glad to be here to share an update on the MTA.

The headline is that the MTA is in solid shape. 2025 was arguably the best year in agency history, for a number of reasons:

- Hugely successful implementation of congestion pricing;
- Enactment of the largest-ever MTA Capital Plan;
- Surging ridership and customer satisfaction;
- Best-ever subway crime stats;
- And record-setting construction of subway accessibility projects.

So, it's safe to say we've come a long way since COVID shut down New York six years ago. When I took this role in 2022, MTA was facing a \$2.5 billion annual deficit. That shortfall was around 14% of the budget. Now, thanks to Governor Hochul rallying Albany – and some aggressive cost cutting on our part that's saving \$500 million annually – we've balanced the budget for the third year running.

The most recent audit of this agency shows that, in real terms, we're actually spending 3% less overall than in 2019, even as we have dramatically increased subway, bus and commuter rail service – more service on 14 subway lines, \$35 million of additional bus service in Queens, and 40% more service on the LIRR. And out-year deficits have shrunk to half of one percent or less – something Wall Street has clearly noticed, since the rating agencies keep upgrading us.

Still, some costs are increasing – most significantly the cost of running paratransit, our Access-A-Ride system. I want to be clear: not the cost per trip, but the total operational cost for the MTA. That's because paratransit ridership has exploded in the last few years as we've switched more trips to for-hire vehicles and dramatically improved on-time performance. But the reality is that the City's contribution to Paratransit's net operating expense has not kept pace with that growth. There's no reason the MTA should be punished financially for fixing an operation the City dumped on us a while ago.

I also want to talk about a few other areas of concern in the City budget that could impact on our shared goals. First – faster buses. We're thrilled that Mayor Mamdani is starting to revive bus lane projects that were abandoned by the last administration. Now's the time to kick things into high gear, which will require not only more miles of bus lanes, more ACE cameras, etc but also additional dedicated funding for traffic enforcement to keep these lanes clear of private vehicles.

Number two – affordability. We are huge supporters of the Fair Fares Program and were disappointed to see that the Mayor's budget actually reduces its funding. For years we've been pushing for expansion so that more people are eligible. It doesn't make

sense that a person working full time for minimum wage makes too much to qualify. Our transit system is one of the few things that makes NYC affordable, but if there's money to invest in increasing that affordability, let's prioritize people who are struggling to make ends meet -- whether they ride the bus or subway.

We also need your help preparing for the next iteration of Student OMNY: moving from physical passes to digital, at least for high school kids. Student OMNY has been a huge success, offering young New Yorkers a lot more flexibility in getting around, not just during the school term but 24/7/365. It's going to take continued close collaboration with NYC Public Schools to ensure another smooth rollout. We need DOE to prioritize getting ready for this new phase, especially training their own staff.

Moving on to number three -- climate resiliency, specifically stormwater management. This is something I've already discussed with Speaker Menin. Every big storm -- and they're only getting more frequent -- torrential rainfall overwhelms the City's sewer capacity, causing back-ups that result in severe flooding and stoppages in our subway system. Our team has some good ideas about where the City can start on expanding capacity, but it needs funding -- perhaps in the City's capital budget. And NYC DOT also needs dedicated funding to repave areas where curbs have been reduced. During storms, water spills over onto sidewalks where it cascades down through grates to subway platforms. I know you've all seen the videos on social media.

Finally, safety. Obviously, the NYPD's budget has a direct impact on our system. We know the increased police presence in the subway doesn't come cheap, but it has yielded huge results. Overall subway crime was down 14% in 2025 compared to 2019, before the pandemic. It's also led to a surge in customer satisfaction. Satisfaction with safety on trains specifically is up 6 points, now 63% - the highest level since the onset of our surveys.

Rider satisfaction with service reliability has also increased, and we expect it to trend even higher as we deliver the new \$68.4 billion Capital Plan. 90% is focused on State of Good Repair work -- new signals, power and rolling stock, plus a ton of ADA elevators. Across the entire system, we're repairing infrastructure that past leaders and past MTAs left to crumble for a hundred years. And we're doing it better, faster, and cheaper than ever. MTA Construction and Development saved \$1.2 billion in 2025 alone. And Bond Buyer just ran a story last week calling the MTA a model for government builders nationwide.

But while we're prioritizing meat-and-potatoes investments, we're not forgetting about expansion entirely. We know that extending transit's reach is an important tool for increasing affordability. So, instead of just building brand new, we're pursuing projects that get more out of existing infrastructure. That's the concept behind Metro-North Penn Station Access, which would put the East Bronx on the region's rail map for the first time with four new stations at Hunts Point, Morris Park, Co-op City, and Parkchester/Van

Nest. No secret we've been having a lot of problems with Amtrak trying to get it done on time.

Another great example is the Interborough Express, which is a real passion project for the Governor. IBX leverages a (mostly) abandoned freight line to connect communities that are underserved by rail from Bay Ridge to Jackson Heights, with connections to 17 subway lines along the 14-mile route. Real borough-to-borough connectivity for the growing cohort of New Yorkers who live and work outside Manhattan.

And of course, you all know about Second Avenue Subway Phase 2 – long awaited transit justice for East Harlem's El Barrio. Again, this is another situation where the feds have been a thorn in our side. In the meantime, we're optimistic about the Governor's proposal for westward expansion in a potential Phase 3 and a separate plan to reimagine the Jamaica transit hub.

With your support, we want to keep showing New Yorkers that this is a new MTA – a business-like government operation that is focused on riders and focused on results. We want to be your partners, not just on Fair Fares and faster buses but housing too. The housing project we recently negotiated for Atlantic Avenue in Brooklyn is a great example of what's possible. We all know that good transit is a precondition for good development.

So, we look forward to working with you all on these issues. Now we're happy to take your questions.

NYC Department of Transportation Testimony
Before the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
March 17, 2026

Good morning, Chair Abreu, and members of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. I am Mike Flynn, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Transportation. With me today are First Deputy Commissioner Margaret Forgione, Executive Deputy Commissioner Paul Ochoa, Deputy Commissioner of Transportation Planning and Management Eric Beaton, and Assistant Commissioner for Intergovernmental and Community Affairs, Rick Rodriguez. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of Mayor Zohran Mamdani on DOT's Fiscal Year 2027 Preliminary Budget and Fiscal Year 2026-2035 Capital Plan.

The Scope of DOT's Operations

With an over **\$1.5B** operating budget and **\$33.5B** capital program, DOT's almost **6,000** employees safely and efficiently manage:



6,000 miles of streets



12,000 miles of sidewalk



809 bridges



24/7 S.I. Ferry Service



1,570 mile bike route network



13,900 signals



350,000 streetlights



200M linear ft of markings

As Mayor Mamdani announced, this Preliminary Budget confronts the fiscal crisis head-on while preserving the core services New Yorkers rely on every day. Within that context, the New York City Department of Transportation remains focused on our Charter-mandated mission to provide for the safe, equitable, and sustainable movement of people and goods and create public spaces that strengthen our communities. DOT manages 26 percent of the city's land area, including 6,300 miles of streets and highways, over 12,000 miles of sidewalk, 44,000 intersections, and more than 800 bridges and tunnels, and this budget enables us to sustain those essential operations while advancing savings, improving operational efficiencies, and maintaining critical infrastructure. We appreciate the Mayor's continued investment in DOT, enabling us to maintain our programs to help all New Yorkers and millions of visitors get around our city.

But, we are also going to think big and be bold. We are laying the groundwork and will marshal our resources to go beyond the status quo, because the status quo isn't good enough. We will:

- Implement transformative street redesigns that improve safety
- Build busways and other bus infrastructure that speed up service
- Scale up the production of protected bike lanes and pedestrian space
- Take a hard look at parking policy in our city
- Usher in a new era for Vision Zero that builds upon past success and utilizes new tools and tactics
- Streamline bureaucracy to accelerate important work that must be done with urgency, and so much more.

All of this work will take resources, and Mayor Mamdani already gave an initial downpayment on the important work that's ahead.

But, resources go beyond just money.

There is a national shortage of engineers, which makes hiring for these essential roles difficult. That's why we are leading outreach and events to attract engineers to work at this agency.

There is also a shortage of contractors who do the work that is needed for our projects, including painting the markings on roadways and repairing traffic lights. And, we are working with contractors to encourage them to expand their operations because we have work that needs doing.

With climate change and affordability as two of the defining challenges of our time, we understand our critical role in transitioning our roadways, infrastructure, and assets to a safer, greener, and more accessible transportation network to benefit New Yorkers for generations to come. This is going to be a forward-looking, problem-solving DOT. Not the DOT of 'no,' but turning a ship as big as DOT will take time if we want to get it right. So, we are acting with haste on the things we can deliver now – like restarting shelved bus and bike lane projects and announcing 800 15MPH slow zones at all eligible NYC schools this year and all 3,200 schools citywide by the end of Mayor Mamdani's first term – and building a rock-solid foundation to deliver on the grander ambitions that we have for this agency moving forward. And it's only March.

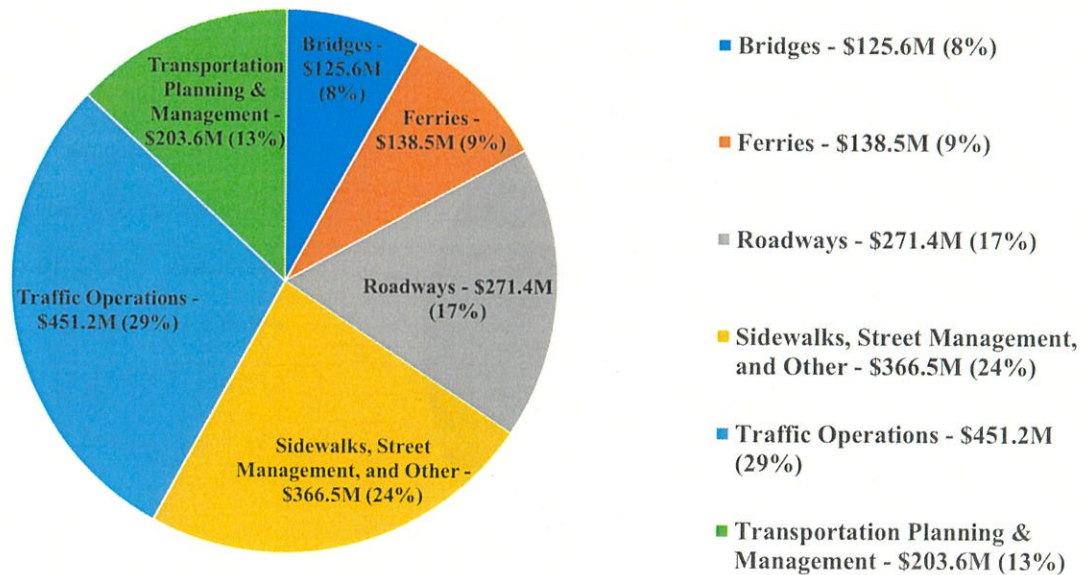
Let's start with where things stand today with the fiscal year 2027 budget.

Expense Budget

DOT's FY27 Expense Budget is \$1.6 billion, and you can see the breakdown and in the chart in my testimony.

- \$126 million for bridge maintenance and inspection;
- \$139 million for ferry operations and maintenance;
- \$271 million for roadway maintenance;
- \$367 million for other DOT operations and administration, including sidewalk management and inspection;
- \$451 million for traffic operations, including signals, streetlights, automated enforcement, and parking; and
- \$204 million for transportation planning and management, including installation of street signs and roadway markings.

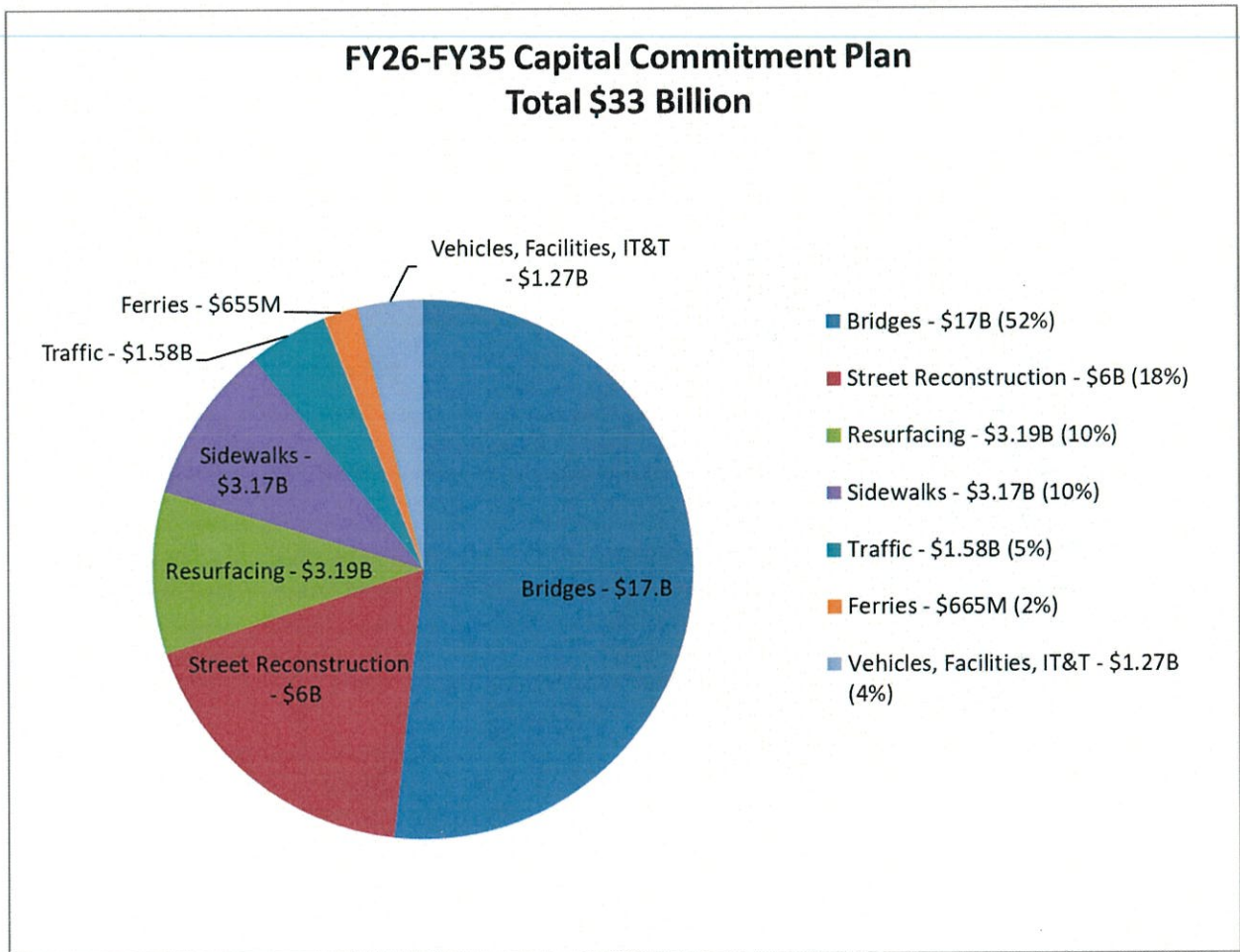
FY27 Expense Budget Total \$1.6 Billion



Capital Plan

DOT's FY26-FY35 Capital Plan is \$33 billion, and you can see the breakdown on the screen and in my testimony.

- \$17 billion for bridge reconstruction and rehabilitation;
- \$6 billion for street reconstruction;
- \$3.2 billion for resurfacing;
- \$3.2 billion for sidewalk and pedestrian ramp repair and reconstruction;
- \$1.6 billion for streetlights, signals, and automated enforcement;
- \$665 million for the Staten Island Ferry; and
- \$1.3 billion for the facilities and equipment needed to support DOT's operations.



This budget provides funding to support critical and innovative DOT operations that make New York safer and more livable. It is clear that the Mamdani Administration shares this vision with the investments in bus riders, cyclists, and pedestrians in this budget, given the funding for a Secure Bike Parking Pilot, Summer Streets, Open Streets, and a down payment on bus and bike

lane projects we're actively planning now. These investments strengthen our vision to create a transportation system that provides equitable mobility for all residents and visitors.

Faster and More Reliable Bus Service

We are thrilled with the Mayor's proven commitment to make it easier and faster to travel around the city with his announcement of the revitalization of four previously halted street redesign projects across the Bronx and Brooklyn. These projects will build upon our creative and collaborative work with the MTA to improve the bus rider experience citywide, ensuring that New Yorkers have fast and reliable bus service. The addition of \$5 million per year starting in FY27 as a down payment for bus and bike lane projects is not just a line in the budget, it is a clear commitment to faster and safer mobility methods that move New Yorkers efficiently and equitably. This investment makes a bold statement about our priorities by accelerating projects that will decrease commute times, protect vulnerable road users, and support our climate goals, all while strengthening the reliability of the city's transportation network. This is how we deliver safer, greener, faster streets and we are just getting started.

Strengthening Bike Infrastructure

With more than 600,000 cycling trips taken in the city each day, we know we need to think holistically to meet rapidly growing cycling trends, so we are working with our vendor on launching a secure bike parking and charging program. As many New Yorkers lack in-home bike storage space or cannot carry heavier e-bikes or cargo bikes upstairs, providing safe and secure bike parking options at transit stations and major destinations will reduce barriers to bike ownership and encourage transit ridership and last-mile trips by bicycle. The addition of secure, covered, long-term parking options in residential neighborhoods will enable people without storage options at home to start biking, which is essential to our goal of promoting mode shift.

In addition, the use of electric mobility devices has dramatically increased with nearly six percent of New York adults reporting that they ride an electric mobility device once a week or more. When used safely, these new modes of transportation offer affordable, sustainable, and convenient options for a range of New Yorkers, from families to delivery workers. Delivery cyclists have a particular need for secure bike parking, particularly with e-bike battery charging, given the high rate of bike theft and safety challenges of indoor battery charging. Secure bike parking is a new opportunity for DOT to meet the moment during this time of rapid change on our streets, resulting in an intervention that supports evolving mobility trends and makes our streets safer.

Expanding Public Space

While overseeing one of the most complex urban transportation networks in the world – we remain proud of our creative work to reimagine the use of public space. To continue making a vibrant and people-centered city, this budget includes an additional \$2 million baselined investment starting in FY27 in Summer Streets and Open Streets that transforms asphalt into opportunity. This funding expands car-free corridors, energizes commercial districts, supports

small businesses, and gives families safe, joyful spaces to gather and move. It's about reclaiming our streets for people and delivering more welcoming streets – for kids learning to bike, seniors taking a morning stroll, and communities hosting arts, culture, environmental, fitness, and educational programming right outside their doors. Summer Streets and Open Streets are powerful demonstrations of what our shared public spaces can be at their best. This investment keeps that momentum alive and solidifies our commitment to a more open, active, and vibrant city for all New Yorkers.

Rezoning Commitments

As part of this budget, DOT will implement the projects outlined in the Downtown Jamaica and Long Island City rezonings.

Over \$190 million of new funding was added to DOT's budget to carry out a variety of projects in Long Island City and Downtown Jamaica, including Archer Avenue Sidewalk & Bus Layover Improvements (\$18 million), Merrick Boulevard Median and Busway Improvements (\$33 million), and 44th Drive Pedestrian Improvements (\$39 million). Thanks to the Council's partnership, we are able to not only build housing, but all the other elements needed in a dense neighborhood.

Finally, DOT continues to make significant progress in expanding contracting opportunities for Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBES). In Fiscal Year 2026, we are on track to achieve record-breaking results, with \$375 million already committed toward MWBE participation—representing 32% of our contracted spending as a department. This milestone reflects more than a numeric achievement; it demonstrates our intentional effort to ensure that economic opportunity reaches the diverse businesses that strengthen our communities. By expanding access to contracting opportunities, DOT is helping to build a more inclusive and resilient business ecosystem while advancing our broader vision of fairness, opportunity, and shared prosperity.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we are thankful for the opportunity to testify before the Council today and for your continued partnership. We are grateful to the Mamdani Administration for investing in DOT – strengthening the steadfast work of the 6,000 people at DOT to keep this city moving. We now welcome any questions.



Testimony of Acting Commissioner Evan Hines
New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission
Before the City Council Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
The Preliminary Budget for Fiscal Year 2027
March 17, 2026

Good afternoon, Majority Leader Abreu and members of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. It is a pleasure to deliver an update on the fiscal state of the New York City Taxi & Limousine Commission (TLC). My name is Evan Hines and I am TLC's Acting Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner for Operations, People, and Innovation. With me is Sherryl Eluto, the agency's General Counsel and James DiGiovanni, the agency's Deputy Commissioner for Policy and Community Affairs. TLC's regulated industries encompass nearly 300,000 licensees including taxi, for-hire vehicle, and commuter van drivers, as well as vehicle owners, bases, and other related businesses. Although TLC is a relatively small agency of about 500 team members, we have a large role to play within our city's transportation ecosystem. As we move into fiscal year 2027, I look forward to continuing our partnership with the Council to ensure that all New Yorkers receive the services that they need and deserve.

The data from calendar year 2025 continues to indicate stability within the TLC's regulated industries. Across all vehicle markets, there were over 320 million trips completed. Overall trips have increased by 6%. Each sector of our regulated industries is unique, and there is some variation across each type. Taxi trips have increased by 16% from 2024 to 2025 and have only recovered 57% from 2019. The agency estimates that between 60-65% of yellow taxi drivers are currently full-time drivers, and the median gross hourly pay for this group is around \$60 an hour compared to \$50 an hour in 2019. Earnings after expenses are unique to each driver but expenses sharply reduce take-home pay. A typical medallion owner pays around \$25,000 per year toward vehicle payments and medallion loan service—and that's before fuel, maintenance, and insurance.

The high-volume for-hire vehicle sector - which includes Lyft and Uber and is the largest segment of our regulated industries - completed over 243 million trips in 2025. That is up from about 239 million in 2024, a 1.7% increase. We also saw earnings increases for drivers in this sector as well. The median pay for full-time drivers before taxes and expenses is approximately \$61 an hour in comparison to \$46 an hour in 2019. This reflects the impact of the driver pay rules authorized by Local Law 150 of 2018 and the amendments TLC adopted last year. Other sectors are also showing progress. Non-high-volume for-hire vehicles completed 28 million trips in 2025, a 4% increase from 2024. Although trips are largely recovered, we know challenges exist in



the industry as well - such as congestion, insurance costs, and more recently, increases in gas prices.

The commuter van recovery extended through this year with 56 vans in service compared to 34 at the beginning of 2024 in part due to Empire State Development's Commuter Van Stabilization Program. Through this program, eligible applicants can receive up to \$40,000 to help offset the cost of annual commuter van auto insurance policies as well as receive reimbursements for specific vehicle safety upgrades, including advanced driver assistance, dash cams, and GPS tracking.

