

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION JOINTLY
WITH SUBCOMMITTEE ON CAPITAL BUDGET

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March 8, 2018
Start: 9:36 a.m.
Recess: 5:18 p.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

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Chairperson

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

(continued Council Members)

Keith Powers

Steven Matteo

Barry Grodenchik

Joe Lohta, Metropolitan Transportation Authority
(MTA) Chairman

Polly Trottenberg, Department of Transportation
(DOT) Commissioner

Corey Johnson, Speaker New York City Council

Ronnie Hakim, Managing Director of Metropolitan
Transportation Authority (MTA)

Latonia McKiney, Finance Division Director

Regina Poreda Ryan, Finance Division, Deputy
Director

Nathan Toth, Finance Division, Deputy Director

Paul Scimone, Finance Division

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Aliya Ali

Chima Obichere, Unit Head

John Basile, Financial Analyst

Jaqi Cohen, Campaign Coordinator for Straphangers
Campaign

Stephanie Bergas-Verras, Senior Organizer

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Matt Tomich, President of Energy Vision

Mario Guerra, Chair for Signals and Line
Maintenance of Metropolitan Transportation
Authority (MTA)

Sherlock Bender, Transit Workers Union Chairman

Matt Kerschner, Graduate Policy Intern at AARP

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION JOINTLY
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[sound check, pause] [background
comments, pause]

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Good morning and welcome to the City Counsel Transportation Committee's hearing on the Fiscal 2019 preliminary budget and the Fiscal 2018 preliminary measures management report. My name is Ydanis Rodriguez and I chair the committee. Today we are here to begin the Fiscal 2019 budget process which will lead to the adoption of a budget that should be progressive, responsible and fair to all New Yorkers. We will start by hearing testimony from the MTA Chairman Lhota following a brief recess. The Committee will reconvene at 3:00 p.m. to hear testimony from DOT Commissioner Polly Trottenberg. Let's begin by giving the floor to our speaker, Cory Johnson.

COREY JOHNSON: Thank you, uhm, good morning. I'm Corey Johnson, speaker of the New York City Council and I would like to begin by welcoming everyone to today's Fiscal 2019 preliminary budget hearing on the Metropolitan Transit Authority and the New York City Transit Authority. Today we will hear from the Chairman of the MTA Joe Lohta. Joe, I appreciate that you accepted my invitation to testify

today and I look forward to collaborating with you to find creative solutions for our public transit problems that will benefit residents of the city.

Ronnie, it is good to see you as well. I thank you also to Council Member and Chair, Ydanis Rodriguez, Chair of the Committee on Transportation for holding his hearing and for continuing to be a leader for efficient, affordable and accessible transportation across the five boroughs. Everybody knows that the state of our subways is currently unacceptable and does not meet the needs of a first class city like New York. Like the millions of other New Yorker's who rely on the subways to get to work I took it here this morning. I took the 3 train from 14th street. It was packed, packed like sardines like people couldn't get in the car it was so packed. They had to wait for the next train. So for folks who take subways to get to work, to doctor's appointments and to pick up their kids each day I can personally attest to the fact that things are getting worse. Subway platforms and cars are more crowded as I said, the delays are excruciating and information for frustrated riders in the past has been nonexistent and I know you are changing that. And at the same

time, the quality of service has been declining and fares have been increasing. For some, to unaffordable levels and while that is but a brief description of the problems at today's hearing we are here to focus on solutions. Last summer after a number of high profile and dangerous incidents, the Governor declared a State of Emergency for the New York City Subway System. In response, Chairman Lohta unveiled a Subway Action Plan in an effort to stabilize and improve the system while laying the foundation for modernizing the subways. The action plan sets forth two phases: Phase 1 which the MTA promised would begin immediately and deliver results within one year will expedite signal repair, accelerate the repair of potential track issues, increase the frequency of station cleaning, increase car reliability and revise customer communications protocols. Phase 2 will detail long-term system wide improvements such as adopting a new signal system and purchasing better subway cars. This type of action plan is long overdue and the council commends the MTA for putting forth specific proposals to address short and long-term goals for fixing the system. However, before the city jumps in feet first to support the

plan, there are several critical issues that need to be addressed. First, is the issue of funding; Phase 1 of the action plan costs \$836 million and the state assumes half of the cost will be born by the city. As I stated in my testimony before the State Legislature last month, while it is true that city residents benefit immensely from the subway system, we are hardly its sole beneficiaries. Tri-State residents from all over the region rely on the subway when they come to the city for work or for play. Given the significant contribution, the city and its residents already make to the Transit System it is hardly fair to ask the city to be only municipality to have to chip in. That being said, I do support some level of additional contribution to the subway action plan and the larger MTA capital budget by the city. This might include a new revenue stream such as congestion pricing or a direct subsidy. However, I do think that any direct subsidy should be a one-time occurrence rather than on a recurring basis because doing otherwise would lead us down a slippery slope but regardless of the form that such a financial support may come in it is absolutely imperative that the city's money go directly to

improving the subways and nothing else. This cannot be another opportunity for the state to siphon the city's money away for other priorities and I have I said before the city's contribution must go in to a lock box, preferably one without a key. I know you Chairman Lohta have said this money would go directly to the subway system in New York City and nowhere else in the MTA budget. Clearly increased accountability has to go hand and hand with a guarantee from the MTA on the use of the city's funds. In exchange for any contribution, the MTA will have to agree to complete transparency and regular reporting. Funds need to be spent efficiently with clear time lines and appropriate oversight. This is non-negotiable. Lastly, the city is not interested in funding superficial station renovations that do nothing to improve service. The city must be assured that infrastructure upgrade and signal modernization will take priority over other types of projects. The council has been encouraged by Chairman Lohta's willingness thus far to work with the city council to address our concerns and priorities and I look forward to continuing that partnership over the next months and years. Let me

finish with this, I am really glad you are here. I am glad that you and your team came the other day to Democratic Conference to answer questions about the Subway Action Plan and to answer questions about individual member's concerns. It is great to work with you, I really appreciate it. People just want "Goddamn results". That's all they way. People want subways that work for them. People want to be able to get to work on time. People want a system that is going to work and what people do not want and I don't want is to be in the middle of a political squabble from Albany and from the city. I care about results. I care about getting things done for the 6 million riders that take it every day and anything that this council can do to help make that happen, we stand willing and excited to do so but the gamesmanship is unacceptable for us. I take the subway literally almost every single day. I have taken the subway every day for the past 18 years. I have never owned a car. I know what it is like to be a strap hanger on a daily basis and the needs that exist of course are gigantic but it is my hope that we will get things done in the short term and in the long-term. Now of course, we are focus on the Subway Action Plan

as I mentioned in my opening statement but the larger questions here is: How do we modernize our subway system so it is a 22nd Century subway system that fits a world-class city like New York City. How do we do that? I don't want us to take our eye off the prize which is the short-term improvements that need to be made, of course are key but I don't want to come back in 2 years or 3 years from now and have a similar conversation. I want us to come up with a long-term plan that will get the revenue necessary to fix the system. I saw Chairman Lohta that in the news the last few days that you are potentially pushing for a vote on the MTA board for congestion pricing. You are shaking your head, I guess the news is wrong, well I would welcome that because I support congestion pricing but I think the immediate thing that we could do is actually put a surcharge on for hire vehicles that could raise us some immediate revenue which could go into the MTA beyond a for hire vehicle surcharge I support a broad and robust congestion pricing plan which will disincentivize cars from coming in to Manhattan, be enough of a charge that it raises a significant amount of money for the MTA while at the same time disincentivizing

cars and your leadership and the MTA's leadership in helping making congestion pricing a reality is key. I speak on congestion pricing as an individual not for the entire body. There are members that still have issues with the plan and we will of course talk about those issues moving forward and I respect my colleagues in the process in how they need it addressed but again I'm grateful that you are here, I'm grateful that you came the other day. I have a series of questions for you and I want to turn it back to my friend and the chair of this committee, Chair Ydanis Rodriguez.

CHAIR YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Thank you speaker for your letters about the council, especially when it comes to transportation and for giving me the opportunity to chair the Transportation Committee and finally when the speaker says, we have seen a new bridge, Mario Cuomo Bridge built, not very expensive and on time. We have seen La Guardia Airport going to through major renovation. We have seen UPK borough the lowest numbers of crime in the city so when they stay in the city, listening to New Yorkers we get things on time and with less funding, now is our time to listen in to the frustration of

the 8.5 million New Yorkers and the visitors and really take our transportation system to the 21st century making it more efficient and safer for everyone. The MTA calendar of 2018 Adopted Operating Budget Balancing included more than \$1 billion in city subsidies. The authorities proposed 2015, 2019 and \$32.4 billion Capital Program appears fully funded. We look forward to having the Chairman of the Committee on this stage of the transit system and its funding sources. Due to a year of negligence, overcrowding and delays have become the new normal creating a strain on the social economy was being over resonance. This is unacceptable and I know that this is something that the Chairman and his team understand. We hope that the MTA will elaborate on the details of the Subway Action Plan, the progress it has made in the first 8 months of the plan and what changes should be expect in the next 4 weeks. An efficient subway system has real human and economic impacts and overwhelming majority of New Yorkers blame subway delay for being late to work, doctor's appointments, school and being with their families. These delays causing New Yorkers hundreds of millions of dollars, most of the time they happen