While we see stability across the TLC's regulated industries, we continue to see and address unlicensed activity which not only siphons off trips from licensed drivers and bases who follow city rules but also endangers and exploits passengers. Illegal rides may not be insured, dispatchers may overcharge passengers, vehicles are not inspected for safety by TLC, and drivers may not even have a valid DMV license. This is an issue that TLC has consistently been addressing, and the newly nominated Chair and Chief Executive Officer made a commitment to stop these scofflaws in her testimony before the Council. Moreover, we are working with our city and state partners to identify additional tools that could be used to halt the operations of these bad actors. I would like to thank the Council for passing Local Law 35 of 2026, which through a DOT study will help gather data to assist the agency with unlicensed commuter van enforcement.

TLC continues to support and ensure compliance with several key pieces of legislation which were passed last year. Local Law 78 of 2025 requires taxis and for-hire vehicles to display a decal to warn passengers to look for cyclists when opening the door. The agency voted to adopt rules to implement this requirement at our September 17th Commission meeting and stocked up on our decal supply. TLC will distribute decals during vehicle inspections at the Woodside facility if needed, and decals are available to licensees for free at both our Woodside and Long Island City facilities.

Local Law 84 of 2025 requires the TLC to conduct a new study on the challenges and opportunities related to increasing the use of electric for-hire vehicles and installing new charging infrastructure by the end of this year. In addition, it requires the agency to include data on electric for-hire vehicles, the infrastructure necessary to support them, incentive programs, and overall progress towards the electrification of the for-hire vehicle fleet in its annual for-hire vehicle license review report, which will be released in the next few weeks. I am pleased to announce that 978 new level 2 and 3 chargers have come online since the agency's Green Rides rules were adopted. According to these rules by this year, 25% of all high-volume for-hire vehicle trips must be dispatched to electric or



wheelchair accessible vehicles. Our newly nominated Chair and Chief Executive Officer highlighted in her testimony before the Council that the costs associated with this public good has largely been born by drivers and small businesses and is something that TLC should further review. We fully expect the companies to meet these requirements, and they are on track with a current industry average of 22.7%.

Also in September, TLC completed rulemaking to implement Local Law 90 of 2025, to reduce TLC's insurance requirements for licensed vehicles. TLC now limits the amount of personal injury protection insurance coverage for licensed vehicles to an amount no greater than 200% of the amount required by state law. This change will help drivers and vehicle owners save money while still requiring the highest personal injury protection insurance coverage in the state.

Accessibility remains a top priority for TLC, and we are excited to report that as of today over 58% of the city's active taxi fleet is wheelchair accessible. Currently there are more than 6,300 accessible taxis bringing us closer to our next goal of 50% accessibility of the authorized fleet. Notably, TLC thoroughly reviewed its accessible taxi programs last year to keep the Taxi Improvement Fund (TIF) solvent in anticipation of the increase in wheelchair accessible vehicle hack ups. Leaving the TIF program as it was, with grants for hack ups, quarterly operational payments, \$1 per trip payments for all trips in a wheelchair accessible vehicle (WAV), and funding the Accessible Dispatch Program was not possible. Our amended rules increased the accessible vehicle hack-up grant for medallion owners from \$14,000 to \$20,000 and capped operational payments at a maximum of \$10,000 for a period of 4 years for eligible participants for a total of \$30,000 in grants to owners. As part of these changes, TLC shifted from a single-vendor accessible dispatch model that cost the TIF \$6 million annually to a multi-provider model serviced by individually licensed E-hail apps at no cost to the fund. Redirecting these funds afforded us the opportunity to add an additional 200 WAVs to the medallion fleet, as well as a \$10 bonus incentive for drivers dispatched by the E-hail companies' call centers. TLC maintained the 24/7 call center requirement and established more stringent service standards, such as requiring agents to receive disability etiquette and sensitivity training. Throughout this process TLC engaged members of the disability community and continues to listen to feedback and perform service audits.

TLC authorized the ATLAS pilot program which helps owners qualify for low-cost financing for accessible vehicle purchases. The program will provide assistance to 100 small business medallion owners to purchase a wheelchair accessible Toyota Sienna, in partnership with Empire State Development, the Disability Opportunity Fund, Hillside Toyota, and the New York Taxi Workers Alliance. The Fund can provide a low interest loan due to the upfront TIF grant of \$30,000, thereby reducing the loan amount from \$80,000



to \$50,000. So far, 16 medallions have received funding, passed inspection, and are in revenue service.

Next, I would like to preview TLC's preliminary budget for fiscal year 2027, which is projected to be approximately \$57.9 million, broken down into \$45.5 million in personal services (PS) and \$12.4 million in other than personal services (OTPS). This is an overall decrease of \$4.2 million, or 6.6%, from the current modified budget. This decrease is the result of less funding for Medallion Relief Program (MRP) needs. Last fiscal year an additional \$4.2 million was added to TLC's budget, specifically for MRP.

Currently the TLC's authorized headcount is 546 for fiscal year 2027. At our budget hearing last year, we reported that we hired the first of several cadet classes to fill 100 new vacancies given to us to backfill high attrition positions. Since then, we have filled all these new lines. Although we continue to see high attrition amongst our Uniformed Service Bureau, we've made great progress in reducing our vacancy rate since the 2025 Preliminary Budget hearing. Last year our vacancy rate at this time was 30%, whereas I am happy to report our current rate is 13%.

As is customary, I want to ensure that the new Committee members are aware of one of TLC's major capital projects. Our Safety and Emissions Inspection Facility in Woodside, Queens, is currently entering the second phase of a \$180 million reconstruction. This project is being managed by the Department of Design and Construction and is expected to be substantially complete by the end of 2028. The project is needed to mitigate structural degradation as well as to meet an increasing demand for inspection services. Once completed, the new facility will increase inspection capacity by 200 cars per day and reduce street congestion associated with entering and exiting vehicles. The original scope of the project was expanded to include 70 new electric vehicle chargers, including 30 level 3 fast chargers, to support TLC's Green Rides initiative. For TLC employees, there will also be a new administrative building, a parking garage, and vehicle testing equipment. The current inspection facility remains operational while the new construction is underway.

Across all of TLC's projects, the agency is committed to ensuring that our vendors reflect the diversity of New York City. The Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (M/WBE) program expands opportunities for local entrepreneurs to access government contracts and grow their businesses. TLC's current Fiscal Year 2026 M/WBE utilization rate is 40.9%, or \$1.4 million in M/WBE contracts, nearly 11 percentage points greater than the citywide goal of 30%. We are incredibly proud of this achievement. For six consecutive years, TLC has exceeded the citywide M/WBE participation goals and remains committed to closing the fiscal year on June 30th above New York City's 30%



M/WBE requirement. This number reflects utilization for eligible contracts, which do not include intergovernmental contracts or requirement contracts. M/WBE vendors were procured for services required to revise our educational course curriculum, provide translation services, cloud security, and quality assurance. Through all these contracts, we are contributing to advancing equity in our city.

As we prepare for the upcoming fiscal year, I want to thank the dedicated staff at TLC for their efforts to ensure that agency initiatives are successful. I look forward to the opportunity to work with the Mayor, Council, and incoming agency leadership to ensure that the Taxi and Limousine Commission continues to support a fair and equitable industry for licensees, passengers, and all New Yorkers. I am now happy to answer any questions you may have about the TLC's budget or regulated industries.

**Fiscal Year
2027
Preliminary
Budget
Hearing**

March 17,
2026

Department of Design and Construction
Eduardo del Valle, Acting Commissioner

New York City Council
Committee on
Transportation and
Infrastructure

Introduction

Good afternoon, Chair Abreu and members of the Committee. I am Eduardo del Valle, Acting Commissioner of the New York City Department of Design and Construction, and I am very pleased to appear before you today. I am joined by First Deputy Commissioner Eric Macfarlane, Chief Financial Officer Nathan Toth, and other members of DDC's leadership team.

Fiscal Year 2026 has been a period of growth and improvement at DDC, as well as an opportunity to demonstrate that many of the construction reforms we've been advocating for here in the City and in Albany are working and delivering the benefits we anticipated.

DDC continues to grow its portfolio and take on the City's largest design and construction challenges. In that spirit, I'll share how this year marked a significant step in realizing the benefits of alternate

project delivery compared to the traditional system of lowest bidder contracting.

We've also made progress on other major programs, including Borough-Based Jails, coastal resiliency and green infrastructure. We are improving the way we pay our vendors and the way the city plans its capital improvements. We detailed our work in a new edition of our Strategic Blueprint, which was published in August. I will talk about those developments in a moment but first, I will share our budget overview for the year.

Budget Overview

DDC builds on behalf of more than 25+ City agencies plus numerous museums, cultural organizations and other non-profits that receive funding from City sources.

The January Capital Commitment Plan for FY26 contains over \$5.8 billion in new planned investments. This figure includes over \$2 billion for Infrastructure projects, close to \$1.6 billion for our Public Buildings and support portfolio and \$2.2 billion for the Borough Based Jails

Program. Capital spending for DDC varies year over year, as it is dictated by the agencies that sponsor our projects and the funding we receive from them. We advise sponsors about scope and cost, but ultimately we rely on our City agencies to dictate policy and priorities.

DDC's FY 2027 operating budget is \$163 million. This includes \$132 million for Personal Services and \$31 million for Other Than Personal Services. Our budgeted headcount is 1,207. Our total operating budget includes \$143 million in IFA funding and \$20 million in City tax levy funding.

In Public Buildings we have 21 projects in the initiation phase, 62 projects in active design, 38 currently in procurement, and 118 in construction, with a total value of these projects of approximately \$15.6 billion. In Infrastructure we have 22 projects in the initiation phase, 126 projects in active design, 46 in procurement, and 91 in construction, with a total value of approximately \$13.11 billion.

Alternative Delivery

I am very pleased to report that we have reached a tremendous milestone in our design-build portfolio. For years we advocated for design-build so that we could build more quickly, and thanks to our partners in both the City and State we are celebrating a new era of construction efficiency. Last month we opened the Shirley Chisholm Recreation Center, the City's first fully public design-build project. It was completed in just three years, which is half the time needed for

similar public building projects using lowest bidder contracting on a typical timeline. The \$141 million project was on time and also on budget, with an anticipated cost savings of ten percent because of design-build. With lowest bidder contracting, this project would not have been completed before 2028.

The Rec Center design was by the world-renowned architecture firm Studio Gang and a review of the building last month in New York Magazine called it architecture with an invitation to “come, stay, and enjoy.”

The building is also one of only three citywide to achieve LEED Platinum for environmental sustainability under version 4 of the LEED guidelines.

These results demonstrate the benefits that design-build and other alternative delivery methods can provide. It’s faster, it’s more

efficient, it reduces delays, and it still provides for superior designs through a comprehensive public review process.

All six of our original design-build pilot projects will be completed by the end of 2026. Other design-build projects nearing completion include the Marlboro Greenhouse in Brooklyn, which will be completed this summer, and the Brownsville Multi-Service Center, which should also be completed this summer.

We are also hard at work building our CM-Build pilot program. We were cleared to use CM-Build by the State for library and cultural projects. We already have five projects in our pilot program including the renovation of 70 Mulberry Street in Chinatown.

Advanced Capital Planning and Payment Reforms

Last year at this hearing, DDC informed this Committee about our Advanced Capital Planning effort. We have completed our Advanced

Capital Planning program’s data portal, and we’re starting on a building assessment tool to augment the data the City already gathers about its own properties. A comprehensive planning program is in the works. We currently have a pilot program with the Queens and Brooklyn public library systems, and we will continue to grow the overall program.

We’ve also made progress in how we process payments to construction vendors, with the goal of reducing the administrative burden and making DDC a more desirable partner to work with.

We’ve standardized our forms; we’ve removed numerous duplicative and onerous paperwork requirements; we’ve removed at least five notary requirements from multiple forms; and we have a payment task force to see what works and what doesn’t. We are also developing similar reforms for payments to consultants.

Borough-Based Jails

The Borough-Based Jails program continues to be our largest overall program as well as our largest alternative delivery program.

Since we last appeared before the Committee site preparation for the last site, in Manhattan, has been completed and we intend to start early construction of that facility this spring. The Brooklyn facility remains the furthest along, with curtain wall installation started last month. We continue to seek design input from local communities with design workshops in Queens, the Bronx and Manhattan, this month and into April.

All four sites have benefitted greatly from the use of design-build contracting and would take several additional years to design and construct if we had to use lowest-bidder contracting.

M/WBE

As we reported in the new PMMR, DDC remains a leading agency in contract awards and payments to Minority and Women-owned

Business Enterprises (M/WBE) In Fiscal Year 2025 the Agency's

M/WBE participation was 33.6 percent for contracts subject to Local Law 1 of 2013. There were over \$1 billion in awards to City-certified M/WBEs, nearly half of the \$2.2 billion awarded to M/WBEs citywide.

As reported in the latest OneNYC M/WBE Bulletin (FY15 – FY 25), DDC remains the leading Mayoral agency in awards to M/WBEs with over \$6.8 billion awarded to M/WBEs since the start of the OneNYC M/WBE program in Fiscal Year 2015. We are extremely proud of these accomplishments.

We are growing our M/WBE participation in our Alternative Delivery program as well. We continue to set ambitious and disaggregated M/WBE goals in both the design portion and the construction portion

of our design-build contracts and are seeing the results of these efforts.

Also note that DDC capital projects have begun using the new Community Hiring goals, which aim for 30 percent of construction trade labor hours to be completed by NYCHA residents or individuals who live in low-income communities as defined by zip code. At the Shirley Chisholm Recreation Center we had 36 percent overall M/WBE utilization and 37 percent of the total work hours performed by people hired through HireNYC.

Sustainability and Resiliency

Our coastal resiliency efforts expanded in September when we began a new \$218 million project in Red Hook, Brooklyn. That project includes numerous public space improvements and is expected to be completed in summer 2028.

We continue to make progress on East Side Coastal Resiliency (ESCR) Project and Brooklyn Bridge-Montgomery Coastal Resilience (BMCR) project in lower Manhattan and expect to have BMCR completed before the end of the year with ESCR several months after that. In all we intend to build 5,750 feet of coastal flood protection in the current fiscal year.

We also are expanding our green infrastructure program to help meet the challenges presented by intense storms and rainfall, and in the first four months of the current fiscal year installed almost 30,000 square feet of porous pavement, with another 70,000 planned by the end of the fiscal year.

Conclusion

As the agency's responsibilities and portfolio expand it remains critical that we find new ways to be faster and more efficient. We also recognize that delivering capital projects in New York City remains complex, and we continue working with our partner agencies to shorten project timelines wherever possible. We continue to deliver additional public buildings, like libraries, cultural institutions for DCLA, firehouses and EMS stations for FDNY, plus new plazas, streets with enhanced pedestrian safety measures and new water mains for our sponsors DOT and DEP. We have proven that the City's construction process can be improved and now, with CM-Build for library and cultural projects, we have the opportunity to take our progress even further and expand it to other types of projects. We will continue to advocate for New Yorkers and to build on these efforts in the future. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today.

March 17, 2026

**Comments of Zach Miller
Vice President of Government Affairs
Trucking Association of New York**

before the

New York City Council Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure

Good morning, Chair Abreu and members of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. My name is Zach Miller, I am the Vice President of Government Affairs for the Trucking Association of New York. Since 1932, TANY has advocated on behalf of the trucking industry at all levels of government, providing compliance assistance, safety programs, and educational opportunities to our members, and in the process, creating jobs, supporting the economy, driving safety, and delivering a sustainable future.

I testify today regarding the critical budgetary needs of the Department of Transportation (DOT), particularly as they relate to freight mobility. New York City is home to one of the finest and most respected Freight Mobility Offices in the United States. Given that trucking is responsible for delivering over 90 percent of the city's freight, the systems we put in place today will shape the future of our city's economy and quality of life.

As we project a 68 percent increase in freight tonnage by 2045, it is essential that we invest in infrastructure to keep pace with this demand. Consumer delivery patterns have shifted dramatically: today, roughly 80 percent of deliveries go directly to residential customers, and 45 percent of New Yorkers receive at least one delivery to their home each week.

It is crucial that we continue to invest in initiatives that will ensure the safe, efficient, and sustainable movement of freight across the city. Some key initiatives that the Office of Freight Mobility is currently engaged in include:

- **Increasing overnight truck parking capacity** to reduce congestion and enhance safety.
- **Expanding and enforcing commercial loading zones** to prevent traffic disruptions and ensure timely deliveries.
- **Developing neighborhood loading zones** to improve access in residential areas.
- **Adopting the proposed modernized truck route network** to enhance the safe and efficient flow of goods and services throughout the City. DOT has identified the major freight corridors for truck movement. It is vital to enhance and protect these corridors.
- **Promoting off-hour deliveries to receivers** to reduce peak-hour traffic and minimize disruptions.

- **Supporting microhub distribution centers and lockers** to further streamline certain types of last-mile deliveries and protecting these business models.
- **Implementing busways and blue highways** to enhance both freight and passenger mobility. Busways in particular can be implemented quickly and have demonstrated success in prioritizing passenger movement while properly maintaining space for freight access.

These initiatives are not just about moving freight—they are about ensuring that our city remains a vibrant, functioning metropolis as we face future challenges.

As freight demand continues to grow, investing in freight mobility is not optional, it is essential to keeping New York City supplied, safe, and economically competitive.

We urge the Council to ensure that DOT's Freight Mobility programs receive the funding and support necessary to meet this challenge.

Thank you for your time and for considering these critical needs as part of the budget process.



New York Taxi Workers Alliance

AFL-CIO, Intl. Transport Workers' Federation

31-10 37th Avenue, Suite 300, LIC, NY 11101

Phone: 718-706-9892 E-mail: Media@nytwa.org / www.nytwa.org

March 20, 2026

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
New York City Council
New York City Hall
NYC, NY 10007

Re: T2026-1361- Preliminary Budget Hearing on Transportation and Infrastructure

Dear Chair Abreu and Members of the Transportation Committee,

Greetings. The New York Taxi Workers Alliance (“NYTWA”) is a membership-based organization of over 28,000 Uber, Lyft, yellow cab and green cab drivers. On behalf of our members, I write to ask for Council support in:

- Our on-going campaign for debt forgiveness for medallion owner-drivers
- Meeting a court settlement entered into by the City of New York to make 50% of the yellow cab fleet wheelchair accessible, by reducing the financial burden on owner-drivers who purchase wheelchair accessible Vehicles (“WAV”), including by repealing the City sales tax on vehicles to be used as WAVs, funding the Taxicab Improvement Fund, and ensuring the appropriate staffing levels to allow for the operation of the ATLAS pilot program
- Raising the pay on Access-a-Ride trips to ensure drivers are not paid below the industry standards
- Allowing for payment plans for TLC and Department of Finance fines and reducing the times when drivers are assessed fines for pick up / drop off of passengers in bus lanes

I. TLC and the City Council must keep the Medallion Relief Program open and funded until the last group of medallion owner-drivers can settle their loans.

The Medallion Relief Program Plus, or MRP+, is a City program that has been a life-saving solution to a years-long crisis. The medallion debt crisis led to such extreme levels of debt that, for far too long, it caused suicides, bankruptcies, and abject poverty. After years of crisis, protests, and a fifteen day hunger strike, our union, and a broad coalition of public officials and allies finally won a solution: the MRP+, a program under which the city provides a city-backed guaranty on loans that are reduced to no more than \$200,000. It further provides an immediate payment of \$30,000 on behalf of the medallion owner to reduce the loan to \$170,000, and brings down the monthly mortgage to a fixed \$1,234 over 25 years. *To date, over 2,000 owners have had their loans restructured, leading to nearly \$475 million in forgiven debt.*¹ The historic program has been an unprecedented and successful model to address debt through municipal solutions.

Despite this extraordinary success, the debt crisis has not ended for a group of approximately 200 drivers. Because their lenders did not want to participate directly in the program, these owner-drivers have seen no relief and have not received any benefit from the city’s historic Medallion Relief Program.

¹ See Office of Financial Stability, *2024 Annual Report* at 2, available at https://www.nyc.gov/assets/tlc/downloads/pdf/ofs_annual_report_2024.pdf.

Many of these drivers have loan balances over \$500,000 with exorbitantly high mortgage payments—often double that of owner-drivers in the MRP+—leaving these workers struggling to make even poverty wages. The largest group of borrowers who have still not had their debt restructured are paying \$11,192 more per year compared to borrowers whose loans are under the program. Meanwhile, they are working with high debts, balloon payments, and confessions of judgment.

The New York Taxi Workers Alliance developed a solution for these borrowers as soon as it became apparent that their lenders would not participate directly. Working with Accompany Capital, a small community development financial institution, and the TLC, NYTWA developed a second model for MRP+: a new lender comes in, pays off the old lender, and restructures the loans pursuant to the terms of the MRP+. This model has been implemented successfully; Accompany has remained ready to close more loans once the program is reopened. What's more, the solution Accompany has modeled can further be used to cross the finish line with the remaining loans.

NYTWA is working with a large non-profit lender and potential investors to raise the necessary funds and set up the infrastructure to complete the restructurings for the remaining 200 loans. The City must partner with NYTWA in this endeavor, to fulfill its promise of debt relief and ensure that all drivers have access to the life-saving benefits of the MRP+. In the immediacy, the city must reopen the program so the drivers that were unable to close under MRP+ when the previous administration prematurely closed the program do not have to wait any longer.

In summary:

- To ensure the final group of owner-drivers can access the live-saving debt relief MRP+ offers, the City Council must ensure that the MRP+ remains open and that funding remains available for the \$30,000 grants, while ensuring that TLC staffing levels remain sufficient to implement the program.
- Meanwhile, to protect the MRP+ guaranty fund, the City Council should allow for the transfer of loans that are currently in MRP+ to new borrowers, so that borrowers who are seeking to retire or exit the industry may do so without defaulting on their loans. This would not only save the City money, as it would not have to pay out deficiency payments from the City-backed guaranty reserve fund, but would allow families to keep medallions by transferring the loan to a younger family member.

II. The City Council must financially support yellow cab owner drivers as they convert to wheelchair accessible vehicles.

As the result of a settlement the Taxi and Limousine Commission entered into in 2014 and a 2024 court order enforcing that settlement, all taxi medallion owners must put a wheelchair accessible vehicle (“WAV”) into service when their current vehicles are retired. *See The Taxis for All Campaign et al v. the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission et. al*, 1:11-cv-00237 (SDNY). While the City made the settlement, the City has never provided financial support to meet its terms.

Unfortunately, there is no purpose-built wheelchair accessible vehicle (“WAV”). Taxi owners must purchase the vehicle and have it retro-fitted with a ramp and hacked-up as a taxi (including painting it yellow, installing a partition and meter, etc.) All of this comes at a heavy price tag: yellow cab WAVs cost around \$80,000, or twice as much as other vehicles—and it is medallion owners, not the City, who currently bear the burden of ballooning vehicle costs. WAVs are also costlier to maintain.

The increased cost of a WAV is particularly significant for owner-drivers, who both own the medallion and/or vehicle and drive it. After a decade of one devastation following another—from the unlimited entry of Uber and Lyft to the medallion debt crisis to the Covid-19 pandemic—many owner-drivers are struggling. The combination of these crises has led to a precipitous decline in the number of trips that taxicabs perform and thus income taxicab drivers earn; yellow cabs now perform only 23.4% of the trips they performed prior to these crises.²

That is, in January 2026 (the latest month for which data is available), taxis averaged 116,444 daily trips compared to 497,661 daily trips in March 2014.³ Owner-drivers need sufficient financial support to convert to WAVs. Otherwise, drivers will face severe consequences: they will be forced out of work, and many will have to go through bankruptcy or foreclosure to discharge their medallion loan debt before they can leave the industry.