because of failure in our all signal system or track fire like the one we say yesterday at 96th street on the one line. Our updated system is keeping hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers with disabilities from fully participating in our economy and navigating our city with often times much longer commutes. Our bus system has not been able to provide reliable services and reach New Yorkers in transportation deserts; both ridership has declined 21% over the past 15 years. Some of that is due to updated bus route and the lost opportunity of not employing technology to enforce clear bus lanes. As we make this transition to the new fare payment system I look forward to the MTA making a real commitment to implementing although aborting to ensure passenger can get on the bus much more quickly. New Yorkers and visitors demand and deserve a 21st Century transportation system. We need to obtain bigger and bolder not just when it comes to investment but procurement policy as well, except it cause employer delivery delayed are persistence in capital improvement projects and the MTA must increase transparency because the public should know how tax dollars are spent. We expect a lot of from the Chairman and the rest of the New

Literacy at the MTA. We look forward to hearing how the MTAs budget reflect the urgency and diligence with which describes him must be addressed. Before we hear from the MTA, let me take a moment to recognize our colleague who had joined us this morning. They are council members Diaz, Van Bramer, Yager, Deutsch, Lander and Menchaca. Now we will hear from the MTA Chairman and his team.

JOE LOHTA: Thank you Mr. Chairman, good morning and members.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: (background) I'm sorry.

JOE LOHTA: All members of the city council who are here.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: One second gentleman, we need to.

LEGAL COUNSEL: I'm going to have to administer the affirmation. Okay. Please raise your right hand.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Joe, you don't have to stand up.

JOE LOHTA: I don't.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Actually I like that, we are going to require that moving forward.

JOE LOHTA: You can't swear the truth unless you are standing.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

LEGAL COUNSEL: Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth in your testimony before this committee and to respond honestly to council member questions?

JOE LOHTA: So help me God yes.

LEGAL COUNSEL: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: We are holding you to that.

JOE LOHTA: Good morning Chairman Rodriguez and members of the city council. My name, as you would image is Joe Lohta, Chairman of the MTA, with me to my left is Ronnie Hakim. She is the MTA Managing Director. To her left is Doug Johnson. He is the Budget Director for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. We are here at Council Speaker Corey Johnson's invitation to discuss the Mayor's fiscal year, 2018 preliminary budget as it relates to the, actually it was the 2019 preliminary budget as it relates to the MTA. This year's MTA operating budget is about \$16 billion, close to \$1 billion of that will come from, directly from the New

York City Budget, representing 6.5% of our overall budget. Funding directly from the New York City Budget monies which are only used in the city of New York support the operations of MTA New York City Transit, MTA bus and the Staton Island Railroad. It is also used to maintain commuter rail stations located within the 5 boroughs. The break out of the \$1 billion in operating funding from the city is as follows: \$45 million to partially offset free and reduced fares for New York City school children. This amount has remained flat since 1996, in spite of the fact that we have had numerous increases in fares over that time. \$14 million for our reduced fare program for the elderly. This amount has also remained flat; however, since 1978. \$189 million for para-transit representing just 35% of its cost, \$95 million for station maintenance for the 36 commuter rail stations that are located in the 5 boroughs, \$161 million to pay local match for state aid payments, \$498 million to reimburse the MTA for the cost of MTA bus, the agency that was created at the request of the city to run the formally franchised private bus lines and finally \$64 million to partially offset the MTA for the cost of the Staton

Island Railway. In general, much of what we get from the city's budget is tied to formulas. I might add, inequitable formulas. As a result, the percentage burden born by the city has decreased dramatically over the years. Para-transit I believe is a perfect example. The money we get from New York City to finance Para-Transit operations is capped at 120% of the prior year reimbursement, in spite of the fact that there are ever increasing number of user, much greater than 120% per year of Para-Transit riders. This is what the formula has meant to the MTA over the years. In 1994, Para-Transit cost a total of \$15 million, the MTA paid \$8 million of that representing 53% of the total. In 2017, these costs went to \$474 million and the MTA paid \$288 million, an increase of 3,500% and over \$100 million more than the city share. Along with the weakening operational support for the MTA, New York City's budget does not fund the Subway Action Plan despite the request from last July when the plan to introduced to combat declining Subway performance. After the Governor declared a State of Emergency to deal with the delay crisis our first course of action was clear, we had to start to immediately reverse the decline, that is why as one

of my first acts as Chairman, we introduced this plan, first to stabilize and then to modernize the subway system. We are implementing the plans first phase right now, I believe it is working. We are improving wait times, increasing the distance between subway train breakdowns, reducing the number of major incidents, resulting from signal track and power failures, we are tracking our progress, we are reporting it to the public on our new dashboard but let me be clear, I know we are far from being finished. I know we have a long way to go before New Yorkers experience and feel the improvement. I will not be satisfied until I feel the improvement. There are 2 main reasons why the plan is working: First the improvements we are seeing can be directly attributed to the extraordinary efforts of our transit workers and their managers working day and night under the plan to install miles of new track, repairs thousands of right of way and station defects. Second, it is our new leadership team in place for less than a year, has dramatically improved the way we schedule and coordinate work along and within our tracks. We have revamped this entire process to maximize productive work type and reduce

unnecessary overtime. We are saving even more time by ensuring that we have all of the necessary people and equipment ready to go at the job site, exactly when they are needed. The end result, is that we are getting more work done, more efficiently, more effectively and saving hundreds of millions of dollars in the process and we are expanding these new rules to other subway work. All new contracts will incorporate all of these new rules. Have been accomplishing meaningful, productive work on the weeknights as well as the weekends and we are going to get many, many years of deferred maintenance work completed just this year. Governor Cuomo's Executive Budget includes capital and operating support to fund the State's half of the \$836 million Subway Action Plan. The City's Budget has not made such a commitment. As a result, the benefits of this plan, as strong as they are to date have been muted and we will be unable to implement the plan as quickly as we originally envisioned it. This lack of support is especially disappointing in light of the analysis issue this past August by the City Controller showing the New York City Economy is thriving. New York City's economy grew 3.3% in the second quarter of

2017. This outperformed the nation's growth rate in the same quarter and is double the city's growth rate from the second quarter of 2016; the number of employed New Yorkers jumped by more than 87,000, the largest increase in more than 3 decades. These new New Yorkers and newly employed New Yorkers are using our subway system and bus system every day just like New Yorkers have been doing forever and it makes me wonder and a question for you Council Members, what better time now to invest in our transit system? What better time to invest in a plan that is working that's goal is to fix our subways? And if we can't invest more now, when can we? The challenges facing our nation's oldest transit system stem in no small part from the decades of under-investment but if there is any good news in these challenges it is that they have spurred a much needed broader look at the weaknesses inherent in the MTA's Financing Model. They have clearly shown that the MTA needs new and consistent revenue sources because we simply cannot limp from crisis to crisis. In this regard, we are encouraged by the robust conversation happening about congestion pricing as a solution to both the city's traffic woes and the MTA's long term financing needs.

The Governor has proposed legislation that would allow the MTA to capture some real estate value that results undeniably and directly from the renewal enhancement and expansion of the city's indispensable transit system and collaboration with the city is absolutely essential. We want to build a stronger partnership with New York City Council to address these long-term challenges because as everyone here knows our transit network is fundamental to the economic well-being of the city. It is what allows New York City to have 4 times the job and population density of the next largest city in this country. The subway system is quite simply the fuel that powers our \$1.4 trillion regional economy which also makes up 11% of our nations GDP. Overall, I would say the city is getting quite a bargain from its investments in our subway and bus network. To wrap up, members of council I want to thank Speaker Johnson for the invitation to join you today even as a speaker. The MTA very much looks forward to working with you, Mr. Chairman and looking forward to working with you and all the members of your committee and all the members of council to strengthen the partnership between the MTA and the

City of New York. I want to once again assure you that I will not be satisfied until the MTA is back on track and that all of our customers, your constituents have a greater sense of reliability when they get on to our subway and bus system. Thank you for this opportunity, my colleagues and I are happy to answer any and all questions that you may have. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you Chairman, now let's go on to the speaker to ask questions and then we will follow with other questions.

SPEAKER COREY JOHNSON: Thank you, thank you Chairman, good to see you. Uhm, the Subway Action Plan as we understand it as you said will help alleviate some of the immediate problems causing delays and overcrowding in the system. The cost for Phase 1 includes as we said before, \$836 million, \$508 million is operating costs and \$328 million is capital related of which the city and state have been called on to split evenly. At this point, the city is not committed to providing that additional funding even though I remain open to it. What are the contingency plans for the Subway Action Plan if the funding requested from the city is not appropriated?

JOE LOHTA: Mr. Speaker, thank you for your support for the plan. Uhm, the, if in fact we don't receive the amount of money from the city, we laid out at the last board meeting of the MTA the how we would phase in the Subway Action Plan. It would be stretched out over a longer period of time. The core principal in developing the Subway Action Plan last July dealt with dealing with it in a surge fashion; doing as much as we possibly can to get back to a state of reliability. By not having the full amount of money, we would have to stretch it out over a longer period of time and therefore re-stagger it. Much of what we have been doing in the Subway Action Plan is hiring workers to get back to the level that we were back in 2008 and 2009, those workers that were so critically important to maintaining the maintenance necessary to keep a system as old as the subway system up and running. By not being able to hire them as quickly as we would like, the program as I said would need to be phased in over time.