A. City Council must exempt wheelchair accessible vehicles purchased for use as taxis from the City sales tax, and call on the state to do the same.

To make wheelchair accessible vehicles more affordable, while simultaneously supporting an increase in the infrastructure for accessible transportation in New York City, NYTWA asks the City Council to amend the City sales tax to exempt wheelchair accessible vehicles purchased for use as taxis. This will bring down the cost of the vehicles by several thousand dollars. The City should also call on the state and Governor Hochul to provide a similar exemption from state sales tax; collectively, the exemptions would lead to nearly \$5,000 in savings for the purchase of a vehicle that costs approximately \$80,000.

B. City Council must fund the Taxicab Improvement Fund so the austerity measures taken to avoid insolvency of the fund can be ended, and driver benefits can be reinstated.

The City Council must also fund the Taxicab Improvement Fund (“TIF”), which was established in the wake of the 2014 settlement to finance the purchase and operation of wheelchair accessible vehicles; it is currently funded solely through a surcharge on yellow cab trips.⁴

TLC recently eliminated the \$1 per trip which drivers who operate a WAV used to receive.⁵ This is a significant \$2,500 - \$3,000 wage cut for thousands of drivers. In the same rule package, TLC has also reduced the operations grants from \$16,000 to \$10,000, and increased the trip requirement to be eligible for operations grants from 250 to 750 per quarter.⁶ These austerity measures will cost drivers thousands in income; they are required, as TLC has noted, to ensure there is funding available to cover hack up payments to the influx of new WAVs caused by the 2024 court order.⁷ After a decade of loss in trips, which decreases TIF revenue, and with a court order to expedite conversions, which increases the costs to the fund, TIF is quickly approaching insolvency. The city made the settlement. The city must do its share to support drivers in meeting the mandate. The Council must sufficiently fund TIF to allow for the

² See *Taxi and Ridehailing Usage in New York City*, available at <https://toddschneider.com/dashboards/nyc-taxi-ridehailing-uber-lyft-data/> (Date accessed: Mar. 17, 2026).

³ *Id.*

⁴ See 35 RCNY § 58-26(a)(1)(i).

⁵ See Notice of Promulgation and Statement of Basis and Purpose, adopted Mar. 26, 2025, available at <https://www.nyc.gov/site/tlc/about/newly-passed-rules-and-pilot-programs.page> (“Statement of Basis and Purpose”).

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ *Id.*

reinstatement of the \$1 per trip reimbursement for WAV operators and also increase the operations grants.

In its 2025 rule package, TLC also heightened eligibility requirements for TIF funding, requiring that drivers submit applications within six months of hack up and increasing the numbers of trips that drivers must perform to receive operations grants.⁸ These requirements disproportionately affect the most vulnerable drivers, including those who are less proficient in English or the use of technology, as well as drivers who must work less due to health issues or age. Drivers earn every dollar that goes into the TIF fund through the trips they perform – they should not be denied access to life-saving funding *they have earned* due to technicalities. The TLC added these requirements when the TIF was at risk of becoming insolvent due to the increased number of WAVs becoming operational after the 2024 court order; these rules must be repealed, and the TLC and City Council must find alternative funding for TIF.

C. City Council must require TLC to facilitate the operation of the ATLAS pilot program and provide additional funding for staff if necessary to do so.

To bring down the purchase cost and monthly vehicle payments of WAVs, NYTWA worked with the TLC and the Disability Opportunity Fund to create the ATLAS pilot program, which provides low interest vehicle loans for the purchase of WAVs and one large sum of \$30,000 (combining hack up and operations TIF payments) to allow for larger down payment and lower monthly payments.⁹ While the ATLAS program has provided significant financial relief to a handful of owner-drivers, its rollout has been severely hampered by operational roadblocks at the TLC that have slowed the approval of applicants and the enrollment in TIF to a trickle.

Since the pilot program resolution was adopted on April 30, 2025, *just 16 vehicles* have been approved through the ATLAS program, out of the 100 vehicles the Disability Opportunity Fund has funding for. NYTWA, meanwhile, had recruited close to 200 medallion owners interested in the program even before the TLC application was posted online. The interest among drivers has been high. But with a slow vetting process, the vast majority have not been able to take advantage of the program, all while the cars Toyota set aside are just gathering dust. While we have proposed a list of solutions to TLC, we ask the Council to require adequate staffing for the program.

III. City Council Must Support Higher Pay on Access-a-Ride/MTA Trips

On March 17, the City Council heard testimony from MTA and NYC Transit on the budget. The Council must raise payments on Access-A-Ride and medical trips. Access-a-Ride trips are one of the last remaining areas of trips that are not subject to regulation regarding the amount of driver pay per trip; as a result, the payment per trip is low. Between low pricing by MTA and high take rates from brokers and bases, drivers are left with almost nothing.

TLC has been aware for years that Access-a-Ride trip payments fall below the industry's pay standards. For example, when conducting a study on e-hail trips for yellow cab drivers, 99% of which were Access-a-Ride trips at the time, the TLC found that drivers were being paid up to 20% less than they would have been for the same trips, when paid on a metered basis.¹⁰ That same report identified that drivers

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ *ATLAS Pilot Program*, available at <https://www.nyc.gov/site/tlc/about/accessibility-atlas-program.page> (Date accessed: Mar. 20, 2026).

¹⁰ *Flex Fare Pilot Report June 2019*, available at https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/tlc/downloads/pdf/flex_fare_pilot_report_06_2019.pdf, at 5.

complained of the low fares and high fees of the trips, but because of the structure of the program, often did not know about the low fare amount until it was too late to cancel, as they were already face-to-face with the customer and would be subject to a high cancellation fee.¹¹

The metered rate for yellow cab drivers and the driver pay rules for High Volume For Hire Vehicle drivers are set, in part, by looking at driver expenses. When drivers are paid below those rates, they are being paid poverty wages: drivers are left struggling to cover their operational expenses, while also not making a living wage. The City Council must take action now, and work with the MTA and TLC to raise driver payments on Access-a-Ride trips.

IV. The incidence of TLC fines for bus lane pick up and drop offs must be reduced and payment plans must be available for all Department of Finance and TLC fines.

TLC drivers often receive bus lane tickets and double parking tickets while they are picking up and dropping off passengers. Fines can be as much as \$250¹², but there is no payment plan until the ticket is in judgement, at which point the car can be booted, leaving drivers unable to go to work or use their vehicle at all.

TLC must provide longer grace periods for FHV's and taxis picking up or dropping off passengers and allow payment plans for all Department of Finance and TLC fines. In addition, if Uber and Lyft dispatched a vehicle to a point in a bus lane, they must pay the ticket.

Conclusion

Thank you in advance for your attention to these matters. We look forward to working with you.

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/ Allison Langley

Staff Attorney

New York Taxi Workers Alliance

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² *See* N.Y. Veh. & Traf. Law § 1111-c(e),

From: [Pattie Cowley](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Written Testimony for 3/17 Hearing Re: Fiscal Year 2027 Preliminary Budget for Transportation and Infrastructure
Date: Monday, March 16, 2026 7:58:37 AM

[REDACTED]

New York City Council Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
FY2027 Preliminary Budget Hearing
Submitted by:
Greater Northeast Motorcoach Association (GNEMA)

March 17, 2026

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Greater Northeast Motorcoach Association (GNEMA), thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony as the Council reviews the Fiscal Year 2027 Preliminary Budget for transportation and infrastructure.

GNEMA represents motorcoach operators throughout the Northeast who play a critical role in moving visitors, commuters, students, and tour groups safely and efficiently into and throughout New York City. Our members support the city's tourism economy, reduce congestion by transporting large numbers of passengers in a single vehicle, and provide transportation services for schools, major events, and organized travel.

As the City continues to advance environmental and sustainability goals, our industry supports reasonable efforts to reduce unnecessary idling and improve air quality. Motorcoach operators have made significant investments in modern, clean diesel technology and are committed to operating responsibly within the communities we serve.

However, our members are increasingly encountering challenges related to the current enforcement environment surrounding idling regulations. Operators who are actively working to comply with the rules are facing confusing and inconsistent enforcement practices that create operational uncertainty for companies transporting passengers

into the city.

We encourage continued dialogue between city agencies and the interstate motorcoach industry to ensure that enforcement policies are implemented in a manner that supports environmental goals while also recognizing the operational realities of safely transporting passengers.

Motorcoach transportation remains an important part of New York City's mobility network and tourism infrastructure. GNEMA looks forward to working collaboratively with the City to ensure policies are both effective and practical.

Thank you for the opportunity to share these perspectives.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Cowley, Executive Director
Greater Northeast Motorcoach Association
PO Box 186
Washington, NJ 07882


pcowley@gnema.org

www.gnema.org



Testimony on 3/17/26 Preliminary Budget Hearing, Transportation & Infrastructure Committee

Open Plans writes today in regard to the Preliminary Budget hearing on 3/17. Open Plans believes in a livable and affordable New York City, and below are our budget priorities that would work towards that aim:

- **The Mayor’s campaign commitment of \$20 million for the Open Streets for Schools: Full Closure (School Streets) program should be realized in the Council’s budget.** The School Streets program closes streets in front of schools to keep kids safe from traffic, and to unlock outdoor recreation space for schools that may not have enough or any at all. However, insufficient resources (as well as a lack of cross-agency collaboration) result in less participation than is possible. During the campaign, Mayor Mamdani pledged to provide \$20 million to the School Streets program for operational expenses. We believe this money is essential and can be used to hire more staff to manage the program, conduct outreach to potential schools, and provide assistance during the application process and throughout the life of their School Street. The Mayor didn’t include this \$20 million as a line item in the Preliminary Budget, and we are requesting that the Council fund the School Streets program as an important step toward expanding access for students across the city. We discuss the potential of the School Streets program more in our report, [School’s Out in the Streets](#).
- **Invest \$25 million to pilot five Public Space Teams to foster local public space management.** In our city, some neighborhoods receive better public space management — better street cleaning, public programming, and planning — than others. To remedy this issue, in our report [Framework for the Future](#), we proposed the idea of Public Space Teams. These Teams would operate in Community Districts, and consist of two DOT employees — a Public Space Facilitator to coordinate the Team and the evolution of the space, and a Public Space Coordinator to perform public outreach — as well as a group of paid contracted Public Space Stewards to perform supplemental sanitation. In our report, we performed a financial analysis and found that \$25 million would be sufficient to pilot five of these teams, one for a neighborhood in each borough, to bring more equitable public space management.
- **Allocate \$4 million for hardened daylighting in 1,000 locations in 2026.** Daylighting saves lives by removing obstructions from the curbspace at intersections, providing increased visibility for pedestrians and drivers alike. To ensure these spaces aren’t occupied illegally, hardened infrastructure like planters, boulders, or bike racks is



essential. We request that the Council allocate \$4 million for 1,000 hardened daylighting locations.

- **Fund implementation of five low-traffic neighborhoods, one in each borough.** The majority of traffic in many residential neighborhoods is “cut-through traffic,” meaning the drivers who drive through a neighborhood do not stop; they use neighborhoods as throughways to get to their true final destination. To avoid this increased congestion and air pollution, we can use low-cost strategies to divert traffic out of neighborhoods and onto main roads. These strategies have been shown to be effective in cities like London, cutting down on congestion in residential neighborhoods while still allowing for local access for residents. The Council should allocate funding for the implementation of five low-traffic neighborhoods, one in each borough, as further described on our [website](#).

Respectfully,
Open Plans

Sara Lind
Co-Executive Director
sara@openplans.org

Jackson Chabot
Director of Advocacy and Organizing
jacksonchabot@openplans.org

Michael Sutherland
Senior Policy & Legislative Analyst
michael@openplans.org



New York City Council Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure
Oversight Hearing: Preliminary FY2027 Budget
March 17, 2026
Testimony of Eric McClure, Executive Director, StreetsPAC

In our testimony at last year’s preliminary budget hearing, we noted that we could very well have rehashed testimony from the preceding three years, since so little had been accomplished over that time span, especially when it came to failing to meet the mandates laid out in New York City’s Streets Plan.

In fact, the New York City Independent Budget Office had issued [a report](#) just prior to the FY2026 budget hearing indicating that funding and staffing for the Streets Plan’s benchmarks had been deeply inadequate, and that “without targeted investment and strategic hiring, DOT’s ability to deliver on the Streets Plan remains severely limited.” In addition, DOT’s staffing vacancy rate was double that of city government overall, which further undermined the agency’s ability to deliver on the Streets Plan’s crucial – and legally required – projects.

But as we noted at the Streets Plan oversight hearing two weeks ago, elections bring change, and change brings opportunity. While we are well aware that New York City faces a challenging budget situation, we remain optimistic that Mayor Mamdani’s administration can begin to fix the failures of its predecessor.

The first and most important step, we believe, is to ensure that the Department of Transportation is fully staffed, especially with the planners and designers and engineers critical to shaping and implementing the Streets Plan. While staffing is a significant cost, the potential for return on investment is also significant. It’s also crucial that DOT streamline the process of onboarding new employees, which currently takes an absurd amount of time. Filling the several hundred vacancies within DOT should be a top priority.

Speaking of the Streets Plan, it’s essential that the FY2027 budget allocate sufficient resources to allow DOT to meet the required benchmarks for bike and bus lane implementation. While it’s understandable that a new administration still getting its sea legs is hesitant to make firm commitments when the previous administration failed so remarkably, it’s crucial that they adhere to Local Law 195. Measurably improving bus service and making greater progress toward Vision Zero is dependent on adding the bus and bike lanes required by the Streets Plan.

Secure Bike Parking

As we've been calling for the city to make a significant investment in a safe, secure citywide bike parking system since 2023, we're excited that the effort is underway to create an initial network of 500 stations. With a quarter of city households having lost a bicycle to theft, the lack of secure storage options is clearly a huge barrier to unlocking the full potential of bicycles as transportation. While we're very happy to see that City Hall has met DOT's initial funding request for the program, we urge the kind of investment that will create a truly world-class bike-parking system that fully integrates charging infrastructure for e-bikes and that will eventually cover the entirety of New York City.

Subsidizing the Bike Share Program

We also renew our long-term call for meaningful public investment in the city's bike share program. Citi Bike ridership continues to grow at a rapid pace, while bike share remains the only facet of our public transit system that receives no public subsidy. Even at the member rate, the cost for a ride on a pedal-assist Citi Bike quickly surpasses that of a subway or bus fare, which creates a perverse incentive for riders to prioritize speed over safety in trying to get to their destinations.

Full and equitable expansion of the bike share system to all city neighborhoods, and implementing the hard-wired tech that will eliminate battery, will undoubtedly necessitate public investment.

Fair Fares

We join colleagues including the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee and Riders Alliance in calling for the expansion of the Fair Fares program to 300% of the federal poverty level, fully free transit for families earning less than 150% of the federal poverty level, the inclusion in the program of express buses and the commuter railroads, automatic enrollment of qualified participants, and the closing of loopholes for seniors and disabled riders.

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 - Richmond County District Attorney
 - Kings County District Attorney (forthcoming)
 - Manhattan District Attorney (forthcoming)

The **Center for Justice Innovation** is a non-profit organization that seeks to transform the policies and practices of the justice system to make it fair, effective, and humane. The Center operates the following sites throughout New York City.

- Family
- Criminal
- Community Development
- Civil/Housing

Click on the name of any program to learn more.

STATEN ISLAND

- 1. Staten Island Justice Center

MANHATTAN

- 2. Harlem Community Justice Center
- 3. Headquarters
- 4. Manhattan Justice Opportunities
- 5. Midtown Community Court

MULTI-BOROUGH

- 6. Legal Hand (Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens)

BRONX

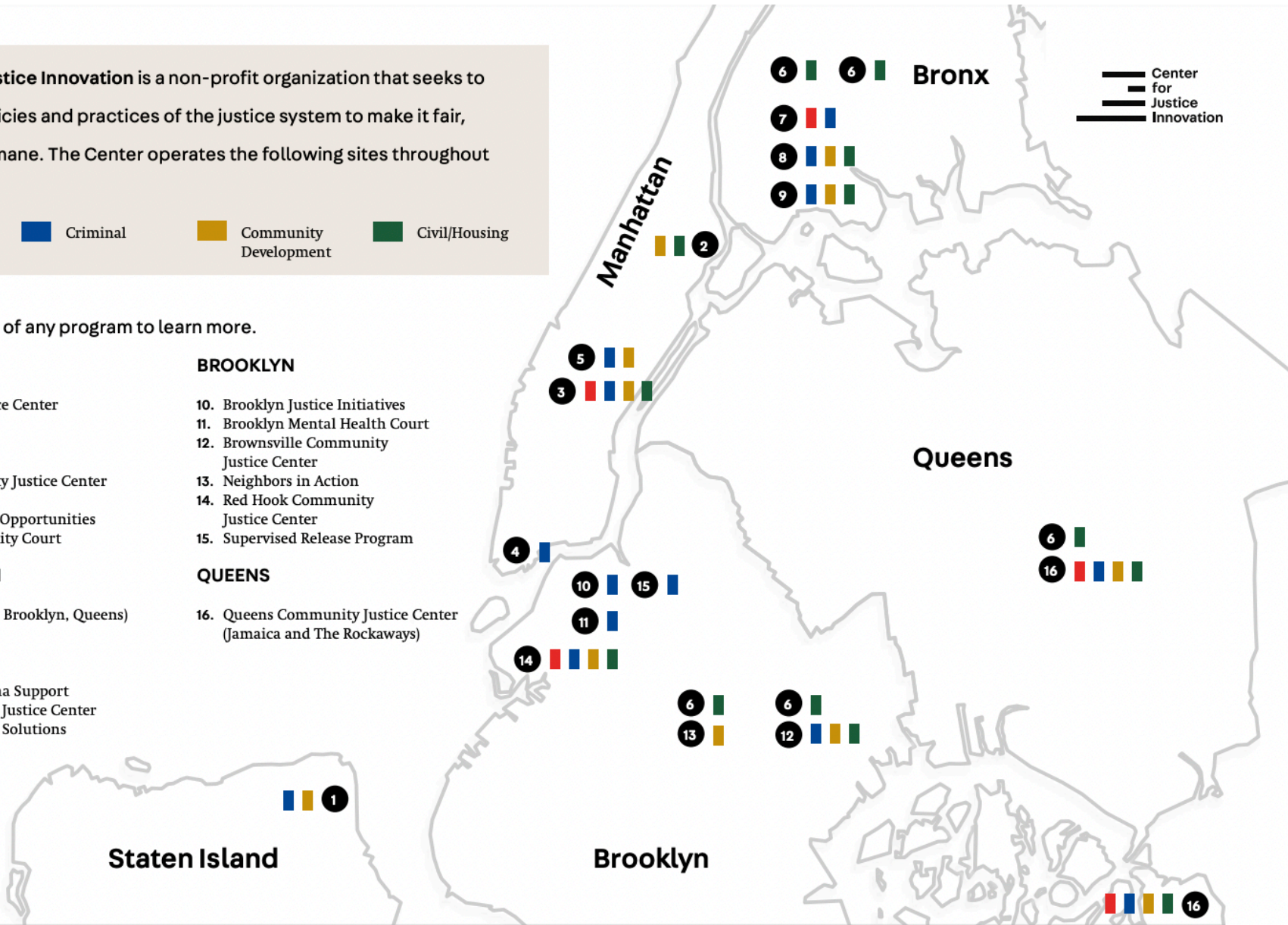
- 7. Bronx Child Trauma Support
- 8. Bronx Community Justice Center
- 9. Bronx Community Solutions

BROOKLYN

- 10. Brooklyn Justice Initiatives
- 11. Brooklyn Mental Health Court
- 12. Brownsville Community Justice Center
- 13. Neighbors in Action
- 14. Red Hook Community Justice Center
- 15. Supervised Release Program

QUEENS

- 16. Queens Community Justice Center (Jamaica and The Rockaways)



Citywide

- Access to Justice
- Alternatives to Incarceration
- Driver Accountability Program
- Gender and Family Justice
- Neighborhood Safety Initiatives
- Parent Support Program
- Project Reset
- Restorative Justice Practices
- RISE Project
- Strong Starts Court Initiative
- Youth Action Institute
- Youth Impact

For More Information
 Hailey Nolasco
 Senior Director of Government Relations
hulasco@innovatingjustice.org



520 Eighth Avenue
New York, NY 10018
p. 646.386.3100
f. 212.397.0985

Courtney Bryan, Chief Executive Officer

innovatingjustice.org

**Center for Justice Innovation
New York City Council
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
March 17, 2026**

Good morning Chair Abreu and esteemed members of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. My name is Amanda Berman, and I serve as Senior Director of Court Reform for the Center for Justice Innovation (the Center). Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

Safe streets are fundamental to public safety and community well-being across New York City. Traffic accidents are preventable, yet too many New Yorkers continue to experience serious injury and loss of life on our roads each year. Addressing this challenge requires more than enforcement alone—it requires solutions that change behavior, support accountability, and address the underlying factors that contribute to harmful conduct while minimizing unnecessary justice system involvement.

As New York City confronts significant budget gaps, strategic spending on programs that address the root causes of public safety issues can minimize costs later on. For the past three decades, the Center for Justice Innovation has worked to develop practical, evidence-based approaches that address the root causes of harm and strengthen long-term public safety. Across our programs, we work to reduce reliance on costly, punitive responses that often fail to prevent future harm, instead advancing interventions that promote responsibility, healing, and behavioral change. Our transportation-related initiatives reflect this mission by treating driving behavior as a serious public safety issue. Investing in prevention, accountability, and support systems will make streets safer for all New Yorkers and reduce the downstream costs of repeat system involvement.

Driver Accountability Program & Circles for Safe Streets

The Center for Justice Innovation’s Driver Accountability Program improves street safety by addressing dangerous driving behavior through education and restorative justice rather than relying solely on punitive legal responses. Operating at seven sites across all five boroughs, the program provides a meaningful alternative to fines, prosecution, or short-term incarceration for individuals charged with vehicular offenses such as reckless driving, failure to yield, leaving the scene of an accident, or impaired driving. Through facilitated group sessions, participants engage in structured self-reflection, learn about the real impacts of traffic violence, hear victim perspectives, and commit to concrete behavior changes that promote safer driving. In 2025 alone, more than 1,000 drivers completed the program citywide.¹ Independent evaluation has shown

¹ Center for Justice Innovation. (2026). Justice Center Application database. [Data file].

strong outcomes, including a 50% reduction in recidivism in Brooklyn and improved safety outcomes in multiple boroughs.²

City Council funding supports program operations, staffing, and multilingual access across criminal courts citywide, and the Center is seeking renewed funding to sustain these services while expanding capacity to meet growing demand. Requested funding will also support program enhancements, including expanded operations at the Midtown Community Justice Center, a new curriculum addressing documentation-related driving offenses, and pre-arraignment diversion partnerships that resolve cases earlier while conserving court resources.

In addition, funding will sustain and expand Circles for Safe Streets, an innovative restorative justice initiative that responds to serious traffic crashes involving severe injury or death. This program brings together drivers and victims or surviving family members in a structured process focused on accountability, healing, and repairing harm—filling a critical gap in traditional legal responses to traffic violence. Funding supports restorative justice facilitators, victim support services in partnership with Families for Safe Streets, interpretation services, case management, and program evaluation efforts.

Together, these investments strengthen New York City's Vision Zero goals by improving driver behavior, supporting victims of traffic violence, reducing repeat offenses, and promoting safer streets through evidence-based, community-centered approaches.

Bronx Community Solutions Driving While Intoxicated Treatment Initiative

Since 2010, Bronx Community Solutions (BCS) has assisted all individuals ordered by court mandate to complete a screening and assessment, DWI treatment, and enrollment in the Driver Accountability Program. This initiative began at the request of the judiciary, who noted that participants were having difficulty navigating the complicated network of private providers of these statutorily mandated services. While BCS never charges any cost to participants for services, private providers of DWI treatment regularly charge \$300 to \$400 to complete a screening and assessment. BCS has negotiated with several providers who have been willing to accept a reduced fee of \$150 in order to serve the volume of court-mandated cases that come from Bronx Criminal Court. Nonetheless, this remains a significant financial hurdle for participants and a barrier to entering the treatment process as soon as possible.

Bronx Community Solutions is seeking funding from City Council to cover the costs of DWI treatment and assessments for its participants, and to fund the staffing of a DWI treatment coordinator so that BCS may continue to rapidly connect mandated participants to treatment, resulting in safer streets for all New Yorkers. Over the last three years, BCS has assisted an annual average of 176 participants in the completion of their mandated DWI treatment. Since 2020, among the participants referred and followed by BCS through their treatment process, over 94% successfully completed treatment.³ Currently, as an unfunded initiative, BCS utilizes the time of several members of the organization's intake and compliance departments to complete this work. The DWI Treatment Initiative will allow for this work to be facilitated by a dedicated,

² Strong, H., Reynolds, D., & Sharlein, J. (2024, November 3). Steering Towards Safety: An Impact Evaluation of the Driver Accountability Program.

https://www.innovatingjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/DAP-eval_11072024.pdf

³ Center for Justice Innovation. (2026). Justice Center Application database. [Data file].

full-time treatment coordinator. If funded, this DWI treatment coordinator will be a bilingual Spanish and English speaker to best serve the community's demonstrated needs.

Conclusion

Together, these initiatives demonstrate how transportation policy, public safety, and the City's financial goals are deeply interconnected. By addressing dangerous driving behaviors, supporting individuals in accessing treatment, centering the needs of victims, and promoting restorative accountability, these programs prevent future harm while minimizing future expenses for the City. These programs advance the City's Vision Zero goals not only through enforcement, but through prevention, education, and meaningful intervention that reduces repeat offending and promotes lasting behavioral change.

Continued City Council investment will allow the Center for Justice Innovation to sustain and expand these proven approaches, ensuring that responses to traffic violence are effective, equitable, and rooted in long-term safety outcomes. By funding programs that address the causes of harmful behavior while minimizing the collateral consequences of traditional justice system responses, the Council can help build safer streets, healthier communities, and a more effective model of public safety for New York City.



520 Eighth Avenue
New York, NY 10018
p. 646.386.3100
f. 212.397.0985

Courtney Bryan, Chief Executive Officer

innovatingjustice.org

Center for Justice Innovation FY27 Proposals

- **#2156900 - Center for Justice Innovation General Funds - \$750,000**

Innovative Criminal Justice Programs (Renewal); Speaker's Initiative

Description: This is an application to support the continuation of the Center for Justice Innovation's innovative criminal justice responses, community-based public safety initiatives, and access to justice programs across all five boroughs in New York City. City Council's support allows us to serve tens of thousands of New Yorkers with mental health services, family development, youth empowerment, workforce development, and housing, legal, and employment resource services. Our goal continues to be improving safety, reducing incarceration, expanding access to community resources, and enhancing public trust in government to make New York City stronger, fairer, and safer for all. With expanded funding, the Center will be able to make deeper investments in housing justice: a key priority area that underpins our efforts at large to build community justice.

- **#2247172 - Driver Accountability Program - \$1,185,000**

Alternatives to Incarceration and Reentry Programs (Renewal)

Description: The Center for Justice Innovation's Driver Accountability Program has been proven to improve street safety by changing driver behavior, while minimizing harms perpetuated by the criminal justice system's historically punitive responses. It does so by offering a proportionate and meaningful alternative to fines, fees, traditional prosecution, or short-term incarceration for vehicular charges; and by utilizing principles of restorative justice to address the dangerous behaviors that are the primary cause of pedestrian fatalities. The program currently operates at seven sites in all five boroughs, with six of those sites receiving support from City Council. This application seeks funding to sustain those operations, as well as the operations of its more intensive version, Circles for Safe Streets, which brings together drivers and their victims for a process of accountability and healing in cases where traffic crashes have caused critical injury or death.

- **#2247103 - NYC Clean Up - \$75,000**

NYC Clean Up; Speaker's Initiative (Renewal)

Description: Bronx Community Solutions' (BCS) Community Service Initiative seeks to beautify the Bronx and develop healthy, engaging public spaces for its residents. BCS creates projects that target local needs and connect participants to resources in their community. BCS partners with the criminal court system, local volunteers, city agencies, and community-based organizations to conduct graffiti and street cleanup, park revitalization, community garden upkeep, art installations and more. Through BCS's Community Service Initiative, individuals with low-level criminal charges have an opportunity to reconnect with their community rather than serve jail time. Additionally, BCS empowers local residents and organizations to sustain their own projects by providing expertise, supplies, volunteers, and existing partnerships to support community-led projects. Continued City Council funding will support these community service projects, including special projects conducted with partner organizations throughout the Bronx.

- **#2247165 - Driving While Impaired - \$100,000**

Member Item; Bronx Delegation (New/Renewal)

Description: Since 2010, Bronx Community Solutions (BCS) has assisted all individuals ordered by court mandate to complete a screening and assessment, DWI treatment, and enrollment in the Driver Accountability Program. This initiative began at the request of the judiciary, who noted that participants were having difficulty navigating the complicated network of private providers of these statutorily mandated services. While BCS never charges any cost to participants for services, private providers of DWI treatment regularly charge \$300 to \$400 to complete a screening and assessment. BCS has negotiated with several providers who have been willing to accept a reduced fee of \$150 in order to serve the volume of court mandated cases that come from Bronx Criminal Court, but that still remains a significant financial hurdle for participants and a barrier to entering the treatment process as soon as possible, thus making Bronx streets safer. To eliminate this financial burden on participants and also expedite the treatment process, this application seeks funding to cover the costs of DWI treatment and assessments for BCS participants, and to fund the staffing of a DWI treatment coordinator so that BCS may continue to be relied on by the courts to do the necessary work of rapidly connecting mandated participants to treatment, resulting in safer streets for all New Yorkers.



DARCEL D. CLARK

THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
BRONX COUNTY

March 9, 2026

Speaker Julie Menin
New York City Council
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Dear Speaker Menin and Members of City Council:

On behalf of the Bronx District Attorney's Office, I am pleased to write this letter in support of key Center for Justice Innovation (formerly, Center for Court Innovation) FY27 City Council Applications. Funding will expand:

- pre-arraignment early diversion options;
- mental health supports;
- restorative justice programming;
- human trafficking survivor leadership initiatives at the intersection of intimate partner violence and gun violence; and
- innovative pilot programs that address pressing needs in communities within the Bronx.

These programs will enable the Bronx to move towards our shared vision of reducing unnecessary and harmful involvement in the legal system wherever possible and allow us to build public safety through sustainable community-driven solutions.

For the past several years, the City Council has supported the Bronx with **\$710,000** to invest in early system diversion, which includes **Project Reset**, the Center's citywide pre-arraignment diversion model and same day at arraignments programming that re-directs New Yorkers with misdemeanor arrests from the court system. Project Reset Bronx includes borough-wide restorative justice circles to aid in diversion. This has offered relief from the collateral consequence's participants might otherwise experience if arraigned for low-level crimes. We support the Center in continuing to partner with the Council to implement the next generation of early system diversions for the Bronx to continue to lead the City in scaled restorative justice-based interventions. In 2025, Bronx Assist was launched, a promising pre-arraignment diversion program for certain Desk Appearance Ticket (DAT) arrests which is being piloted in the 44th Precinct with support from a two-year federal grant. CJI has demonstrated a willingness to partner on this project and has shown a willingness to see it succeed.

Thanks to meaningful changes in the treatment of trafficking victims in the justice system, the Center's **Bronx Human Trafficking Intervention Court (HTIC)** referrals continue to decline. **Project Healing and Empowerment through Advocacy and Leadership (Project**

HEAL) is a survivor leadership and peer support initiative for human trafficking survivors. Additionally, we support the Center's RISE Project which is used in Family Court and provides community-based intimate partner violence prevention services in communities most impacted by gun violence.

Since 2010, **Bronx Community Solutions (BCS)** has assisted all individuals ordered by court mandate to complete a screening and assessment, DWI treatment, and enrollment in the **Driver Accountability Program**. This initiative began at the request of the judiciary, who noted that participants were having difficulty navigating the complicated network of private providers of these statutorily mandated services.

Finally, we support continuation of the Center's **Innovative Core Funding** which addresses the immediate needs of all borough residents by piloting novel and effective approaches to anti-gun violence, victim services, and mental health services with diversion.

The Center has a long and documented history of conducting original research and operating direct service programs in the Bronx. Their mission to promote equality, dignity, and respect in communities aligns with my Office's vision. Together we can reimagine a fairer and more holistic approach to justice. We can do this by reducing incarceration as well as by building substantial and meaningful community-based support. I encourage the City Council to consider funding each of the Center's programs which will ultimately enhance fairness, accountability, and safety for the people of the Bronx.

Sincerely,



Darcel Clark



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
RICHMOND COUNTY

MICHAEL E. MCMAHON
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

March 3, 2026

Speaker Julie Menin
New York City Council
City Hall
New York, New York 10007

Re: Support for Center for Justice Innovation Fiscal Year 2027 Initiatives

Dear Speaker Menin and Members of the New York City Council:

I am pleased to offer my strong support for the Center for Justice Innovation's Fiscal Year 2027 funding request to expand alternatives to incarceration, provide enhanced mental health supports, develop early diversion programming at the intersection of intimate partner violence and gun violence, strengthen restorative reentry options for individuals and their families, expand pre-court eviction prevention initiatives, and pilot innovative programs that address pressing community needs across New York City. These initiatives represent thoughtful, evidence-based approaches that reduce unnecessary and harmful involvement in the justice system while advancing public safety through sustainable, community-driven solutions.

The Center for Justice Innovation has a long and well-documented history of conducting original research and implementing direct service programs that promote equality, dignity, and respect in communities across New York City, including Staten Island. These values closely align with the vision of the Richmond County District Attorney's Office. My office has proudly partnered with the Center in the development of the Staten Island Community Justice Center, an initiative designed to reduce crime and incarceration, strengthen community trust in the justice system, and promote safer, more equitable neighborhoods through community-driven public safety strategies, youth opportunity, and economic mobility initiatives.

To maintain existing operations while expanding programming, Justice Center staff will dedicate time and expertise to developing new initiatives, including designing data collection and evaluation strategies to measure program effectiveness and ensure accountability. Through this partnership, we continue to reimagine a more holistic and equitable approach to justice—one that emphasizes prevention, diversion, and meaningful community-based support alongside traditional court responses. Investment in the initiatives outlined above will allow this work to continue and expand its impact in Staten Island and throughout the city.

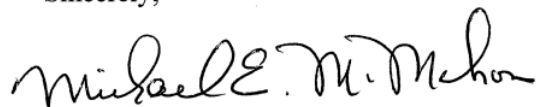
I also urge the Council to support **Youth Impact Staten Island**. Formerly known as Youth Court, Youth Impact is a dynamic youth leadership development program focused on peer mentorship, violence prevention, and restorative practices. The program works to keep young people engaged in school and out of the criminal legal system while fostering a youth-centered approach to community safety and healing. Through structured in-school partnerships and civic engagement opportunities, participants gain valuable skills in oral and written communication, facilitation, conflict resolution, and research. They also learn about the structure and impact of the justice system and receive training in community planning and organizing, empowering them to become leaders and advocates within their communities.

Continued investment is also critical to addressing the mental health needs of court-involved and at-risk youth. Individuals experiencing persistent and untreated mental illness must have access to culturally competent, trauma-informed mental health care. To address existing gaps in services for Staten Island youth, I urge the Council to continue and expand support for the Staten Island Justice Center's **Youth Wellness Initiative**. This program provides vital mental health services that promote healing and stability for young people involved in, or at risk of entering, the justice system. Importantly, the initiative also provides holistic support to families by offering resources and guidance to parents and caregivers of participating youth.

Finally, I support the continuation and expansion of the Center's **Driver Accountability Program**, which offers a constructive and restorative response to dangerous driving offenses. This program seeks to meaningfully change risky driving behavior among individuals charged with driving-related offenses in criminal court while promoting greater accountability and safer streets for all New Yorkers.

Thank you for your consideration of this request as the Council makes important funding decisions on behalf of the City of New York. If you have any questions, please contact Agency Chief Contracting Officer and Grants Coordinator Dr. Lisa Sloan at (718) 556-7089 or by email at Lisa.Sloan@rcda.nyc.gov.

Sincerely,


Michael E. McMahon
District Attorney



Renae Reynolds, Executive Director

Tri-State Transportation Campaign

Written Testimony: NYC Council Transportation & Infrastructure Committee

March 17th, 2026

My name is Renae Reynolds, I am the Executive Director of Tri-State Transportation Campaign (TSTC). TSTC is a non-profit advocacy and policy organization dedicated to fighting for improved mobility, accessibility, affordability, and sustainability in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. Thank you for the opportunity to provide a comment to the NYC Council Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Hearing on the Preliminary Budget for Fiscal Year 202, the Preliminary Capital Plan for 2027-2030, and the Fiscal Preliminary Mayor's Management Report.

TSTC is supportive of faster and more reliable buses encouraged by the MTA's coordination with NYC DOT to achieve faster, more frequent service. We agree on the need for more traffic enforcement to keep dedicated bus lanes clear in order for buses to stay on-time and reliable. We also echo MTA's sentiment about the importance of keeping transit affordable to all New Yorker's, and expanding access to the existing Fair Fares program. We are disheartened by the reductions to the program in the preliminary budget and urge the Mayor to restore this funding. We cannot lose momentum or pull back on the critical benefits that this program provides to working class people. While we support the efficiency brought on by the adoption of OMNY, we must express concerns with complete digitization of Student OMNY—maintaining physical OMNY cards is crucial to ensuring young people's ability to board transit without any hiccups. Consider the scenario of a student with low or no battery charge on their cell phones, or a lost cell phone: we do not want to see young people stranded due to any technological shortcomings. A physical OMNY card provides a critical redundancy in case of any unforeseen problems.

MTA acknowledged that current expenditures, \$19.5 million, on police presence in subways has contributed to a significant reduction in subway crime and improvements in ridership experience. However, they propose an increase of \$38.5 million more for FY27. We believe the additional funding should be used to restore the city's reduction to Fair Fares and complementary social service investments. We should provide more support for the unhoused individuals who seek refuge in the subway and those who may experience mental health challenges that can impact both the rider experience and perceptions of





safety. This would address the underlying problem without constantly relying on costly surges in police presence.

TSTC strongly supports the MTA's expansion efforts to better connect the city. Projects like the Inter-Borough Express, Penn Station Access, and the Second Avenue Subway are essential to delivering faster, more efficient mobility, and improved connectivity. We stand in support and solidarity with the MTA in urging an end to the federal withholding of critical resources for the purposes of political gamesmanship.

TSTC wants to reaffirm the City's ongoing efforts to achieve the legally mandated Streets Plan. LL 195 requires DOT to install 30 miles of bus lanes and 50 miles of protected bike lanes each year—since DOT has fallen short on delivering these legislatively mandated goals, we recommend creating a publicly accessible dashboard, to track progress and share important updates. We see an opportunity for increasing prioritization in one of New York's most marginalized communities: the Rockaway Peninsula. The Peninsula is home to nearly 125,000 residents in our most climate vulnerable coastal communities. It is beyond time for the Rockaways to be seen and receive equitable investment in streets redesign initiatives, fully connected bike and pedestrian networks, and better bus lanes for faster commutes. Currently the Rockaways is listed at the lowest priority level but opportunities abound to make a model of coastal living on New York's forgotten gem.

With regards to daylighting, TSTC supports daylighting intersections throughout the city and we want to ensure that a strategy for successful implementation is at the forefront. There should be an overarching goal to eventually attain a universal daylighting but one that is rooted in long term investments and strong enforcement. We seek transparency in the DOT's planning process and robust community engagement.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to the continued work ahead.





DISABLED IN ACTION OF METROPOLITAN NEW YORK
POST OFFICE BOX 1550
NEW YORK, NY 10159 TEL 646-504-4342
www.disabledinaction.org

DIA'S Testimony to the Transportation Committee re DOT, MTA, and TLC on 3-17-2026

I am Jean Ryan, president of Disabled In Action of Metropolitan NY, and I am testifying about issues facing the MTA, DOT, and TLC that affect people with disabilities. Of course there are many other issues that also affect us.

DIA wants the TLC to reinstate the Accessible Dispatch program with trained dispatchers so that people with disabilities, including people with speech differences, can call on the phone and get a person who understands our needs and can dispatch a taxi that comes to where we are anywhere in the City. The people who are there at this TLC program now are not able to get a vehicle to us and we get stranded at home or elsewhere. This is very urgent because every day that this program remains like it is now, is a day that people with disabilities are stranded. Taxis refuse to pick up wheelchair users who try to hail them.

We are asking the MTA to look into low floor coach-type express buses that have a ramp instead of a lift so that wheelchair users can reliably get onto and off the express bus and take it like anyone else does instead of being left at the curb or having to be removed from the bus by the NY Fire Department as often happens now. They say all their buses are accessible but in reality, the current buses are not accessible when it is a complicated system that drivers are unable to use reliably, especially on nights and weekends when there are many fill-in drivers. Nothing has changed much in 25 years! Wheelchair users and other people with mobility problems need access!

We are telling the council and DOT that we want outdoor dining to be 100% accessible to wheelchairs. It has been the requirement since at least 2020 but there seems to be zero enforcement of accessibility for outdoor dining. What good is a rule if it is not followed? We also want any outdoor restrooms to be fully ADA compliant so that we can use them, too. And lastly, we want the DOT to pick up the pace in making curb cuts at corners because there are so many bad or missing ones, including at and right around Union Square in Manhattan. Now it is dangerous to be there in a wheelchair and try to cross the street. We need high contrast domed ramps at every crossing, not fancy stones or cement that might be a slightly different color so that everyone can safely cross the street.

Thank you,

Jean Ryan
Pansies007@gmail.com
917-658-0760

From: [Downstate NY ADAPT](#)
To: [Testimony; District7](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Written Comments Filed In Response to the New York City Council's Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure's Request for Testimony in Response to the Public Hearing Held on Tuesday, March 17, 2026
Date: Friday, March 20, 2026 1:53:16 PM
Attachments: [3-20-2026 Final Comments to NYC Council Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.pdf](#)
[3-20-2026 Final Comments to NYC Council Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.pdf](#)

Dear Majority Leader Abreu:

Today, the following fourteen disability organizations:

- 1-Bronx Independent Living Services,
- 2-Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled,
- 3-Center for Independence of the Disabled, New York,
- 4-Civics League for Disability Rights,
- 5-Disabled In Action of Metropolitan New York,
- 6-Downstate New York ADAPT,
- 7-Greater New York Council of the Blind of American Council of the Blind of New York State,
- 8-Harlem Independent Living Center,
- 9-Metropolitan Asian Deaf Association,
- 10-National Federation of the Blind of New York, Vanguard Chapter of Greater New York,
- 11-New York DeafBlind Advocates,
- 12-New York Lawyers for the Public Interest,
- 13-One Heart, One Vision, and,
- 14-Staten Island Center for Independent Living

submitted the attached written comments, in PDF and Word format, in response to the New York City Council's Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure's request for testimony in response to the public hearing held on Tuesday, March 17th, 2026. We have filed these written comments, in PDF format, at <https://council.nyc.gov/testify/>

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to

contact us at telephone number 917-576-0225 or email us at dnyadapt@gmail.com.

Very respectfully,
Kathleen Collins

--

From your Downstate NY ADAPT Co-coordinators

Free Our People!

Visit our website at:

www.DNYADAPT.com

Bronx Independent Living Services • Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled • Center for Independence of the Disabled, New York • Civics League for Disability Rights • Disabled In Action of Metropolitan New York. • Downstate New York ADAPT • Greater New York Council of the Blind of the American Council of the Blind of New York State • Harlem Independent Living Center • Metropolitan Asian Deaf Association • National Federation of the Blind of New York, Vanguard Chapter of Greater New York • New York DeafBlind Advocates • New York Lawyers for the Public Interest • One Heart, One Vision • Staten Island Center for Independent Living

March 20, 2026

Majority Leader Shaun Abreu
Chair

New York City Council Committee On Transportation
And Infrastructure

Sent Online at <https://council.nyc.gov/testify/>

Emailed to: testimony@council.nyc.gov

Re: T2026-1361 New York City Council Budget and Oversight Hearings on The Preliminary Budget for Fiscal Year 2027 The Preliminary Capital Plan for Fiscal Years 2027-2030, and The Fiscal 2026 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report

Dear Majority Leader Abreu:

The undersigned disability organizations submit this testimony to the New York City Council Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

We address issues related to the following four agencies questioned by the New York City Council Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure:

1-Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA)/New York City Transit Authority (NYCTA).

2-New York City Department of Transportation (DOT),

3-Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC), and

4-New York City Department of Design and Construction (DDC).

1. MTA/New York City Transit

Access-A-Ride (AAR)

The City Council must take a particularly close look at AAR, since the City of New York funding now supports 80% of its cost. We urge the City Council to follow up on our concerns with additional oversight hearings and to work with us, the Administration and the MTA to improve service.

E-Hail Pilot Program

Those of us who are not fortunate to be a participant in the E-Hail Pilot Program are still required to request rides before 5 p.m. the day before an appointment. When will all AAR customers be included in the E-Hail Pilot Program? The E-Hail Pilot Program needs to be made available to all AAR users who want to use it because it gives us the ability to be spontaneous like everyone else. The restriction on the number of rides a person is allotted to take on the E-Hail Pilot Program needs to be eliminated.

We are glad to see that the MTA has increased the amount of the cost the MTA will cover for each trip on the E-Hail Pilot Program. However, it would be helpful if the MTA was to cover the total cost of these rides, less the fare everyone pays to ride the buses and subways (as the Memorandum of Understanding between the City of New York and the MTA requires), so that more of the City can be reached without the on-demand passenger having to pay significant out-of-pocket costs. We understand that the MTA faces budget constraints just like everyone else; however, the cost of placing more people on the E-Hail Pilot Program is minuscule in comparison to the City's and MTA's multibillion dollar budgets and has a profound beneficial impact on the lives of New Yorkers with disabilities.