SPEAKER COREY JOHNSON: And if, uhm are there other resources on the table including a re-allocation of internal MTA funds, could you all re-allocate what is in your budget right now to cover

the Subway Action Plan cost if the city decided not to go 50/50?

JOE LOHTA: Well, we, we, we are always constantly looking for ways to be more efficient and effective. We had a program to eliminate our gap to the tune of over a \$1 billion over the last few years so not a day goes by when we don't look for ways to re-allocate. However, given the size of what we do and the number of passengers that we have, uhm this surge is above and beyond our existing needs. We will do everything we can to try to find the mon... the funds but I'm not sure that it will as good as being able to have a partner in the City of New York.

SPEAKER COREY JOHNSON: So if the city were to contribute the \$418 million at the Authority is seeking how much say in the decision making process would the city have with the Subway Action Plan spending? It sounds like you have already identified everything that you think needs to happen so how does the city really have a say if the plan has been baked already?

JOE LOHTA: Well I'm I'm glad you added that on after the question because I think that is at the core. The plan has been laid out. I would be

more than happy to sit with the city to go over the plan, what we have done to date, what we want to do today, why we think it is important to get done in the order in which we have put it together. I am always willing to sit down and talk to the city and my job is to convince them that the plan that we put together is the, is the right approach. There may be disagreement and we will find a way as I always have with the city to find a way to compromise.

SPEAKER COREY JOHNSON: So I think it would be helpful for you to detail for us and for the public, when we look at the \$836 million that is needed for the Subway Action Plan, 33% of it is for operating costs, 50% for capital cost for car equipment as it relates to car equipment, 33% for operating costs, 50% for capital cost and then the amount of signals which the public hears over and over again, there are signal problems, there are signal problems, we have delays because of signal problems is relatively small, can you explain how you have gotten to the amount that you have gotten to for signal related work and talk about water issues, talk about track repairs, and how all of those things fit together?

JOE LOHTA: Absolutely. When you look at the number that talks about the signals, it is talking about directly working with the signals but you also have to understand that every amount of money that we want to spend on power is directly related to the signals. The power problems, the surges that have been experiencing from Con-Ed have a direct impact on the signalization and the signals that go on. So that you know when I prioritize them into different buckets, each one of those buckets are interrelated, without any doubt, the overall goal of the Subway Action Plan, the primary goal if you will if the Subway Action Plan is to deal with signals. Water is having to deal with signals. Power has to deal with signals. The line items that is called signals directly relates to the box and the red, green and yellow lights that are on the side. That is the direct hardware and the work necessary. All of it is dealing pretty much with signals. The same with tracks, is directly related to signals so the isolation that the dollar amount that is identified as signals is not the correct way to look at it.

SPEAKER COREY JOHNSON: What's, what's that amount of money for signals? That is

specifically for signals that is put into the Subway Action Plan:

RONNIE HAKIM: So there are uhm as the Chairman noted, there are 2 types of money that is included in the Subway Action Plan. The operating budget money and supported also by a capital program investment. So, in our capital program, for the Subway Action Plan there is a specific line item for \$34 million for signal modernization but that's not the, that's not the entirety of what we are investing in signals. We are also improving the infrastructure so a signal breaks, it malfunctions, if water drips on it, so we have to manage our water problem in the subway system as well. The signal breaks, it malfunctions if there is a defect in the circuitry that touches that signal, that travels the power to that signal so we have to address the power and the circuitry as well. So the numbers actually totality get closer to \$200 million of that \$836 that we have been talking about in that Subway Action Plan.

SPEAKER COREY JOHNSON: That's helpful.

JOE LOHTA: I would also add that we've got I believe, and correct me if I'm wrong but almost \$3 billion in the capital plan for signals. That

amount is being re-tooled and has been since I've been back to get much more of it done and much more of the system into the new modern systems. We would be more than happy to talk about.

SPEAKER COREY JOHNSON: Okay so you recently indicated to the council that in addition to the approximately \$418 million for the Subway Action Plan you are also requesting approximately \$150 million per year in future years to support the Subway Action Plan which is primarily an operating cost related to new personnel that would come on for the plan; however, when you announced the Subway Action Plan last summer, you stated that you were asking the city and state to fund the initial cost and that you would "Do your best to find efficiencies and revenues necessary to go out in future years." So what has changed since then? Why are you now asking the city to help fund those future year costs?