Taxi Authorizations

Until the E-Hail Pilot Program is available to all AAR users, all AAR customers should be able to use taxi authorization between boroughs in the same way that AAR customers can use taxi authorization within a borough and to travel to a limited number of designated places such as the airports in New York City as well as Grand Central Terminal and Pennsylvania Station.

Safety of Access-A-Ride and Broker Service

With respect to safety, many AAR users face their safety being compromised daily. Access-A-Ride riders constantly experience drivers in both the broker service and the blue and white bus service making video calls on their phones, watching YouTube and TikTok as well as engaging with other social media such as Facebook, and Instagram, while on the road. The City Council must act now to stop this for the safety of passengers and the public.

So too, when we make our reservation for AAR and see that we are assigned a black car, we who use wheelchairs wonder whether the wheelchair vehicle will have a seat belt and shoulder belt. Additionally, we wonder if the driver will have the four wheelchair securement devices, and will the securement devices be operating properly, and will the driver know how to secure our wheelchairs, and will the driver know how to place the seat belt and shoulder belt on us? The MTA needs to ensure that all riders can be secured properly; it does not do this now.

New Yorkers who are blind, New Yorkers with low vision and New Yorkers with mobility disabilities wonder if the driver will come over to them and assist them into and out of the vehicle, which the drivers are required to do. This problem was experienced by many passengers with disabilities many times during this past winter since drivers did not want to leave their cars. Further, AAR passengers would show up on time and need assistance to get to the vehicle due to the weather, snow and ice and did not receive assistance and then treated as “no-shows” by AAR. Significantly, when these passengers called up AAR to explain what occurred, the response was sorry we cannot change the information. This is significant since if a passenger’s no-show trips are more than 30% of the passenger’s reserved trips, and there are more than 7 no-show trips within thirty days, the passenger’s service can be suspended by the MTA. See: [Access-A-Ride-No-Shows-and-Late-Cancellations](#).

Similarly, New Yorkers who are Deaf or have hearing loss find many times that AAR drivers, broker drivers, and bus drivers do not know how to communicate with them. Additionally, there are no real-time visual updates and a lack of American Sign Language interpreters’ support.

Thus, there needs to be better training of all drivers who provide services to the public since they work with people with various disabilities every day.

All riders using AAR wonder if we will be picked up on time and arrive at our destination on time. Too many riders using AAR are picked up hours after the designated time and too often riders are given inaccurate information as to when they will be picked up from operators at Access-A-Ride and from the MTA app.

Additionally, assuming that the MY MTA app is operating, which is a major assumption at times, riders who use the broker service must deal with drivers, vehicles, and license plates that do not match what is posted on the MY MTA app. Some drivers do not match the driver's license picture on the windshield. On some occasions passengers get different drivers and cars than what is listed in the app. While the MTA boasts about the success of the MY MTA app, they have not addressed the problems with it. Consumers need to know who their drivers are for their own safety.

Condition of Blue and White Buses

The general riding public would refuse to ride the blue and white buses (now sometimes known as blue and yellow buses) that are provided to New Yorkers with disabilities. With respect to the blue and white buses, these AAR vehicles are basically a truck chassis with terrible springs. We request that the City Council look at the vehicles that the MTA is purchasing to see how we can get better vehicles that ride smoothly. Presently, many AAR riders, who already have bad backs and necks, complain about their back and neck pain being exacerbated by having to ride in these very bumpy blue and white buses and those without bad backs are

concerned that they will acquire another disability, that is, back and neck injuries, by riding in these blue and white buses. The public would not put up with such bumpy rides that passengers with disabilities must experience daily on AAR buses. If anything, the rides for people with disabilities should be smoother not worse than what the public experiences on the buses presently operated by the MTA.

Inability To Communicate

Another issue is AAR drivers speak many languages which reflects the wonderful diversity of New Yorkers. However, this causes safety issues for many riders with disabilities. Significantly, the MTA requires its bus drivers and the engineers and conductors on its subways and railroads to be able to speak and understand English. In stark contrast, many of the MTA's broker service drivers do not know how to speak with their passengers even with respect to simple sentences such as "Where am I? What address are you going to? Am I there yet?" and "I need a seat belt and shoulder belt." This needs to be corrected. We, people with disabilities, need to receive services equal to that of the rest of the riding public who would be shocked if a bus driver told them he did not understand English.

Filing Complaints

Further, we ask, “When will AAR join the 21st century and coordinate with the Taxi and Limousine Commission concerning filing complaints?” Presently, the information you need to provide to 311 to make a complaint about an AAR trip is not provided to AAR customers. The two systems need to be connected and streamlined.

Call Out and Assist

The MTA needs to improve training of all AAR drivers, that is drivers of broker service vehicles and the blue and white buses, and the TLC needs to improve training of all taxicab drivers and for-hire vehicles (FHVs) drivers because these drivers are not providing call out and assist to passengers who are blind or have low vision on a consistent basis. Call out and assist is when the driver gets out to help a waiting passenger walk to their car or a paratransit bus since they cannot see the vehicle and the driver provides information to the passenger such as where is the vehicle going, when the vehicle has arrived at its destination and assists the passenger to the door of their destination as well as describes where the passenger is being dropped off. This is another example where people with disabilities’ safety is placed in jeopardy due to drivers not being able to communicate with their passengers.

Buses

Signage

With respect to the signs on buses that say “Wont you please give this seat to the elderly or disabled” or “If requested you must give this seat to the disabled” these signs do not seem to be very effective. The sticker over the seats in Washington, D.C. say, “PRIORITY SEATING Federal Law Requires That These Seats Be Available to Persons with Disabilities and to Seniors”. The language that the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) uses on its’ vehicles seems to be more affirmative and not an ask but a command: it tells people to avoid sitting in these seats and leave these seats empty. Similarly, accessible parking signs indicate to most drivers that they must keep the accessible parking space available for those who need it.

We recommend that when the New York City Transit Authority changes the signs on the buses as part of its scheduled maintenance, it replaces the old signs with new signs that have the same affirmative statements that the signs that are used in Washington, D.C. communicate to the public. Additionally, it would help if the announcements on trains and on buses remind people not to sit in the seats that are reserved for people with disabilities.

Better affirmative signage and announcements reminding New Yorkers to keep vacant seats reserved for passengers with disabilities are essential because many people have invisible or near-invisible disabilities that

affect their ability to stand or hold on to bus or subway straps/handrails for long periods of time. If the disability seating were always left vacant, people with disabilities would not have to worry about asking someone to move for them when it is not evident to the person already sitting that the person with a disability needs a place to sit.

Express Buses

On Monday, March 17, 2025, the Office of the Comptroller published a report on the MTA's express bus service. It exposed something our community has known for years: The MTA fails to keep its express buses accessible. The report highlighted extensive equipment and training problems that essentially shut out people with mobility disabilities from riding express buses. These buses provide a very important service between boroughs which is especially critical to people with disabilities because we do not have full access to the subway system and will not for several years.

Former Comptroller Lander's report made several recommendations. One additional suggestion we hope the City Council will advocate for is that the MTA provide a video for drivers that they can access on their cell phones to refresh their recollection on how to operate the lifts on express buses until the MTA purchases express buses with ramps. Similarly, broker service drivers under AAR should be able to access a video on their cell phones that shows how to fasten a wheelchair and how to assembly the seat belts and shoulder belts on passengers using wheelchairs.

2. New York City Department of Transportation

Condition of Sidewalks, Pedestrian Ramps, and Roadways

Crossing streets is hazardous to your health when you have a disability, since you are more likely to have to cross a street that has no Accessible Pedestrian Signal, see infra, than one that does have one. So too, some pedestrian curb ramps are very dangerous because they guide people with low vision or who are blind into traffic instead of a safe pathway to the other sidewalk.

Additionally, at times, New Yorkers with disabilities encounter sidewalks with no pedestrian curb ramps or pedestrian curb ramps which are very steep, have cracks and potholes, are uneven or guide you into traffic instead of a safe way to the other sidewalk. When a sidewalk has no pedestrian curb ramps available, very steep pedestrian curb ramps or broken pedestrian curb ramps, a person using a wheelchair can be completely stranded until some kind person helps them.

Additionally, the City needs to repair sidewalks where tree roots are pushing up the sidewalk because this is not only an unsafe obstacle for people with disabilities but also is a tripping hazard for everyone.

Bus Stops

Even in the 21st century, we still encounter bus stops that are not accessible; this is not acceptable and illegal. Further, even when the bus stop is accessible there may not be a bus shelter with chairs with backs. We need every bus stop to be accessible and all bus stops need to have accessible bus shelters that have space for wheelchair users and seating with backs for people to wait for buses. The need for all bus stops to be accessible and to have bus shelters with sufficient room to shelter both people who use wheelchairs and other mobility devices, as well as provide seating with backs for other passengers, is even more important now, as we saw just this winter, with the changes happening to the climate in New York City.

Additionally, we in the disability community are concerned that there is a push to have less bus stops and faster buses. Removing bus stops can result in eliminating a New Yorker with a disabilities ability to board a bus. A few blocks more to walk or wheel can result in no access to a bus. Forcing New Yorkers with disabilities and without disabilities such as very young and very old New Yorkers as well as New Yorkers with young children to go several blocks to get on a bus can mean the difference to boarding a bus or not. We strongly recommend that DOT provide more, not less bus service.

Another concern is the bus stop islands and bus bulbs the City is installing which can be difficult, hazardous, and in certain instances, impossible to access when you are blind or have low vision, or use a wheelchair, walker, or other mobility device. We strongly urge DOT to have discussions with us before it installs any additional bus stop islands and bus bulbs and not after mistakes are made and people are injured or killed.

Bus stop shelters, benches and their placement are the responsibility of the city's DOT. The City Council should use its oversight to delve more deeply into these concerns.

Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS)

Crossing streets is even more hazardous when you have low vision or are blind since you are more likely to have to cross a street that has no APS than one that does have an operational APS. Additionally, even when an APS exists, the volume of the APS needs to be loud enough to be heard over heavy New York traffic. If you cannot hear the APS signal, it is useless.

APS must work correctly-it is a matter of life and death. The APS the City installs should, among other things, clearly indicate which pedestrian crossing is served by each device as well as provide the name of the street that will be crossed in accessible formats such as verbally, Braille and raised print. So too, tactile maps of crosswalks also need to be provided.

In view of the fact that the City has been required for more than thirty years to have Accessible Pedestrian Signals and pedestrian curb ramps, its Streets Plan, due in fiscal year (FY) 2026, requirement that APS be installed at no fewer than 2,500 intersections over five (5) years, and pedestrian ramps be installed at no fewer than 3,000 street corners by FY 2031 is just a drop in the bucket and is not sufficient to improve safe travel for people with disabilities. [Committee Report, dated January 21, 2025, at p. 21](#). We are glad to see that the New York City Department of Transportation's updated plan reported that 716 APSs were installed, which exceeded DOT's benchmark of 500 APSs, however, we would like to see DOT keep up and exceed this pace in installing APSs. See, [NYC Streets Plan Update 2026](#) at p. 3.

Significantly, the New York City Department of Transportation's NYC Streets Plan Update 2026 does not give an update on accessibility with respect to anything other than APS and even with respect to APSs, there is no update in this report about the maintenance of APSs and the repairing of APS when they breakdown. This is quite telling since this report discusses bus stops and bus shelters but provides no information as to the accessibility of bus stops and bus shelters. It discusses bike lanes and provides a map concerning bike lanes but provides no additional information about APSs and pedestrian curb ramps.

Additionally, New Yorkers are finding trash cans are being illegally attached to the APS and this forces New Yorkers to have to reach over and at times, touch garbage to access the APS. This is a health concern that DOT needs to address immediately.

Further, DOT is not keeping track of when they receive a complaint that an APS is not working and when the repair is made to the broken APS. Moreover, there seems to be no record of how quickly the APS become inoperable after being installed. DOT claims that the APS are many times damaged from weather and cars. Accurate data needs to be collected and reported so we will be able to know how well APSs are working and making streets safer.

Bicycle Lanes, Bicycles, Electric Bicycles and Electric Scooters

Since we all need to share the limited space in New York City, all drivers of motorized vehicles, electric vehicles, and bicycles need to be made aware that they are subject to regulations that promote everyone's safety. Additionally, those regulations already on the legal books need to be enforced fairly and effectively.

We, the undersigned disability organizations, support the micro-mobility and delivery service industries. Additionally, our community includes members with respiratory issues, and thus, we support transportation alternatives that protect New York City's environment and reduce air pollution.

Significantly, however, the wider bicycle lanes are making it more difficult and treacherous for New Yorkers with disabilities to cross the street. Presently, bicycles, electric bicycles, and scooters are not required to have any insurance and do not have any sound on them to warn persons who have low vision or who are blind that a bicycle is near them. So too, many people have reported that all these bicyclists do not follow the traffic rules and regulations and are notorious for going through red traffic lights. Further, delivery personnel riding bicycles many times leave their bicycles anywhere and everywhere on the sidewalk and just make it difficult and hazardous to travel on even the sidewalks. Bicyclist ride bicycles for pleasure or for work for a few hours, however, in stark contrast we, people with disabilities, walk all places, all the time, and need the sidewalks and streets to be safe and free of obstacles, including bicycles and scooters. The City Council needs for the DOT to be more accountable and require DOT not just to hold meetings with disability organizations but actually consider our recommendations.

3. Taxi and Limousine Commission

With respect to the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission again, we do not know when taxis and FHV's will help us into and out of the vehicle. Riders who use wheelchairs do not know if they will be provided with a seat belt, shoulder belt and four-point lockdowns.

The Taxi and Limousine has allowed several Revel FHVs that are not wheelchair accessible on the roadways of New York City and advocates for the use of electric vehicles that at this time are not wheelchair accessible, and probably will never become wheelchair accessible, without a demand being made that they be accessible. We request the City Council to pass a law that mandates that the New York City Taxi Limousine Commission require that all electric FHVs be wheelchair accessible. If such a law was enacted, then manufacturers would make electric FHVs wheelchair accessible. Our tax dollars should not be used to deliberately exclude us, the largest voting minority in New York City, from access to all modes of transportation.

We recommend that the City Council require that the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission require that all new FHVs be wheelchair accessible vehicles until passengers who use wheelchairs have 100% access to all New York City's FHVs and not only 50% of the active medallion taxicabs. When 100% of all New York City FHVs are wheelchair accessible, everyone who needs a wheelchair accessible FHV will be guaranteed to get a wheelchair accessible FHV and this will allow all New Yorkers to travel throughout the five boroughs in New York City with ease.

Accessible Dispatch

We are sad that the Taxi and Limousine Commission has replaced the working Accessible Dispatch Program with a program that is not working. The TLC's new program does not have a telephone number where a person can immediately speak to a live customer representative trained in dealing with various disabilities who can communicate with the customer and is able to be called back if something goes wrong in getting the taxicab. Many people in the disability community strongly recommended that the TLC keep this in any system replacing Accessible Dispatch and yet, TLC choose to totally ignore our recommendation.

What is the point of having more accessible taxicabs if we cannot get a ride in the first place?

Many times, Accessible Dispatch was called when a person was under stress due to an AAR vehicle or FHV not showing up and Accessible Dispatch was the only lifeline left for a person with a disability to get to an appointment or home. Now there is no functioning lifeline. The prior system made it easy for a person to access a live person well-trained in the needs of people with disabilities. The prior Accessible Dispatch Program had a dedicated provider that any person could contact to get a taxicab to come to them. You did not even have to remember the number for Accessible Dispatch since you could call 311 and they would connect you to Accessible Dispatch. In sum, we need to reestablish the prior system.

It did not, and still does not, make sense to replace something that is not broken, that is Accessible Dispatch, merely to purportedly save a few dollars which in the end now will probably cost more to get a system as good as we already had. This seems to not make sense. If the Taxi and Limousine Commission needs more money to fund the conversion of taxis into wheelchair accessible vehicles, we respectfully submit that the City Council should provide more funds for these conversions. So too, the City Council should fully fund the Accessible Dispatch program.

4. Department of Design and Construction

With respect to the New York City Department of Design and Construction, the Department of Design and Construction must ensure that the capital projects it oversees are accessible to people with disabilities. This is vital. Thus, the Department of Design and Construction needs to make sure that all the infrastructure and public building projects are made accessible to people with all types of disabilities. The Department of Design and Construction needs to be required to confer with cross-sectional grassroots disability advocacy organizations, such as the undersigned organizations, before and not after it does its work and thus, avoid making costly mistakes, such as the Hunters Point Library fiasco.

In sum, we ask that the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure provide sufficient funding to address all the issues we raised and continue to raise in our testimony since a city that is safer and accessible to people with disabilities results in a better city for all New Yorkers.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment today since equal access to all New York City's services, activities, programs and facilities is important to all New Yorkers. If you would like additional information or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned organizations.

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Thank you for your continued work on behalf of all of us.

Sincerely,

Bronx Independent Living Services

Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled

Center for Independence of the Disabled, New York

Civics League for Disability Rights

Disabled In Action of Metropolitan New York

Downstate New York ADAPT

**Greater New York Council of the Blind of
American Council of the Blind of New York State**

Harlem Independent Living Center

Metropolitan Asian Deaf Association

**National Federation of the Blind of New York,
Vanguard Chapter of Greater New York**

New York DeafBlind Advocates

New York Lawyers for the Public Interest

One Heart, One Vision

Staten Island Center for Independent Living

*** Bronx Independent Living Services**

Bronx Independent Living Services' (BILS), a non-profit, community-based organization dedicated to empowering all people with disabilities, philosophy is based on the belief that people with disabilities can and should make their own decisions and take control of the issues that affect their lives. From helping to devise simple, practical aids for everyday living to assistance in negotiating the maze of bureaucracy, BILS strives to make individuals aware of the range of opportunities and programs available to them and to which they are entitled. Since BILS's beginning in 1983, BILS has assisted people with disabilities by demonstrating ways of breaking down barriers.

Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled

The Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled (BCID), founded in 1956, became an independent living center in 1981. We are disability-led and provide free services to and advocate for the civil rights of disabled people in Brooklyn and beyond.

Center for Independence of the Disabled, New York

As an Independent Living Center, the Center for Independence of the Disabled, New York (CIDNY) has provided critical services to people with disabilities in New York City since its founding in 1978. By providing services that address the social determinants of physical health, mental health, education, employment, housing, and transportation, as well as providing support for the development of independent living skills, CIDNY helps people with disabilities navigate the ever-changing service system, and enables them to live independent, fully integrated lives in the community.

Civics League for Disability Rights

The Civics League for Disability Rights is a group for New Yorkers with disabilities and their friends who advocate for themselves and their communities and are constantly educating themselves to do so more effectively.

Disabled In Action of Metropolitan New York

Disabled In Action of Metropolitan New York, Inc. ("DIA") is a fifty-six (56) year old, 501(c) (3), grassroots, civil rights organization run by and for people with disabilities. DIA's mission is to eliminate discrimination for people with all kinds of disabilities.

Downstate New York ADAPT

Downstate New York ADAPT (DNY ADAPT), a chapter of National ADAPT, national grassroots, non-hierarchical community of people with all types of disabilities advocating for the civil rights of people with disabilities, including, but not limited to, the right to live and fully participate in the larger community. Downstate New York ADAPT covers the five counties in New York City, the two counties on Long Island as well as Westchester, Dutchess, Orange, Rockland, Putnam, Ulster and Sullivan counties in New York State.

Greater New York Council of the Blind, a chapter of the American Council of the Blind of New York State

The Greater New York Council of the Blind (GNYCB) is a chapter of the American Council of the Blind of New York State (ACBNY) which is a nationwide member - driven advocacy organization that strives to increase the security, independence, economic opportunity, and quality of life for people who are blind and experiencing vision loss.

Harlem Independent Living Center

The Harlem Independent Living Center (HILC), incorporated on May 31st, 1990, to address the lack of access to independent living services by people with disabilities in Harlem and surrounding areas, is a disability-focused organization that advocates for community change and empowers people to be independent. Harlem Independent Living Center's objective is to provide an array of independent living services to persons with disabilities to increase their ability to function independently within their community. The Center is a community-based, non-residential, non-medical, consumer-controlled organization that provides a "peer" approach to services, i.e., a place where people with disabilities frequently assist their peers.

Metropolitan Asian Deaf Association

The Metropolitan Asian Deaf Association, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, founded in 2002, is an advocacy organization which works to improve the lives of Deaf Asian New York City residents by increasing and improving their self-awareness and self-esteem as well as by advocating for meaningful systemic changes to improve the lives of Deaf Asian New Yorkers in New York City.

National Federation of the Blind of New York, Vanguard Chapter of Greater New York

The National Federation of the Blind of New York's Vanguard Chapter of Greater New York believes in the full capacity of blind people and believes that blind people have the power, influence, diversity, and determination to help transform dreams into reality.

New York DeafBlind Advocates

New York DeafBlind Advocates is a group of New Yorkers living with deaf blindness seeking the creation of a funded statewide co-navigator program, and promotes greater awareness of DeafBlind concerns, issues and our culture.

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New York Lawyers for the Public Interest

New York Lawyers for the Public Interest (NYLPI), for 50 years, has been a leading civil rights advocate for New Yorkers marginalized by race, poverty, disability, and immigration status. Through our community lawyering model, we bridge the gap between traditional civil legal services and civil rights, building strength and capacity for both individual solutions and long-term impact. NYLPI's work integrates the power of individual representation, impact litigation, and comprehensive organizing and policy campaigns. Guided by the priorities of our communities, NYLPI strives to achieve equality of opportunity and self-determination for people with disabilities, create equal access to health care, ensure immigrant opportunity, strengthen local nonprofits, and secure environmental justice for low-income communities of color. NYLPI's Disability Justice Program works to advance the civil rights of New Yorkers with disabilities. In the past several years alone, NYLPI disability advocates have represented thousands of individuals and won campaigns improving the lives of hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers.

One Heart, One Vision

One Heart, One Vision is a 501(c) (3), grassroots, nonprofit, charitable organization that provides services to disabled and blind women in underserved communities and is engaged in advocacy.

Staten Island Center for Independent Living

Staten Island Center for Independent Living's (SICIL) mission is to provide individuals with disabilities with the information, life skills training, and facilitative assistance which will result in independence and integration in their own community. SICIL is committed to providing the support, information, and resources necessary for people with disabilities to reach their full potential.

**Testimony by
Christopher Schuyler, Managing Attorney
Disability Justice Program, New York Lawyers for the Public Interest
To New York City Council, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
Regarding the Preliminary Budget for Fiscal Year 2027
March 17, 2026**

After more than one year in power, the federal administration continues to create unprecedented threats to the rule of law and to New Yorkers' freedoms, civil rights, access to public services, and access to a healthy environment. New York City legislators must continue to leverage the substantial power of local government to uphold and protect our laws and rights, and to make the major investments needed to protect and strengthen infrastructure, public institutions, and the renewable energy economy.