JOE LOHTA: The future year costs are not the total amount of the costs. We are finding funding for the differential between the two. The the uhm, yeah we will continue to always have what I call programs to eliminate our out year gaps or out year projected deficits because that's the only way

to keep the system as efficient and as effective as possible.

SPEAKER COREY JOHNSON: Has the state agreed to fund those future year costs as well?

JOE LOHTA: We've had discussions with the state as you know, unlike the city, they don't do 4 year financial plans and because of the Financial Control Act and the requirements, we actually do follow the city the way the city does it's budgeting and financial plans at the MTA so it's hard to. You know, we have had discussions with the state that this is an ongoing program but whenever you talk to them they always say it is one year at a time.

SPEAKER COREY JOHNSON: During the last vote at the MTA's Capital Plan Amendment to include the Governor's Station Improvement Plan, the city's four representative were forced to vote no on the entire plan on the entire plan changes as voting on the plan changes are structured as an all or nothing vote. They couldn't vote on a partial part of the plan, they had to vote on the whole plan and they voted no. If the city's representatives agree with 90% of the plan changes they would have to vote no on the entire plan for the 10% they were not in favor

of. Would you consider changing this approval structure to allow for partial approvals?

RONNIE HAKIM: Mr. Speaker, may I ask a clarification?

SPEAKER COREY JOHNSON: Yes.

RONNIE HAKIM: Because I wasn't quite sure which vote you were referring to.

SPEAKER COREY JOHNSON: I believe I am talking to the vote related to the Subway Station Enhancements where some of the members did not want to vote for that so they ended up voting no on everything even though they agreed with a lot of the stuff that was in the amendment.

RONNIE HAKIM: There were two things I think that you are referring to. There was a recent vote on the Enhanced Station Initiative Program where we were recommending to award 2 contracts for another set of Enhanced Stations. Uhm, the 4 city members, I think 3 were in the room actually chose to vote no which is absolutely within their prerogative. That is not though the Ultimate Plan Amendment Vote that was taken last spring where we had everybody's support at that time.

SPEAKER COREY JOHNSON: Would you consider changing the approval process so that they wouldn't have to vote all or nothing on these amendments?

JOE LOHTA: They don't ha... they already have the ability to do that. These were contracts 2 months ago to implement what they had all voted for originally and all we were doing and we break them down into various different component parts. There were three stations. There were 2 contracts, each one had 3 different stations and they were voted on on just those, not the entire contract.

SPEAKER COREY JOHNSON: I'm asking about the whole capital plan, the Capital Review Board Plan.

JOE LOHTA: Well the Capital Review Board, that's, that's different. They in fact did vote in favor of that, they did not vote no in connection with the capital, with the overall Capital Plan. With that being said, it is one that as you know it comes to the board. It goes before first to the board and then it goes to the capital program review board of which there are numerous negotiations. A little bit of a description. The

Capital Program Review Board was set up by the state back in 1981, 1982 time frame if I recall and it basically when it comes to the Capital Budget, specifically for anything that is on the New York City Transit, their members include a representative of the Governor, a representative of the speaker, the assembly, a representative of the majority in the Senate and a representative of the Mayor's office. The rules of the Capital Program Review Board are quite unique within our government in that any one of the members can veto anything so it requires us to sit down and negotiate because any one of the members have basically similar to what I consider security council rules. If they don't like what's in there they can veto it. So it requires everyone to sit down together prior to having that meeting and going through each and every line item to figure out what is acceptable, what is not acceptable and it is a classic negotiation process that goes on. That's the opportunity for which representatives of the Mayor have a clear opportunity to be involved in what's in or what's not in.

SPEAKER COREY JOHNSON: So the Citizens Budget Committee came out with a report recently and

they said the recent amendment reduced the state of good repair, normal replacement commitments from \$12.7 billion to less than \$12.4 billion decreasing sums dedicated to signals and communication systems, subway cars and line equipment so even though Chairman you mentioned approximately \$3 billion for signal upgrades that was already included in the MTA Capital Budget the Citizens Budget Commission is claiming there is actually a decrease as it relates to the much needed improvements from an infrastructure perspective that we are talking about.

JOE LOHTA: Have to be careful about what the Citizens Budget Commission writes; it is actually an increase over the prior Capital Budget. It is on a percentage basis, possibly less than what was originally envisioned when the budget came together but there are, you know, the amount of money that we are spending on new cars which increased the size of the Capital Budget I believe is very important and so when you look at the total, what they are talking about is just percentages, the dollar amounts are more but given the cost of what it takes to purchase new cars, the new R211s I believe they are called, you know, just became, you know we need to get new

cars. There is no question so it's a, you know as I said you have got to be careful as I have always been with the Citizens Budget Commission on making sure that you fully grasp, they grasp the reality of the situation.