My name is Christopher Schuyler, and I am an attorney in the Disability Justice Program at New York Lawyers for the Public Interest (NYLPI). Thank you, Chair Abreu and Committee Members, for the opportunity to testify.

Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA)

The City contributes enormous funding to the MTA, and as such, is entitled to demand better, more accessible services for all New Yorkers, and particularly for people with disabilities. During the City's 2025 fiscal year, it contributed \$1.4 billion in operating subsidies to the MTA. Additionally, the City will contribute \$3 billion to the 2025-2029 Capital Plan. Such significant financial investment gives the City a say in how its money is spent.

Access-A-Ride (AAR)

The City's significant financial contributions to the MTA are perhaps most evident with respect to AAR, for which the City contributes 80% of the funding needed to run the paratransit service. In recognition of that overwhelming financial stake, the City owes it to AAR customers – New Yorkers with the most severe disabilities – to ensure that the MTA provides the best, most cost-efficient paratransit service possible.

As a starting point, in acknowledgment of MTA Chair Lieber's concerns about the rising costs of AAR, and his indication that the MTA intends to demand the City pay an even larger share, it's important to note that the growing AAR ridership numbers are in part due to the MTA's historical deprioritization of subway accessibility projects. If the

subway were more accessible – it's currently only 30% stair-free accessible – a large percentage of AAR users could use the subway rather than AAR. The MTA has itself to blame for delaying subway accessibility improvements which will reduce reliance on AAR.

Further, it bears mentioning that AAR is not a premium service that the MTA offers out of the goodness of its heart. Rather, the MTA is required by law to provide paratransit services that are comparable to the MTA's subway and bus services.

Irrespective of the outcome of the upcoming negotiation between the MTA and the City to determine each entities' share of the AAR costs, the MTA must be a good steward of taxpayer money by exhausting all possibilities to reduce AAR costs – particularly if those cost-saving options also improve service for AAR customers. NYLPI has long championed two policy changes which promise to accomplish both goals: expand the on-demand pilot and close assessment centers.

For the select few AAR riders – fewer than 4,000 of the total 190,000 AAR users – who are part of the on-demand pilot, it has been called a life-changing program. Those users no longer need to schedule AAR rides at least 24 hours in advance. Instead, they can travel just like any MTA customer without disabilities: spontaneously and without exhaustive planning. In other words, they have equal access to all the city has to offer. Given that the Americans with Disabilities Act passed more than 35 years ago – and New York City's Human Rights Law passed well before that – this really shouldn't be such a novel idea. And more than just being an equitable service, an on-demand trip actually costs the MTA more than 50% less than a traditional AAR trip. The Council must demand that the MTA finally expand the pilot to all AAR users, and eliminate all service rationing.

We also call on the MTA to end its policy of requiring AAR applicants to travel to assessment centers to prove their eligibility for the service. The MTA would enjoy cost-savings from no longer operating their five assessment centers around the city, and from no longer covering the costs of transporting AAR applicants to and from the assessment centers. Instead of requiring AAR applicants to endure this onerous and unnecessary exercise, the MTA should instead accept medical provider documentation – just as paratransit providers around New York State already do. In fact, the MTA used to do it this way too. We call on the Council to push for the closure of AAR assessment centers.

Subways

Due to a 2020 settlement agreement, the MTA now has 30 years to make the subway system 95% stair-free accessible. While it's encouraging that the MTA is finally on this schedule – albeit not one of their choosing – the MTA must do more than simply make stations stair-free accessible. The settlement agreement does not require the MTA to

address other accessibility problems, such as dangerous gaps between platforms and trains, failure throughout the system to ensure ride-related communication necessary to provide equal access for riders who are deaf and hard-of-hearing, or a litany of other accessibility barriers.

Additionally, during the hearing, Chair Lieber promised to install platform edge barriers in 200 stations by the end of the calendar year, but would not commit to continuing installation station-wide after this year, alluding to future budgeting challenges.

Finally, the MTA is testing new fare gates, with plans to eventually install them throughout the system. Earlier this year, the New York Times reported about malfunctioning fare gates closing on various users, risking injury. We urge the Council to hold the MTA accountable, including by remedying the issue and releasing a public statement stating that it has been resolved.

In sum, we urge the Committee to exercise oversight to ensure that the MTA provides a fully accessible subway system, not just a stair-free accessible one, and that it addresses each of the accessibility and safety issues described above.

Buses

Buses are integral to the disability community because they are ostensibly accessible, although as acknowledged by Council Member Brooks-Powers during the hearing, there remain training issues with operators not knowing how to operate lifts or secure wheelchairs. Chair Lieber responded that the fix is with continued driver training; the Council must therefore ensure that the MTA follows through with training its drivers to appropriately serve riders with disabilities.

Further, Chair Lieber remarked that the free bus pilot was “not an unqualified success” because rather than inviting new riders to the bus, it pulled existing riders away from paid bus lines. A clear remedy for that “issue” is – as championed by Mayor Mamdani – free buses citywide. And while we support the Administration’s widely-touted goal, we emphasize that if buses are made free citywide, so too must AAR. And the MTA recognized very this connection when, during the free bus pilot, it provided free AAR for trips originating near the free bus line.

Finally, as the MTA, in coordination with the City Department of Transportation (DOT), endeavors to speed up its buses, the needs of people with disabilities must be factored in. While there are many ways to hasten buses, the MTA and DOT cannot be permitted to remove bus stops. Doing so will negatively impact bus travel for people with disabilities, forcing them to travel further to stops and often across additional lanes of dangerous traffic. Instead, the MTA – and its partner, DOT – must focus on methods such as dedicated bus lanes, transit signal priority at intersections, and accessible bus-loading platforms, to encourage speedier service.

Congestion Pricing

NYLPI long supported the passage of the congestion pricing program, which has led to cleaner air for New Yorkers, and has funded transit accessibility improvements to benefit the disability community. Disability advocates, however, continue to push for improvements to the disability exemption to ensure the broadest possible coverage. People with disabilities should be among the last people required to pay the toll, as most are unable to use the inaccessible subway system and thus are forced to use road transportation options such as AAR and privately-owned vehicles.

To improve the disability exemption, NYLPI and other advocates have made various recommendations to the MTA, including: 1) an app-based tracking program to travel with the person with disabilities, rather than requiring the person with disabilities to register a single vehicle to receive the exemption, thereby acknowledging that many people with disabilities travel in multiple vehicles, not just one, and 2) a remote application process, rather than needlessly burdening people with disabilities with traveling to in-person assessments.

Congestion pricing, more than a year after its implementation, is a boon to the New York City region. The Committee, however, must ensure that New Yorkers with disabilities – who have long been shut out of the subway system due to decades of delays on accessibility improvements – must not now be required to pay the MTA's toll.

Additional Fiscal Savings for the MTA

As the MTA seeks funding to implement its subway improvement plans, it continues to waste money in litigation fees, paying high-priced lawyers to engage in stall tactics which ultimately just delay making desperately-needed accessibility improvements. We encourage the Committee to call on the MTA to settle its various outstanding anti-discrimination lawsuits. Doing so will ensure that the MTA actually funnels its money into making the system accessible.

Fair Fares

We commend the Council for expanding the Fair Fares eligibility levels to 145% of the federal poverty line in 2024. We, however, urge the Council to continue expansion to New Yorkers with incomes up to 200% of the federal poverty line, which will make over 415,000 more low-income New Yorkers eligible to receive half-price mass transit rides.

Additionally, while the Fair Fares program was introduced back in 2019, more than half of eligible New Yorkers are still not enrolled in the program. This is especially true for AAR users. We urge the Council to mandate the implementation of an extensive advertising campaign – particularly targeted at AAR users – to ensure that eligible New Yorkers are aware of the Fair Fares benefits and how to opt into them. Additionally,

people who contact the MTA and the City Human Resources Administration should be promptly screened for Fair Fares eligibility.

Notably, the Fair Fares program – which is administered by the City, not the MTA – serves at best as a bandage over the MTA’s discriminatory practice of excluding AAR users from the discount programs available to subway and bus riders. Subway and bus riders who have disabilities or are senior citizens have available to them a half-price Reduced-Fare OMNY card. They – and all other subway and bus riders – also enjoy fare-capping benefits under the OMNY program: namely, once having paid for 12 rides in a 7-day period, any additional rides are free. AAR users are also excluded from OMNY fare-capping benefits.

The City contributes significant funding to the MTA, and is entitled to make demands on the MTA. We, therefore, urge the Council to exercise oversight and compel the MTA to include AAR users in the same discount programs available to all other mass transit riders.

Department of Transportation (DOT)

During the hearing, several times, Chair Abreu asked DOT to commit to meeting several Streets Plan benchmarks. DOT, each time, refused to commit, and even refused to accept the Committee’s assistance in seeking increased DOT funding to help it meet its benchmark. We urge the Council to hold DOT accountable to its legal requirements.

The first Streets Plan set ambitious benchmarks pertaining to expansion of bus and bike lanes, intersection redesigns, and public space expansions, among other improvements. While the first Streets Plan met certain of its goals, it also fell far short in other areas.

Protected Bus Lanes and Bus Stops

As referenced earlier, buses – which are ostensibly accessible – are of particular importance to New Yorkers with disabilities. As such, the disability community stands to gain improved access to the city if DOT meets its Streets Plan requirements for improved bus service.

The Streets Plan promises certain bus service improvements, including adding 30 miles per year of protected bus lanes and upgrading bus stops with seating and real-time screens displaying bus arrival times. The City has failed to meet its legally required benchmarks on each of these goals every year of the Streets Plan. Fortunately, the new Administration has made bus service improvements a leading issue to improve quality of life for all New Yorkers. We trust this will mean that the Administration will address with the Streets Plan, and we further trust that we can count on the Council to support these efforts.

Intersection Redesign

We commend the City for exceeding its benchmarks for intersection redesign, which includes installing daylighting measures to reduce traffic-related injuries. Daylighting is a traffic safety practice that removes parking spots and visual obstructions near intersections, significantly improving visibility for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists. Notwithstanding the City's progress in this area, many New Yorkers are still injured or killed in traffic-related incidents. This problem particularly affects people who use wheelchairs and other mobility devices, as they sit at a lower, more difficult sight line for drivers, and are thus at a higher risk of being hit. Further, as this Committee's report produced in accompaniment with the March 3, 2026 oversight hearing acknowledged, in 2024, 92% of pedestrians killed in traffic-related incidents were killed at intersections without any daylighting measures at all.

While daylighting measures must be implemented at every intersection in the city, we advise the City to avoid using large cement blocks, large planters, and other such large objects which can actually impede driver visibility of individuals using wheelchairs and other mobility devices. That notwithstanding, wherever cement blocks and other objects are used, the City must ensure that these barriers do not block access to pedestrian ramps and intersections for individuals using mobility devices.

Better yet, the City should use daylighting measures which do not obstruct visibility, including curb extensions, stanchions, and other measures. For these reasons, we strongly support Council Member Hanif's T2026-1335, which will require curb extensions to be installed at least five intersections in each borough per year – although we would ask that the Council take a more aggressive approach with respect to this literally life-or-death issue and at least increase the number of intersections to be retrofitted to 20 per borough per year.

Additionally, the City must respond to pedestrian complaints about accessibility violations in a timely manner. In 2024, New York Lawyers for the Public Interest complained about the placement of a cement block at the corner of 7th Ave and 34th Street that obstructed a pedestrian ramp. Because of the problematic placement, people with disabilities were forced into the street – into on-coming traffic – in order to get around the block. The City took almost six months to re-position the block.

To that end, while we support daylighting, all daylighting barriers must comply with the ADA and be regularly inspected to ensure that people with disabilities have full and equal access to streets. It is our belief that DOT does not have any official guidelines on placing cement blocks and other barriers. Without proper guidance and oversight, more and more physical barriers used for daylighting in the future may impede access to streets. We request that the Council instruct DOT to undertake a survey of every barrier placed, move the problematic ones, and report about this endeavor to the public.

Pedestrian Space

We commend the Streets Plan for its commitment to creating one million square feet of pedestrian space within the Streets Plan's first two years, and as we learned from DOT during the Streets Plan oversight hearing earlier this month, the agency continued to create approximately half a million square feet of pedestrian space per year since then. The new Streets Plan must similarly prioritize the creation of pedestrian space, which is why we support Council Member Restler's T2026-1338, which will include a requirement in the new Streets Plan to create one million square feet of pedestrian space for each year of the Streets Plan, prioritizing the areas around bus stops and subway stations with the highest rates of pedestrian traffic in the city. Again, however, we would ask that the Council consider a more aggressive approach and mandate the creation of two million square feet of pedestrian space for each year of the Streets Plan.

We also ask that the Council exercise oversight to prevent the removal of pedestrian spaces. One example of such an effort to remove pedestrian spaces is the recent reintroduction of car traffic in Silver Lake Park on Staten Island. We urge the Council to protect and maintain pedestrian spaces around the city.

Further, as sidewalks are also considered pedestrian spaces under the Streets Plan, we encourage the Council to support DOT's Pedestrian Mobility Plan, which provides detailed guidance on clear path requirements on sidewalks around the city, starting from a minimum of four feet of clear path sidewalk access to fifteen feet in the city's busiest corridors. For this reason, we express concern about Speaker Menin's T2026-1336, which allows sidewalk cafes to provide no more than eight feet of clear path, or 50 percent of the width of the sidewalk, whichever is greater. Such a bill will reduce the clear path requirements and will result in people with disabilities – as well as those with strollers, luggage, etc. – experiencing greater difficulty navigating the city's sidewalks.

Finally, we commend the Council for passing the original Streets Plan law that will require DOT, in the new Streets Plan, to add protected bus lanes on all bus routes, implement bus stop upgrades at all bus stops, and install pedestrian ramps at no fewer than 3,000 intersection corners.

Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC)

Similar to buses, for-hire vehicles (FHVs) are especially important to the disability community due to the inaccessibility of the subway system. We encourage the Council to provide support to, and exercise oversight over, the TLC to provide equitable service for the disability community as follows:

- Impel the MTA to extend the AAR on-demand program to all AAR users. As discussed above, AAR on-demand trips using accessible FHVs cost up to 50% less than traditional AAR paratransit trips;

- Encourage the TLC to mandate fair pay for TLC drivers completing AAR broker trips;
- Urge the MTA to improve the congestion pricing disability exemption by permitting – as described above – exemption holders to be tracked through their personal devices, allowing the exemption to be applied to FHV trips. People with disabilities have long been shut out of the subway system, and should not now be expected to pay the MTA’s toll when they, out of necessity, use FHV’s.
- Disaggregate wheelchair-accessible vehicle (WAV) response time data, to allow the study of response times by community districts, neighborhoods, and zip codes, rather than continue to merely aggregate citywide. NYLPI recently released a report on WAV availability in the city and statewide, and determined that, while the problem is even more dire upstate, even within certain outlying areas of the city, there are disparities in WAV request response times. Disaggregation of the data will allow TLC to identify and address disparities affecting neighborhoods throughout the city.
- Promote the transition to zero-emission accessible FHV’s. In recent years, TLC implemented the Green Rides Initiative, which demands that all FHV trips will soon use vehicles that are either zero-emission or accessible. We call for the TLC to adjust the program to demand vehicles that are both zero-emission and accessible; it’s not an either/or, it’s a both/and. We acknowledge that such models are only just entering the market, and encourage TLC to prove their marketability to manufacturers by testing and promptly approving these vehicles as they become available. Further, to promote purchase of zero-emission WAV FHV’s, TLC must identify subsidy programs, including the proposed assistance described in S5552A/A6635A, or alter the Taxi Improvement Fund to provide larger payments to drivers seeking to purchase accessible zero-emission FHV’s.

NYC Ferry

Members of the disability community have reported that NYC Ferry suffers from various accessibility issues, including lack of signage, particularly important for those who are deaf and hearing impaired, as well as a lack of clear and accessible paths from street to landing. The Council must ensure that NYC Ferry funding be used to abate such denials of access to people with disabilities.

Snow Removal

This winter has produced several significant snowfalls, and people with disabilities were acutely impacted by the City’s struggles to remove the snow. While New Yorkers without disabilities were able to – by and large – navigate the uncleared sidewalks, cross-walks, and bus stops, New Yorkers with disabilities were relegated to their homes for far too long. The City needs to do better for its residents with disabilities.

First, we commend the Mayor for adding \$100 million in funding for snow removal to his preliminary budget. That signals that the Administration is taking the problem seriously. Now, we urge the Council to exercise oversight to ensure that the City – and its patchwork of agencies responsible for snow removal – timely clear snow and ice. We acknowledge that this issue only in part falls within the purview of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, including, significantly, snow removal around bus stops and subway stations, but urge the members to impel their colleagues throughout the Council to contribute to the effort. NYLPI offers the following recommendations:

- Ensure that DOT and its contractor, JCDecaux, promptly remove snow around bus stops;
- Ensure that the MTA, likewise, removes snow near subway entrances;
- Encourage the MTA to review challenges reported by AAR customers with pick-up/drop-offs as a result of uncleared snow, and consider ways to resolve these challenges;
- Consider legislative solutions to incentivize timely snow removal by property owners, including increased fines for large buildings and businesses;
- Improve coordination between City agencies to ensure that snow is removed from all sidewalks, irrespective of which government agency is primarily responsible for any given stretch of sidewalk;
- Mobilize and encourage constituents to participate in snow removal as emergency paid laborers;
- Improve reporting and accountability, including requiring City Department of Sanitation to report and rate snow removal efforts by district, allowing the City to identify underserved areas; and
- Ensure that the disability community is included in City planning and strategy meetings to address snow removal.

New York City's FY 2027 Preliminary Budget

In recent years, the Council has played a critical role in defending vital City services, investments, and infrastructure from budget cuts and flatlining. We appreciate the Mamdani Administration's transparency about the major fiscal challenges facing New York City. We urge both local and state lawmakers to pass and implement policies that advance social equality, public health, and sustainability while creating revenue and savings for New York City.

Immigrant Health Initiative

We ask the Council to continue and enhance support for the Immigrant Health Initiative, which continues to save lives and improve health across our city. This program supports more than 20 nonprofits, including NYLPI, and is aimed at improving the health and well-being of New Yorkers and their families through direct legal representation, litigation, community education, strategic partnerships with public

hospitals, and non-legal advocacy. Through vigorous client and community advocacy and wraparound services, NYLPI improves health outcomes, increases access to healthcare, and provides critical and timely education for communities, healthcare providers, and legal service advocates.

Such access to essential healthcare often results in cost savings for the City, the State, and our safety net health care system when people are able to resume work and productive lives.

As increasing numbers of New Yorkers are detained in immigration jails, we remain one of few organizations focused on medical advocacy and the acute health hazards of immigration detention. In addition, in the face of continued attacks on the asylum process, we have offered culturally competent legal representation, including to those who identify as transgender, gender-expansive, or live with HIV.

Nonprofit Rapid Response Network

The federal administration has focused tremendous power on mass deportations, revocation of racial justice initiatives, claw backs of climate and environmental justice funding, and retribution against those standing up to it. The human cost to New York's disadvantaged communities has already been staggering. Nonprofits and CBOs serving or employing immigrants and other marginalized groups continue to form a critical shield but are also becoming direct targets of federal agencies attempting to conduct raids, chill advocacy, and cut services to people in need.

With continued support from the Speaker and the Protect NYC Families Initiative, our Nonprofit Rapid Response Network will strengthen and protect New York City's nonprofit sector by providing legal resources, relationship-building, practical training, and legal advice and representation to nonprofits and CBOs. It will foster collaboration, build capacity, and distribute essential resources and legal advice to help nonprofits survive attacks by the federal administration.

Nonprofit Contracting Reform

Legal services providers continue to face significant challenges related to timely payments for our contracts with the City. When non-profit legal services organizations take on such contracts, we commit to providing high-quality services, supporting marginalized individuals and communities. We urge the Council to invest adequate resources toward fixing the city's flawed contracting and procurement systems to ensure providers are paid on time. This entails filling long-empty agency vacancies for contracting positions and reforming the payment process, so providers are no longer completing the critical services they are contracted for and then waiting years to receive already allocated funding.

Christopher Schuyler
Managing Attorney, Disability Justice Program
New York Lawyers for the Public Interest
151 West 30th Street, 11th floor
New York, NY 10001
cschuyler@NYLPI.org
(212) 336-9315

About New York Lawyers for the Public Interest

For 50 years, New York Lawyers for the Public Interest (NYLPI) has been a leading civil rights advocate for New Yorkers marginalized by race, poverty, disability, and immigration status. Through our community lawyering model, we bridge the gap between traditional civil legal services and civil rights, building strength and capacity for both individual solutions and long-term impact. Our work integrates the power of individual representation, impact litigation, and comprehensive organizing and policy campaigns. Guided by the priorities of our communities, we strive to achieve equality of opportunity and self-determination for people with disabilities, create equal access to health care, ensure immigrant opportunity, strengthen local nonprofits, and secure environmental justice for low-income communities of color.

About NYLPI's Disability Justice Program

NYLPI's Disability Justice Program works to advance the civil rights of New Yorkers with disabilities. In the past several years alone, NYLPI disability advocates have represented thousands of individuals and won campaigns improving the lives of hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers. Our landmark victories include mandating that the MTA equitably provide its Access-A-Ride services to all applicants and riders with limited English proficiency. We have worked together with the MTA to bring about an "on demand" Access-A-Ride program and to enable New York's most indigent residents to obtain Fair Fare discounts when using Access-A-Ride. We recently filed a class action lawsuit seeking to permit all Access-A-Ride users to access the same discount programs available to all other MTA transit users, as well as a class action to remedy the enormous gaps between subway cars and subway platforms system-wide.



**Testimony of Alia Soomro, Deputy Director for New York City Policy
New York League of Conservation Voters
City Council Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
FY27 Preliminary Budget Hearing
March 17, 2026**

My name is Alia Soomro and I am the Deputy Director for New York City Policy at the New York League of Conservation Voters (NYLCV). NYLCV is a statewide environmental advocacy organization representing over 30,000 members in New York City. Thank you, Chair Abreu, as well as members of the Committee on Transportation for the opportunity to comment.

In order to effectively fight climate change and protect public health, we need to reimagine how people live and move in our City. According to the [New York City Comptroller's Climate Dashboard](#), New York City's transportation sector is the second highest source of NYC's greenhouse gas emissions (GHG). Moreover, [private vehicles account for 90% of transportation-based energy use in NYC](#) and are the largest contributors to transportation-related emissions and air pollution, which disproportionately impacts environmental justice communities. NYLCV believes that all New Yorkers should have access to affordable, clean, and sustainable modes of transportation to improve our City's air quality, combat climate change, and reduce congestion. Efficient and accessible mass transit, pedestrian and cyclist safety, and smart street design are crucial to achieving these goals.

For FY27, NYLCV urges the City to fund and implement the NYC Streets Master Plan, prioritize Vision Zero policies, and increase the eligibility of the Fair Fares NYC program, including, but not limited to, 300% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). These plans and programs will help to improve existing infrastructure for transit, cycling, and pedestrians as well as solve bottlenecks and congestion, in addition to reducing the amount of dangerous vehicles on the streets. They will also reinforce the use of public transportation and micro-mobility options, will make New York City safer and cleaner, and will put money back into our underfunded transit system.