RONNIE HAKIM: And I think it is important to be specific on this point, Mr. Speaker which is the Capital Program and the Plan Amendment that you are referring to includes over \$2.7 billion with a B dollars for signals. There was a shift of \$38 million with an M dollars because of the R211 procurement that the Chairman just referenced, which is their signal equipment that is included on new cars and some of those new cars are actually not being delivered until the next 20 to 24 program so we reallocated the money that is associated with the cars being delivered in the next program but the ultimate commitment of over \$2.7 billion was consistent.

JOE LOHTA: So did you all have a chance to read John Raskin's "A bed" in the Daily News today.

COREY JOHNSON: His staff was good enough to give it to me prior to this and...

JOE LOHTA: Did you read it on the subway ride here?

COREY JOHNSON: Uhm, no I didn't, I don't buy the Daily News, sorry.

JOE LOHTA: You don't buy the Daily News.

COREY JOHNSON: I don't.

JOE LOHTA: It's New York's hometown paper.

COREY JOHNSON: I've lived here my entire life and you know, somebody I'm sure in the office has a copy, I will read it.

JOE LOHTA: So you buy the Times?

COREY JOHNSON: Actually, yes I do actually. (laughing) And I buy the Wall Street Journal.

JOE LOHTA: Well I can give you a copy of the.

COREY JOHNSON: No but I do have a copy.

JOE LOHTA: You have a copy.

COREY JOHNSON: Your staff was kind enough, the staff was kind enough to give it to me and I in fact did read it right before. And what do you think?

JOE LOHTA: Well I uhm, I wish John Raskin spent 10 seconds in my shoes to fully understand as you know, given his background as an advocate and as a Chief of Staff to a State Senator he does very, very good work but without sitting in my shoes to fully understand that we have gone through years, possibly decades of underinvestment and disinvestment in the subway system I think someone referenced before 8 months, I counted 7 months, regardless, we, everything we are doing to stabilize the system to get it into a state of reliability I think is exactly what I need to do. We are in the process of developing a Capital Plan, the next Capital Plan. That next Capital Plan will include money for new modern signalization, new modern cars, new modern efforts. We need to do. We, we are working on that now. I think the gist of this, the idea that the MTA Rescue Plan is a distraction from the much needed overhaul I think is just absurd. It's a combination, like the Mayor I can do 2 things, I can walk and chew gum at the same time. I can actually work on a short term program and a long term program at the same time. This column is nothing more than a cheap shot.

COREY JOHNSON: I have a couple of more questions then I want to hand it off to my colleagues who are all patiently waiting to ask questions. Uhm, so you are not looking for the MTA to have a vote on congestion pricing? You shook your head when I.

JOE LOHTA: No, so let's, here's what happened at the last meeting as I end every meeting and I've encouraged board members now in some separate meetings to take advantage of the fact, do I say are there any, uhm, any additional questions, comments, business that we need to bring before the Board. A Board member who happened to be a member of the Fix NYC Board said, two things: I'd like to have the folks who developed and wrote the fixed NYC report to come in and make a presentation to the board. I'm all in favor of that. The more education process that we have and the second was to have a vote on the plan. Uhm, you know it's a good question, what does that mean, the vote on the plan. I'm more than happy to have a vote on the plan; however, I do not in any way, shape or form want to get the MTA board in a position that disagrees with the legislature or the executive. Power regarding additional funding for the MTA belong with elected

officials. Not with the Board of the MTA. The Board of the MTAs job is to spend whatever they are given efficiently and effectively and I attempt to do that every second of every day.

COREY JOHNSON: Do you support congestion pricing?

JOE LOHTA: I have always supported congestion pricing. I supported Mayor Bloomberg in his Congestion Pricing Program of probably a decade ago, 2013. I said that congestion pricing should be put on the table when I happen to be doing something else in my life and as part of that but I also said that we need to do certain things before we actually get to congestion pricing. One of the things that I think is really fascinating about the Fix NYC report is that it does it in 3 pieces. There are 3 particular parts and the beauty of the particular parts is it requires planning to be done in parts. The first part hey MTA get your act together. The second part is hey city let's deal with the placard problem and third MTA and others try to figure out what technology would be necessary if we would implement congestion pricing. I think that planning part of it is very important and that's what I was

talking about in 2013. You just can't go willy-nilly into congestion pricing. You really need to have it developed in a substantive way, public discussions, public hearings, and understanding of the technology, how would it work. Also you know the impact, not just on the individual and their cars but also on the commercial vehicles, also on the for hire vehicles, how would it all work? And how do you, how can we take advantage of the digital world that we live in to be able to make it again as I said efficient and effective? So your question about the vote? Yeah, yes sir we could have a vote but it's not a vote in saying yes we should do congestion pricing, no we shouldn't. There are certain principals that were within the Fix NYC report that I think the board at the MTA should buy in to and that is let's do the proper planning. Let's let the Legislative and Executive Branches of Government who are involved in the developing the laws that would allow congestion pricing to go in to place, for help, let the MTA Board facilitate that process but not get in the way of it.