NYC Streets Master Plan

NYLCV urges the Mamdani Administration to fully fund and staff DOT to achieve the milestones mandated in the existing NYC Streets Master Plan, continue to restart long-delayed bus and bike lane projects, and work toward publishing a comprehensive and bold vision of transit and streets in the upcoming 2026 NYC Streets Plan. This includes robust and early engagement on the revamped Streets Plan with community members and elected officials, coordinating future bus and bike lanes with City-led affordable housing

developments and neighborhood rezonings, and planning holistically with plans the City is currently leading, such as the Urban Forest Plan and EJ NYC Plan.

According to the [Transportation Committee Report](#), “DOT installed 27.9 miles of protected bike lanes in Fiscal 2025 and 32.9 miles in Fiscal 2024. In both years DOT failed to achieve the benchmark of installing 50 miles of protected bike lanes as set forth in the Streets Plan legislation, Local Law 195 of 2019. DOT also failed to meet its quota for protected bus lanes. DOT reported that they installed only 20.8 miles of protected bus lanes in 2025 which was short of the 30 miles requirement.”

We urge the City to get back on track to meet these benchmarks, including prioritizing investments in bus stop upgrades, bus speeds, and protected bike lanes to make our streets safer. We also encourage DOT to work towards a comprehensive citywide bike network with protected bike lanes and bike parking infrastructure along major bike commuting routes.

NYLCV appreciated that the Mayor’s Preliminary Budget allocated an additional \$5 million of City funding in Fiscal 2027 only for the creation of new protected bus and bike lanes. According to the [Transportation Committee Report](#) “It is anticipated that this funding would help [DOT] produce more protected bus and bike lanes.”

Moreover, the Mayor’s Preliminary Budget allocated millions of dollars for secure bike parking. As the [Transportation Committee Report](#) states, “The Preliminary Plan includes an additional \$9.3 million for secure bike parking including \$295,000 in City funds in Fiscal 2026, \$1.8 million in Fiscal 2027, \$2.1 million in Fiscal 2028, \$2.4 million in Fiscal 2029, and \$2.8 million in Fiscal 2030 for the new secure bike parking program. The secure bike parking program will incorporate lockers on the street that riders can use to lock their bicycles and/or charge e-bikes. The program is expected to launch by next fiscal year.” More bicycle parking will encourage New Yorkers to opt for this healthy, sustainable method of transportation that decreases traffic congestion. DOT estimates that more than [762,000](#) New Yorkers ride a bike regularly, and the 2025 MMR also reports DOT [added 51.8 lane miles](#) to the City’s bicycle network, including 27.5 miles of protected bike paths. In order to support this new infrastructure and support our bicyclers, DOT must keep parking stations to ensure bike parking is always available.

As Congestion Pricing continues to [show positive results](#) in both Manhattan and the region, the City must improve public transportation service, reliability, and accessibility, particularly in outer borough neighborhoods and disadvantaged communities. This means rolling out more protected bus lanes with signal prioritization, protected bike lanes that allow for fast, safe commutes into the central business district in Manhattan and between residential and commercial hubs in the outer boroughs, and secure bike parking. The city must also reclaim and rethink how public space is utilized throughout the city. The Streets Plan should be an effective tool that works in tandem with Congestion Pricing, and with the rollout of this program, the City must plan holistically and equitably, prioritizing areas of the City that have been historically neglected.

Vision Zero

We also urge the City to prioritize and fund Vision Zero policies that encourage safety through engineering, education, and enforcement to better protect pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists. Vision Zero, which was launched in 2014, called for eliminating all traffic deaths across the five boroughs by 2024. It sought to do this with expanded penalties and enforcements for dangerous car drivers and new street designs. However, we are not close to achieving the City's own goals.

According to the [Transportation Committee report](#), "in the first four months of Fiscal 2026 total traffic fatalities were almost 7 percent higher than during the same four months in Fiscal 2025. The total number of deaths increased from 86 in the first four months of Fiscal 2025 to 92 in the first four months of Fiscal 2026. This continues the alarming trend of rising traffic fatalities, which in Fiscal 2024 were higher than in eight of the last ten years. In the Fiscal 2025 Preliminary Budget Response, the Council called on the Adams Administration to restore \$3 million for Vision Zero education and outreach that was eliminated as part of the Administration's PEG program. To date, the funding has not been restored." **NYLCV urges the City to restore \$3 million for Vision Zero education and outreach.**

NYLCV welcomes [news that DOT will move to lower speed limits in school zones](#) to improve safety. We also support daylighting more intersections to not only increase visibility and safety, but to reimagine curbs for other uses such as bike racks, vegetation, or bioswales. Relatedly, NYLCV supports the passage of Intro 511 of 2026, sponsored by Council Member Won, a bill that would set a requirement for NYC DOT to implement daylighting barriers at a minimum of 1000 intersections per year. Daylighting with physical infrastructure is proven to benefit the safety of pedestrians in relation to pedestrian injuries.

Fair Fares

The Fair Fares program is crucial in making public transportation more affordable and accessible for New Yorkers. The program helps eligible New Yorkers with low incomes manage their transportation costs by providing them with discounted subway and bus fares.

This year, NYLCV stands with advocates and elected officials calling for increased eligibility to 300% of the FPL, fully free for households under 150% of the FPL, expand Fair Fares with half-priced fares on MTA Express Buses and CityTickets on the LIRR and Metro-North railroads within New York City, and automatic enrollment of qualified households so Fair Fares is easily accessible.

Not only do we need greater investment in the Fair Fares program to expand eligibility, we also need more investment for outreach and education to make sure the many who currently qualify are using the program, as well as expansion of the program so that other forms of public transportation discounts such as for Citi-Bike, Metro North, and Long Island Railroad, are included. With the cost of living only increasing, it is critical that we ensure affordable transportation for everyone.

Micromobility & Electrifying Our Transportation System

As stated in [NYLCV's 2026 NYC Policy Agenda](#), we also support increasing access to affordable multimodal strategies to bolster the city's public transportation system, with priority to low-income and transit desert communities. This includes support for bike-share programs and e-bike infrastructure, more public charging stations for e-bikes and e-scooters like the newly-proposed Street Deliveristas Hubs and electrification of strategic CitiBike hubs, light rails, ferries and car-sharing programs. We urge the City to continue equitably expanding and funding the DOT's shared e-scooter pilot program, originally started in the East Bronx, by prioritizing transit desert areas throughout New York City, as well as the Citi Bike program, to serve more neighborhoods in the outer boroughs.

We urge the City to continue prioritizing efforts to revolutionize e-commerce delivery, such as NYC's Blue Highways Initiative, DOT's Microhubs Pilot, utilizing e-cargo bikes for last mile deliveries, increasing the number of Neighborhood Loading Zones, and implementing off-peak hour incentives for residential and commercial deliveries to improve air quality, reduce emissions, and improve worker and traffic safety, particularly in disadvantaged communities.

When it comes to e-bike trade in, NYLCV is supportive that the Mayor's Preliminary Plan includes an additional \$1.4 million of City funding in Fiscal 2026 only for costs associated with the e-bike trade-in program that began last fiscal year. Under this program, eligible food delivery workers who trade in an uncertified electric bike, an uncertified electric moped, or a gas-powered moped that cannot be legally registered with the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) will receive a new certified e-bike with a spare certified battery." We hope the City continues to invest in this program going forward.

NYLCV is also supportive of the NYC Clean Trucks Program, which provides incentives to local commercial fleet operators to transition from diesel trucks to cleaner, more advanced transportation technologies. The Mayor's Preliminary Plan includes an additional \$2.8 million of Other Categorical funding in Fiscal 2026 and \$5.8 million in Fiscal 2027 only for the Clean Trucks Program.

School Streets

NYLCV also supports calls by transportation and open space advocates asking Mayor Mamdani to follow through on his [commitment](#) to provide \$20 million of baselined, expense funding to the Open Streets for Schools (School Streets) program, and call on the Mayor and City Council to fund School Streets. The Department of Transportation's School Streets program closes off streets in front of schools to traffic during the school day for safety at pick up and drop off, recess, gym, outdoor learning, and community programming.

DOT Staffing

Lastly, NYLCV urges the Administration and City Council to fully fund and staff DOT, ensuring full staffing capacity in the next two years, so that the resources and expertise to correct the existing shortfalls and move forward are ready and available. According to the [Transportation Committee report](#), as of January 2026, DOT has a vacancy rate of 12.0

percent. If DOT had the funding and staffing to fully do its job, New York City would be in a better position to make our transportation system safer, more accessible, and sustainable.

It is imperative that the City fully commits and funds the NYC Streets Plan, Vision Zero, and Fair Fares, in addition to prioritizing DOT staff retention and hiring. We hope the Council will work with the Mamdani Administration to fund these crucial initiatives and plans so we can have a truly accessible and equitable City.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

**TESTIMONY
OF THE
NEW YORK PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP
BEFORE THE
NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND
INFRASTRUCTURE
March 17, 2026
New York, N.Y.**

Good afternoon. My name is Natasha Elder, and I am the Regional Director for NYPIRG, the New York Public Interest Research Group. NYPIRG is a non-partisan, not-for-profit research and advocacy organization. Environmental protection, public health, consumer protection, higher education equity, and civic empowerment are our principal areas of concern. Since 1979, the Straphangers Campaign, a project of NYPIRG's, has advocated on behalf of the millions of riders of mass transit in New York City.

Thank you, Committee Chair Abreu and members of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure for the opportunity to testify today.

We all recognize that New Yorkers deserve faster, more reliable, and equitable transit service, as well as affordable fares. Achieving this requires 1) continued full funding and staffing of the Department of Transportation; 2) meeting the City's bus lane and street design commitments, and developing a network of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridors with features such as center-running lanes, transit signal priority, and accessible boarding stations, and 3) strengthening and expanding free and reduced fare programs like Fair Fares. This includes making transit fully free for households earning under 150% of the federal poverty level and expanding eligibility to include all current CUNY students and New Yorkers earning up to 300% of the federal poverty level. We are also advocating for Fair Fares to cover additional transit options by expanding the program to MTA Express Buses and CityTicket fares, while ensuring CUNY students have access to free transit passes so that transportation remains affordable and accessible for all New Yorkers.

A Thriving Transportation System

Climate sustainability, along with the economic and social health of New York City, depends in large part on the success of its public transit system. Ours is a system that provides transportation to a population of more than 15.3 million people.¹ It's responsible for 40% of the nation's public transit

¹ Metropolitan Transportation Authority, "About Us," <https://new.mta.info/about>.

rides.² In short, it keeps the largest and busiest city in the country running while also providing transit to and from the Long Island suburbs and surrounding upstate communities. New York City is not a car city - it is a mass transit city. It is critical that our public transit system represents the future of NYC and not the past. It is possible for NYC to have a world class public transportation system, but New Yorkers need to believe in it and they need to see results.

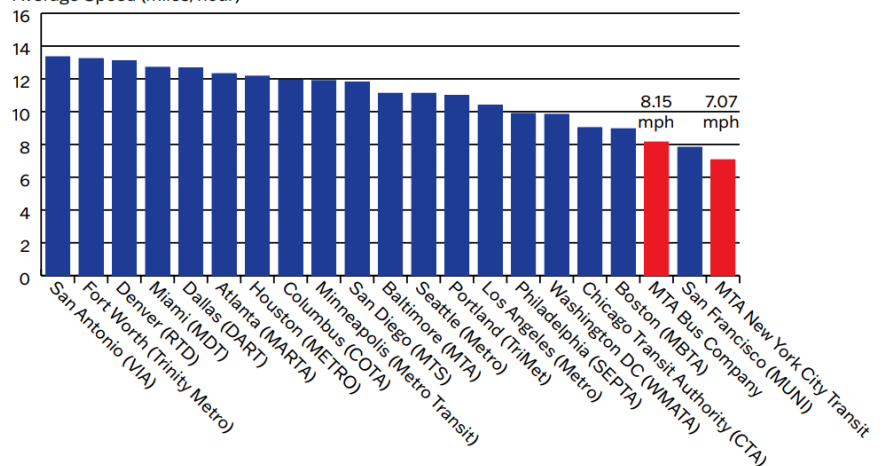
Recommit to the Department of Transportation's Streets Plan

Street design is one of our most viable instruments for improving bus speeds and reducing accidents, while creating space for safer walking and riding for New Yorkers. The Streets Master Plan—enacted by the Council and embraced by the previous and present Administrations—is that instrument and the City's blueprint for converting our streets into safe places to travel, regardless of mode. However, progress necessary to improve the speeds of our buses throughout our streets and improve safety for pedestrians and bikers has been at a snail's pace.

New York City Buses Rank Among the Slowest in the Nation

Average Local Bus Speeds in Major U.S. Cities (2018)

Average Speed (miles/hour)



SOURCE: Federal Transit Administration 2018 bus service data

NOTE: MTA buses are separated into the MTA Bus Company and the New York City Transit, both of which are run by MTA.

Although the Department of Transportation (DOT) installed more bus lanes in 2024 than in the previous year, the agency continues to fall short of the targets established under the Streets Master Plan. In 2022, DOT fell 45% short of new or camera-enforced bus lanes, installing only 11 of the required 20 miles. The amount of bus lanes installed declined further in 2023, when DOT reported installing just 9.6 miles. According to the Mayor's Management Report, DOT installed 15.7 miles of bus lanes in Fiscal Year 2024, still below the annual target. However, progress reversed again in Fiscal Year 2025, when DOT installed only 5.5 miles of bus lanes citywide, a sharp decline from the prior year.³

The statistics for 2022 through 2025 continuously fall short of the legislatively mandated targets set by the Council.⁴ Because of installation delays and inconsistent enforcement, New York City's buses crawl

² Office of the New York State Comptroller, "Existential Questions Facing National Public Transit Systems Create New Fiscal Pressures for MTA," July 2022,

<https://www.osc.state.ny.us/reports/osdc/existential-questions-facing-national-public-transit-systems-create-new-fiscal-pressures-nta#:~:text=The%20Metropolitan%20Transportation%20Authority%20>

³ New York City Mayor's Office of Operations, *Mayor's Management Report (MMR): Department of Transportation*, Fiscal Year 2025, p. 350, <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/operations/downloads/pdf/mmr2025/dot.pdf>

⁴ Calder, Rich, and David Meyer. "City Council Approves Corey Johnson's \$1.7B Car-Reduction Plan." *New York Post*, New York Post, 30 Oct. 2019, <https://nypost.com/2019/10/30/city-council-approves-corey-johnsons-1-7b-car-reduction-plan/>.

through their routes at an average speed of merely 8.1 miles per hour.⁵ New York City has consistently ranked among the most congested in the nation – and even globally! Some low-lights include being worst-ranked nationally in 2023 and 2024 and the second worst-ranked globally in 2024.⁶

The Council knows and understands the importance of the installation of bus lanes and busways. In April 2023, the Council passed Resolution No. 460, which called on the Department of Transportation to add an additional 35 miles of dedicated bus lanes and busways necessary to boost ridership and improve travel outcomes and wait times. Improved service times is not only linked to “a possible 15% increase in system wide ridership” but also better safety outcomes with decreased crowding, and transportation equity to bolster a thriving city while being a critical factor in mitigating climate change.

Looking forward, New Yorkers will continue to bear the brunt of long travel and wait times, and poor pedestrian and bike safety with DOT consistently missing goals each year. DOT has ground to make up after missing these targets every year and it is critical to accelerate the project. We appreciate Council Speaker Abreu and the Council Transportation Committee’s advocacy for solutions and urge that the final budget supports a fully funded and fully staffed DOT to get the bus lane planning and installation work done.

Expanding Bus Rapid Transit

While expanding bus lanes is critical to improving bus speeds, New York City must also begin developing a true Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) network. BRT systems build on dedicated bus lanes by incorporating features such as center-running lanes, transit signal priority, off-board fare payment, and level boarding stations, allowing buses to move faster and more reliably while providing riders with a higher-quality transit experience. These improvements can dramatically increase bus speeds and reliability, bringing subway-like service to city streets at a fraction of the cost of rail expansion.

New York City has already begun implementing elements of BRT on key corridors. On Flatbush Avenue in Brooklyn, the City has started installing center-running bus lanes, which place buses in the middle of the roadway to avoid common curbside conflicts such as double parking, turning vehicles, and delivery activity.⁷ This design—used in successful BRT systems around the world—helps buses move more efficiently and provides more consistent travel times for riders.

Additional high-ridership corridors across the city could also benefit from BRT-style treatments. Streets such as Main Street in Queens, which carries some of the busiest bus routes in the borough and experiences severe congestion, are strong candidates for dedicated, high-capacity bus infrastructure.

⁵Independent Budget Office (IBO). (2025). *Speeding up slowly: A review of initiatives to improve bus speeds in New York City*. Retrieved from <https://ibo.nyc.ny.us/iboreports/speeding-up-slowly-a-review-of-initiatives-to-improve-bus-speeds-in-new-york-city-february-2025.pdf>

⁶ Inrix. “Scorecard.” *Inrix*, <https://inrix.com/scorecard/#city-ranking-list>.

⁷New York City Department of Transportation, “NYC DOT to Begin Installing Flatbush Avenue Bus Lanes,” <https://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/html/pr2025/nyc-dot-better-bus-service-flatbush-ave.shtml>

Other major corridors with heavy ridership and slow bus speeds should be evaluated for similar improvements to ensure that buses can move quickly and reliably.

With buses carrying more than two million riders every day, investing in a network of high-quality bus corridors is one of the fastest and most cost-effective ways to improve transit across the city. Developing true BRT routes—paired with expanded bus lanes and busways—would significantly improve travel times for riders and help deliver the faster, more reliable bus system New Yorkers deserve. We urge the Council’s support of these solutions.

Expand Free and Reduced Fare Solutions: Support Fair Fares

Fare increases in 2023 and 2025 have brought fares to \$3.00. Affording mass transit has become increasingly difficult for many New Yorkers as the overall cost of living in the city continues to rise. The burden is particularly severe for New Yorkers with low incomes who rely on buses and subways for daily travel. According to the Community Service Society’s 2023 *Unheard Third* report,⁸ nearly one in five New Yorkers struggled to afford subway and bus fares in 2023, continuing a trend of increasing transit affordability hardship since 2020. The challenge is even more pronounced for households living in or near poverty, where approximately 30 percent reported difficulty paying for transit, demonstrating that the cost of transportation remains a major barrier to accessing work, school, and other essential services.

Fair Fares, the City’s half-priced fare program, has been called “transformative” by our city’s leaders. And it truly has been, proving to be a huge success since its inception in 2019, giving over 360,000 riders who are having trouble affording transit a lifeline. Under the reduced-fare program, all working-age people (18–64) whose household income is less than 145 percent of the Federal Poverty Line (FPL) can apply for Omnycards at half price.

Still though, there are hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers who are eligible for the program but are not enrolled. According to the most recent census data, roughly 900,000 New York City residents live in poverty, but roughly a third of eligible New Yorkers are enrolled in the program. Part of this is due to strict income requirements, where only working-age New Yorkers earning up to 145% of the federal poverty level — equivalent to about \$23,940 annually for a single individual under current program guidelines — would be eligible. These income requirements cause many New Yorkers who earn significantly less than the city’s median income to be ineligible, severely lowering enrollment rates.

Financial woes and transportation affordability gets even worse for New York City college students, where costs extend beyond the classroom. Affording an Omny tap can be the difference between earning a degree or dropping out altogether. While knowing that those with a college degree continue to have better career opportunities and higher annual wages than those with less education,⁹ a recent survey by the Center for Urban Future found that affording a Metrocard was the biggest financial barrier cited by

⁸ Community Service Society of New York, *When You Can’t Afford the Fare: How Expanding Fair Fares Can Help Working New Yorkers as Transit Hardships Persist, Unheard Third 2023 Transit Brief* (March 2024).

⁹ National Center for Education Statistics. <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2022/2022144.pdf>.

students when discussing college costs.¹⁰ Acknowledging the importance of mass transit to education equity, New York City's K-12 students receive free Omnycards, yet that resource doesn't exist for higher education. And with housing and food cost increases outpacing wage growth in the City, the need to address transit affordability to support educational attainment could not be more pressing.

New York City has an opportunity to build on the success of Fair Fares and expand its reach. We urge you to support Fair Fares expansion which includes 1) increasing eligibility to households earning up to 300 percent of the Federal Poverty Line, 2) making transit fully free for households earning below 150 percent of the Federal Poverty Line and for all CUNY students, and 3) expanding the program to cover additional transit options such as MTA express buses and CityTicket fares. Expanding Fair Fares in this way would ensure that more New Yorkers can access affordable public transportation and fully participate in the city's economic and educational opportunities.

Thank you.

¹⁰ *Opportunity Costs* - [Nycfuture.org. https://nycfuture.org/pdf/CUF_OpportunityCosts_Final.pdf](https://nycfuture.org/pdf/CUF_OpportunityCosts_Final.pdf).

Tuesday, March 17, 2026

Testimony by Linda Baran
President & CEO, Staten Island Chamber of Commerce
New York City Council Transportation and Infrastructure Committee

Good morning Chair and members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

I am Linda Baran, President and CEO of the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce, representing about 700 businesses employing nearly 20,000 workers across our borough, most of them small businesses.

Transportation equity remains a major issue for Staten Island. Despite being home to nearly half a million residents, Staten Island remains the most transit underserved borough in New York City. We have one passenger rail line, no direct subway connection to Manhattan, and limited bus service. For many years we relied almost entirely on a single ferry route as our primary link to the rest of the city.

At the same time, Staten Islanders continually pay into the region's transportation system while receiving far fewer investments in return. Unlike residents of other boroughs, Staten Islanders must pay a toll every time they leave or return to the borough. We also pay more for mass transit. While riders in other boroughs can take the subway into Manhattan for the cost of a local bus fare, many Staten Islanders must rely on express buses that cost significantly more just to reach the same job centers. The result is one of the longest and most expensive commutes in New York City.

With congestion pricing now in effect, Staten Islanders face yet another added cost when traveling into Manhattan. While the policy is intended to reduce traffic and encourage transit use, it underscores the need for real transit investment in our borough.

For the businesses we represent, these challenges are very real. Employers regularly tell us that hiring workers from outside Staten Island can be difficult because commuting to the borough takes too long or costs too much.

Improving transportation equity means better mobility within Staten Island and stronger connections to the rest of the city.

SICC Recommends Four Investments to Speed Commutes, Ease Congestion, and Reduce Costs for Staten Islanders

1. Fully Fund the North Shore Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in the MTA Capital Plan

One of the most important investments for Staten Island is the North Shore Bus Rapid Transit project. This long-planned project would convert a dormant corridor into a reliable transit link connecting North and West Shore neighborhoods to the St. George Ferry Terminal. It would also improve access to major employment centers such as the Staten Island Corporate Park, helping employers attract workers and strengthening economic development across the borough.

The Chamber urges the Metropolitan Transportation Authority to include full funding for the North Shore BRT in the next MTA Capital Plan so this long-awaited project can finally move from planning to construction.