COREY JOHNSON: So you are not planning on having a vote?

JOE LOHTA: Uhm we will have a vote but on the principals of the...

COREY JOHNSON: On the principals not on the...

JOE LOHTA: On the principals of it.

COREY JOHNSON: Principals, okay.

JOE LOHTA: Because the plan itself is to too amorphous to say yeah or nay.

COREY JOHNSON: Okay, I'm going to end with this because there are a lot of folks that have questions. Uhm, you said to us the other day which was I think very, very helpful and I think it is great to have of course this level of interspection I would say that the MTA needs to do a better job at communicating with the public, not just when they are on a stranded train but generally with the public on how these planned improvements and how these capital dollars will actually help make the system better, both the operating dollars and the capital dollars and I, I would just reiterate to you and I would love to hear your thoughts on this, so you could say it for us and for the public where the MTA has fallen down in many ways. Most New Yorkers, the 6 million people that take the subway every day, they, they

just want to get to work on time. They just want to end up at an appointment on time. They don't want to be stuck in a train. They don't want to be stuck on a subway platform. They don't want to have unreliable service and they already feel nickel and dimed in New York City with property taxes and a variety of other issues that they feel like we are being screwed a little bit. So when it comes to the subway system which is the egalitarian, quintessential thing about New York City they need to understand how this plan is actually going to help them. It can't be conceptual, it can't be well we are going to eventually get the modern signal technology 40 years from now through a 5 year capital plan. They don't understand that nor should they. They don't care about that. They want to know how is this going to effect my day to day life on a regular basis, what are you going to do to ensure that we can get to work on time, that we try to get on the subways in the weekends, is not rerouted in 50 different directions because of the work that is getting done. What needs to happen? And so I think it would be helpful given that this is a hearing today. The press is here covering it, that you

communicate to the public, our plan is going to help you in this way.

JOE LOHTA: Sure, so let me, let me first state that an overwhelming majority and many people may disagree with me on this but the numbers and the facts bear, bear, support my effort. An overwhelming of the people get to their destination on time. I want all, everybody, to get to their destination on time. However, there are going to be certain circumstances where we may have to reroute because of some unfortunate circumstance. Some that are in our control and some that are not in our control. So I think it is important for us as an organization instead of having the pre-canned programs that were put in place a decade ago, we are saying, you know, we are being delayed because of a police action. You know what we ought to state exactly what is actually happening up front and we have started that process. Uhm, we also have to do a better job of talking about all the things that we have put on line. I mean it's amazing to me that most people don't realize that they have in their pocket, they have the countdown clocks for every single line in the system in their pocket. You can go on to subway time and be able to

find out when the next stop, you know, when the N or the R train are going to come here on Broadway or the 4, 5 and 6 across the street at the Muni Building and you know when the next one and the next three are coming and take advantage of that. Many, we are not doing a good enough job of marketing that to everyone. We will be coming out with a new, a new app that will allow people, pop in your address and it will give you, and where your destination is and it will give you three different ways in which to get there on our system, both on the subway and on buses and when walking and where to turn and all the rest of that. The other, you know, and to be able to understand the system better, I mean one of the things that we did with the new R211s is we actually had a model of the R211s. We had it up at the, up at the Westside yard, the Hudson yards and a model was up there, we advertized it. I monitored every day how many people came to see it, a lot of New Yorkers did but most members of council never came to look at what the new modern trains look like. I need your help as well, you need to get out there because people will follow what you do. It is very important, we put, we put advertisements out, we got

articles in the tabloids as well as in New York Magazine about it. We at least were able to get pictures up out there but I think it is important that people get an idea of what the new trains will look like, what features they will have and this is a train that has a feature that it's going to be 5 cars in one, the open gangway which allows you not having doors in between cars. It will be 5 car lengths long and it is important for people to see it combined with the fact that they have larger doors, which will allow more people to get on and off, as you talked about earlier how crowded the train was getting here today. Nothing is more emblematic of the system than the fact if the doors were a little bit bigger, more people would be able to exit and more people would be able to enter simultaneously so there are, there are all the things we have to do to explain the system and the other thing that I want to be