With congestion pricing now in effect and policymakers encouraging fewer car trips, investments like the North Shore BRT are essential to ensuring Staten Islanders have real and reliable transit alternatives.

2. Extend Ferry Service

Regional connections must also continue to improve.

The recent addition of Staten Island to the NYC fast ferry network and the reconnection to Brooklyn landings are positive steps toward integrating our borough into the citywide ferry system. Expanding ferry service and developing additional landings on Staten Island would further improve commuting options and support economic activity throughout the borough.

3. Pilot Smart Traffic Signal Technology

Improving mobility within Staten Island itself is just as important. Traffic congestion continues to affect daily life for residents and businesses. During rush hour it can take more than an hour to travel just a few miles along major corridors such as Hylan Boulevard.

The Chamber has proposed piloting a smart traffic signal system that uses real time data and adaptive signals to improve traffic flow and reduce delays. Cities that have implemented similar systems have significantly reduced travel times and delays.

Because Staten Island is geographically compact, our borough is well suited to pilot this technology islandwide and demonstrate how intelligent traffic systems can improve mobility and safety. The City could implement a pilot program and pursue federal infrastructure or safety funding to support broader deployment if successful.

4. Extend the Staten Island Expressway HOV Lane

Another important step to ease congestion is extending the Staten Island Expressway HOV lane westward to the Goethals Bridge. This improvement would help move traffic more efficiently, support express bus service, and reduce congestion on surrounding local streets.

While the Staten Island Expressway is under the jurisdiction of the New York State Department of Transportation, the City can play an important role in advancing this project. We encourage the City to work with State DOT to prioritize the extension and to pursue federal infrastructure funding opportunities to support its completion.

Transportation equity means ensuring that Staten Island receives the same level of investment and connectivity as other boroughs. Our residents and businesses deserve reliable transit, fair transportation costs, and better access to opportunity.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. We look forward to continuing to work with the Council to advance these priorities.

March 19, 2006

Dear Members of the Council,

I am writing to raise serious concerns about the impact of automated ticketing enforcement on providers of senior transportation services in New York City.

Since late 2025, NYC has implemented automated ticketing for double-parked vehicles using camera-equipped buses that capture license plates. While we understand the intent to improve traffic flow and safety, this system has unintentionally created significant hardship for services like ours that transport frail and mobility-impaired seniors.

Our work involves door-to-door assistance for vulnerable individuals who cannot use public transportation. A typical pickup is not a quick stop:

A senior must first be alerted, stand up, walk slowly to the door, carefully navigate stairs, and make their way to the curb. Once outside, they often require assistance entering the vehicle. Our driver must then safely store mobility aids such as walkers or wheelchairs before departing. This process can take 5–10 minutes, and often longer depending on the individual's condition.

Despite holding a valid Annual On-Street Parking Permit (Permit # 2026/767027), our vehicles are repeatedly issued tickets during these necessary stops. In some cases, we have even received multiple tickets for the same location within minutes.

We provide essential local transportation for seniors who rely on us for critical daily needs—medical appointments, grocery shopping, pharmacy visits, banking, and more.

Additionally, we operate a weekend meal delivery program for seniors, primarily Holocaust Survivors. Even brief stops—such as quickly picking up the meals from the caterer—have resulted in multiple automated violations, further compounding costs.

These fines, often ranging from \$100 to \$200 per ticket, are unsustainable. They directly threaten our ability to continue serving the very population that the City is committed to supporting—older adults and individuals with disabilities who require additional time and care.

We respectfully urge the Council to consider the following:

- Exemptions or adjusted enforcement rules for licensed senior and disability transportation providers
- A grace period for vehicles engaged in active passenger assistance
- Recognition of valid on-street permits within automated enforcement systems
- A fair appeals process that accounts for the realities of accessibility services

New York City has long championed equitable access to transportation. To uphold this commitment, policies must reflect the real-world needs of those who require extra time and assistance—not penalize the services that support them.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Debbie Hes

Executive Director

Washington Heights Inwood Preservation & Restoration Corp

SUBJECT: 3/17/2026 - DOT Preliminary Budget Hearing - Fund the DOT and Proven Measures Life Saving Measures

Thank you Chair Abreu and the entire Transportation & Infrastructure Committee for the opportunity to testify. My name is Pauline Barkin. I am a volunteer with Transportation Alternatives, an architect and a proud resident of Flatbush Brooklyn.

I'm here because our streets are not as safe as they should be. We have the tools to make our streets safer. Investing in continuous & protected bike networks, traffic calming treatments, improved signaling, redesigned intersections, and hardened daylighting save lives. These are proven, data driven interventions.

The Department of Transportation (DOT) plays a critical role in preventing traffic deaths and serious injuries. Unfortunately, the DOT has struggled to meet its goals in recent years because the agency has been consistently underfunded and understaffed. The current plan adds only 43 new employees in 2027. That doesn't come close to matching the scale of the work required to keep millions of New Yorkers safe on our roads. To deliver safer streets, DOT needs a workforce that matches its mission.

When we give the DOT the resources it needs, we save lives, we create opportunity, and we build a stronger, safer, and more resilient New York. **Increase funding for the Department of Transportation and ensure the agency has the necessary resources it needs to deliver the life saving improvements New York City deserves.**

Thank you for your time.

Pauline Barkin, AIA

Alexis Foote

[REDACTED]
Hell's Kitchen, NY 10036
[REDACTED]

The New York City Council
City Hall New York, NY 10007
250 Broadway - 8th Floor - Hearing Room 1
Tuesday, March 17, 2026, 9:30am
New York City Council Budget and Oversight Hearings on
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

Shaun Abreu, Chair

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

We are being robbed by the MTA with this new debit MetroCard. I shouldn't have a negative balance on a MetroCard I brought a week ago. Riders don't trust that they're being charged correctly. MTA needs to do more to build trust in OMNY so riders can see and experience the benefits. We need a real-time display of charges and card balance when riders tap so we know we're being charged and can use OMNY to its full advantage. **WE NEED TO EXPAND THE FAIR FARES PROGRAM!**

We need to be able to access OMNY in the MTA App so riders can immediately view their transaction history and refill their cards while on the go. The OMNY website is difficult to navigate, and most riders are unable to view a record of their rides, making it difficult to track progress towards the weekly fare cap. Riders need easier access to OMNY machines

Lack of access to OMNY machines means that riders are often having to travel out of their way to refill their cards, losing the benefits of fare capping by using other devices to pay, and even having unnecessary interactions with NYPD.

Access to OMNY machines cannot just be limited to subway stations, shutting out millions of bus riders and New Yorkers who live in neighborhoods where the nearest subway could be miles away.

Riders need to have access to more than one OMNY vending machine per station along with in-station customer support from MTA employees. New Yorkers across the city have struggled to use the OMNY system, from dealing with broken vending machines to long lines at the stations.

Riders need better stronger customer support on the phone and in the stations, and flexibility to ride when OMNY is out of service. MTA employees at the stations need to be equipped with the knowledge around OMNY to best support riders. And we need more visible signage in our stations that describe how fare capping works along with better customer service at the stations and community meetings across the city where riders can learn more about OMNY.

OMNY customer service needs to be equipped to resolve customer issues in a timely manner, without riders having to call repeatedly. Without community resources, riders are often helping one another navigate the system – particularly seniors, young people, and those with limited access to technology. We need regular OMNY info sessions to be hosted in community centers & libraries so that riders can have a space to learn about the benefits of the program, ask questions, and receive support to enroll. When OMNY is not working, riders are at risk

Multiple riders have experienced receiving tickets even though they paid the fare due to OMNY malfunctions. This not only wastes riders' time and money, but it increases unnecessary rider interactions with the police.

From: [Gabriella Pasquali](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for the mta
Date: Tuesday, March 17, 2026 11:58:49 AM

[REDACTED]

Hello, my name is Gabriella Pasquali and I'm a student at the College of Staten Island. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I am here to talk about how transportation affects me as a student.

If I were to take the bus to school it would take over an hour to get to CSI. When live 20 minutes away by car.

I would also stress about getting to class on time because public transportation isn't always reliable. When buses are delayed it makes it harder to get to class and just adds more time to the commute.

My dad had to drive me to work one time because a bus passed by me. I was waiting for 15 minutes and the sign on the front of the bus was off so I couldn't see it was the bus I needed. If I had waited I would have been late to work.

From, Gabriella Pasquali

March 16, 2026

To the Committee of Transportation and Infrastructure:

I am a longtime resident of Washington Heights, and I use the 1 train commuter tunnel at 190th street to bring my child to school and to travel outside of the neighborhood.

I was recently informed by a DOT employee that DOT will be doing much needed repairs on the tunnel, which I was very happy to hear. However, I was also informed that the tunnel has no cameras.

Especially given the fact that DOT will be doing repairs on the tunnel, I would like to advocate for any new budget to please allocate funding for security cameras for this subway tunnel.

Given that there was a recent assault on a commuter at a different neighborhood 1 line subway stop just weeks ago, the fact that the tunnel is a block long and has unreliable reception, the reality that there is never any police presence along the length of the tunnel, and lastly, the fact that that in both winter and summer, it has become a gathering place for the homeless as well as drug addicts, having NO CAMERAS at all in this block long, enclosed space is straight up negligence.

I strongly feel that it is just a matter of time until someone is assaulted in this space.

There is a serious need for cameras in this tunnel to ensure that it is safe and secure for the residents utilizing the station.

Thank you so much,
Hannah Scholl

Chair Sanchez and members of the Committee,

I'm Jillian Curtis and I'm a teacher.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. Thank you to Chair Sanchez and all of the City Council for restoring community composting funding in FY25 and continuing the funding for FY26. I am writing to strongly support **ongoing, stable funding for community composting** through Schedule C Council Initiative funding for Community Composting.

When Mayor Adams cut funding to community programs at DSNY, City Council stepped in FY25 to save decades old programs that supported community composting, composting education, and outreach through New York nonprofits. The ongoing support from constituents shows how community composting impacts and engages the community.

I have a community garden behind my apartment, the Moore-Jackson Community Garden, and participate actively in composting, both through our community garden and in neighborhood bins with the Compost App. Our neighborhood has thrived since opening our community garden and I've felt the positive impact on our surroundings because of it. Furthermore, the amount of trash that my household alone has cut down on composting is quite significant and has made me realize what a positive impact on the earth composting can have.

Community composting is a proven, community-powered climate solution. It reduces landfill waste, lowers emissions, enriches our city's soil, and strengthens our resilience. Curbside composting needs outreach and education, and community composting provides this. With EPA cuts and climate change denial at the federal level, we know that **acting locally can have a big impact**, and we've seen how the City Council can be part of that change.

This isn't just about compost. It's about environmental justice and climate resilience. It's about green jobs. It's about investing in a better future for all New Yorkers. I urge Council to continue to **fund community composting**. Let's keep growing a cleaner, more resilient New York City—*together*.

Thank you,

Jillian Curtis



I. Background: Previous Legislation (Int 1141-2018) and the Stipulated Fine Program

The Stipulated Fine Program is a Department of Finance arrangement under which delivery and other businesses pay a pre-negotiated rate for parking violations in exchange for waiving the right to contest those violations at OATH hearings. Participation in the Program allows companies to resolve large volumes of parking tickets without experiencing the burdens of individual hearings.

from 2001 - 2018

The Program has attracted scrutiny in recent years. One report done by IBO found that the ten largest shipping companies in the city saved more than \$20 million in fines through the Program in a single year, and over \$750 million since 2001.¹ Critics have argued that the Program effectively allows large corporations to purchase the right to block streets and double-park at discounted rates, undermining enforcement, public safety, and accessibility.

[Intro 1141-2018](#) would have abolished the Stipulated Fine Program as it currently operates. It would have prohibited any city agency from agreeing to reduce fines for parking violations in exchange for a waiver of the right to contest them.

II. Proposed Amendment

A proposed amendment would create an exception to the bill's universal prohibition on negotiated fine reductions by preserving access to the Program for certain qualifying small businesses. To be eligible for the Program, under this proposed carve-out, a business must satisfy all of the following criteria:

1. The business must be domiciled in the City or State of New York;
2. The business must be registered with the New York Secretary of State;
3. The business must be incorporated within the State of New York; and
4. The business's total annual revenue must not exceed \$1,000,000.

Businesses that satisfy the above four criteria would remain eligible to participate in the Stipulated Fine Program. This carve-out would mitigate the risk that the bill, as previously written, would impose a disproportionate burden on small, locally-rooted businesses that bear little resemblance to the large shipping companies that the bill is designed to target. The \$1 million revenue ceiling provision is also narrow enough in scope that it would not disturb the bill's spirit of prohibition as applied to large delivery companies.

¹ <https://www.nydailynews.com/2022/08/21/nyc-gives-big-delivery-companies>.

Int. No. 1141

By Council Members Rodriguez, Reynoso, Levin, Deutsch, Levine, Rosenthal, Grodenchik, Maisel, Rose, Barron, Holden, Moya, Kallos, Chin, Treyger, Brannan, Ayala, Cornegy, Cumbo, Perkins, Louis, Ampry-Samuel, Lander, Cabrera, Koslowitz, Gibson, Salamanca, Adams, Van Bramer, D. Diaz, Gennaro, Riley, Powers, Rivera, Ulrich and the Public Advocate (Mr. Williams)

A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to the dismissal of notices of violation and reduction of fines

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

1 Section 1. Chapter 2 of title 19 of the administrative code of the city of New York is
2 amended by adding a new section 19-216 to read as follows:

3 § 19-216 Dismissal of notice of violation or reduction of fine. Except for the dismissal or
4 cancellation of a notice of violation for a technical reason pursuant to paragraph (b) of
5 subdivision 2-a of section 238 of the vehicle and traffic law, paragraph (3) of subdivision (a) of
6 section 39-02 of title 19 of the rules of the city of New York, subdivision 2 of section 19-162 or
7 section 19-215, no notice of violation may be dismissed, or the associated fine reduced, without
8 the issuance of a written determination by an administrative law judge after completion of a
9 hearing on the merits of each individual charge. No city agency may agree to reduce fines for
10 parking violations in exchange for a waiver of the right to contest such violations.

11 § 2. This local law takes effect 90 days after it becomes law.

NAB
LS #6282/6546
10/12/18
✓

NEWS > NEW YORK NEWS

NYC gives big delivery companies \$750 million in parking ticket discounts since 2001



By **CLAYTON GUSE** | New York Daily News

PUBLISHED: August 21, 2022 at 8:25 AM EDT | UPDATED: August 21, 2022 at 12:25 PM EDT

Big delivery companies' trucks clog New York streets — and they get millions in discounts on parking tickets while doing so.

Transit advocates wonder whether the discounts incentivize the companies to clog traffic, slowing buses and cars.

Over the last 21 years, companies like FedEx and UPS have gotten roughly \$750 million in parking ticket discounts not available to smaller businesses that must navigate the same parking and street rules, records obtained by the Daily News show.

The discounts are issued through the city's Stipulated Parking Fine Program, which since 2001 has reduced parking fines to the major deliverers in exchange for the companies' agreement not to contest the violations in city administrative courts.

How Does the City Collect Parking Fines from Delivery Companies and Other Businesses?

Each year hundreds of thousands of citations for parking violations are issued to vehicles registered to companies doing business in the city. Just like an individual receiving a violation, these firms have the right to challenge their tickets. Because of the volume of parking violations issued to vehicles registered to businesses such as United Parcel Service, Federal Express, and others making deliveries or service calls, having even a small percentage of those violations contested in court could overwhelm an already overburdened system.

To reduce the burden on the city's traffic courts the city provides an incentive to businesses that agree not to dispute parking violations. The city currently offers two similar programs that do this: the Commercial Abatement Program for small firms and the Stipulated Fine Program for large companies. Participants waive their right to challenge parking tickets and agree to pay a pre-set, reduced fine amount for each offense. We look at how much the city has collected from the two ticket abatement programs—and how much it may have forgone.

Payments Made by Participants in The Stipulated Fine and Commercial Abatement Programs: 2010-2018

Fiscal Year	Violations Paid	Dollar Payment
2010	832,500	\$54,586,800
2011	812,400	53,634,600
2012	908,700	58,635,000
2013	768,300	48,761,100
2014	900,900	57,214,300
2015	986,600	61,468,900
2016	839,800	54,852,800
2017	727,100	49,751,300
2018	678,100	51,008,600
Average	828,267	\$54,434,822

New York City Independent Budget Office

- Since 2010, the two abatement programs have averaged over \$54 million in payments annually for about 828,000 parking violations a year. The programs reached their peak revenue in 2015 when they collected over \$61 million for nearly 1 million violations.
- Most of the fine revenue is generated through the Stipulated Fine Program because those businesses generally have many more vehicles. In 2018, 1,362 businesses paid fines through the Stipulated Fine Program while 866 firms paid fines through the Commercial Abatement Program. Ninety-three percent of the revenue collected under the two programs in 2018 came through the Stipulated Fine Program.

Top 10 Participants in the Stipulated Fine Program by Fines Paid Fiscal Year 2018

Business Name	Summons Count	Fines Paid	Maximum Savings
United Parcel Service	254,868	\$14,404,619	\$6,627,851
Federal Express	114,005	6,880,245	4,900,375
Verizon	64,235	2,514,218	2,372,387
Manhattan Beer Distributors	29,421	2,343,538	733,757
Verizon Corporate Services	51,187	2,135,943	1,681,802
Fresh Direct	28,032	1,784,018	1,055,617
US Foods, Incorporated	25,087	1,745,013	823,512
Liberty Coca-Cola Beverages	22,252	1,607,526	685,374
Time Warner Cable of New York	26,828	1,264,634	882,091
Anheuser-Busch Beer Distributors of New York, Inc.	16,834	1,170,614	628,061
Total for Top Ten	635,749	\$35,850,368	\$20,390,827
All Other Stipulated Fine Participants	670,264	\$11,336,632	
Total, Stipulated Fine Program	1,306,013	\$47,187,000	

NOTE: Reported savings assumes that all fines originally imposed would have been paid. It is not based on an actual accounting of the forgone revenue.

New York City Independent Budget Office

- IBO estimates that the Stipulated Fine Program saved the 10 most heavily fined firms in 2018 as much as \$20.4 million on their summonses. Because the summonses are not contested in traffic court and some of the violations likely would have been dismissed or reduced had they been, it is impossible to determine the amount of revenue the city would have collected without the program in place.

The revenue from the payment of parking violations by participants in either of the abatement programs is only a small fraction of the overall revenue collected from parking violations.

Since 2010, parking violation fine revenue has averaged nearly \$532 million annually. The abatement programs account for about 10 percent of this annual amount. Starting in December, the city increased the pre-set fines for each type of violation and now expects the programs to generate \$11 million more this fiscal year than they did in 2018 and \$17 million more in the following years.

Update: We have updated the summons count and maximum savings amounts to reflect information that the Department of Finance had originally not provided on summonses reduced to \$0 fines.

Share on



SOURCE: New York City Department of Finance

Prepared by Jonathan Rosenberg
New York City Independent Budget Office

VOTERS FOR
FAIR FINES



Vote For
1141-2018



STOP HOVING
MY DISABLED PERSONS
PARKING SPCE

STOP HOVING
MY DISABLED PERSONS
PARKING SPCE



Vote for
12-02-2018

STOP HOVING
MY DISABLED PERSONS
PARKING SPCE



PARKING
ONLY

Vote for
12-02-2018

STOP HOVING
MY DISABLED PERSONS
PARKING SPCE



Vote for
12-02-2018

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Stephen Balson

Address: [REDACTED] 10033

I represent: NYPDRS

Address: 9 Murray St, 10007

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/17/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Christopher Schuyler

Address: _____

I represent: New York Lawyers for the Public Interest

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/17/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Bhairavi Desai

Address: [REDACTED]

I represent: New York Tax Workers Alliance

Address: 31-10 37th Ave #300, LIC, NY 11101

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/17/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Rasheda Bunting

Address: _____

I represent: National Federation of the blind

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Megalie Austin

Address: _____

I represent: Dept Design & Construction

Address: 30-30 Thomson Avenue

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Amanda Berman

Address: _____

I represent: center for Justice Innovation

Address: 520 8th Ave.

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Sherryl Eluto

Address: 33 Beaver Street NY NY 10004

I represent: NYC Taxi and Limousine Commission

Address: 33 Beaver Street NY NY 10004

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Evan Hines

Address: 33 Beaver Street NY NY 10004

I represent: NYC Taxi and Limousine Commission

Address: 33 Beaver St NY NY 10004

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: James DiGiovanni

Address: 33 Beaver Street NY NY 10004

I represent: NYC Taxi and Limousine Commission

Address: 33 Beaver Street NY NY 10004

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. Budget Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Elizabeth Adams (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 111 John Street

I represent: Transportation Alternatives

Address: 111 John St.

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: Mar. 17, 2026

Name: Alli Langley (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: New York Taxi Workers Alliance

Address: 31-16 37th Ave, Long Island City

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Zay Zay Howard (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: 504 Democratic Club

Address: _____



Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms



**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Glen Bolofsky

Address: [REDACTED] Paramus NY 07652

I represent: 504 Democratic Club

Address: 125 Maiden Lane NY NY 10038

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3-17-2026

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Monica Bartley

Address: [REDACTED] Brooklyn NY 11221

I represent: DISABLED IN ACTION

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 03.17.2026

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ROSA CHANG

Address: [REDACTED] 10025

I represent: GOTMAN PARK

Address: 1 ROSE STREET, 10038

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/17/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Brian Fritsch

Address: [Redacted] BK, NY 11228

I represent: PCAC

Address: 2 Broadway, NY NY

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/17/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Michale Ring

Address: _____

I represent: disabled in action

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Lean RYAN

Address: pansies007@gmail.com

I represent: Disabled IN ACTION

Address: _____

MTA
DOT
TLC

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Rasheta Bunting
Address: Rasheta@oneheartonevision.org

I represent: NFB - National Federation of The Blind

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Edward Funches

Address: _____

I represent: 504 Democratic Club / Inclusion

Address: the movement

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3-17-2026

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Aboubakar Ki

Address: _____

I represent: Worker's Justice Project

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3-17-2026

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Yadira Sanchez

Address: _____

I represent: Workers Justice Project

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/17/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Paul Olson

Address: _____

I represent: DOT

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/17/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Margaret Forgiare

Address: _____

I represent: DOT

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/17/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Mike Flynn

Address: _____

I represent: DOT

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Eric Beaton

Address: _____

I represent: DOT

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Rick Rodriguez

Address: _____

I represent: DOT

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: John J. McCarthy (MTA)

Address: 2 Broadway, NY, NY

I represent: MTA

Address: 2 Broadway, NY, NY

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◆

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Chairman Janno Lieber (MTA)

Address: 2 Broadway, NY, NY

I represent: MTA

Address: 2 Broadway, NY, NY

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◆

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

8

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jashala Patel (MTA)

Address: 2 Broadway, NY, NY

I represent: MTA

Address: 2 Broadway, NY, NY

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Shanifah Ricara (MTA)

Address: 2 Broadway, NY, NY

I represent: MTA

Address: 2 Broadway, NY, NY

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms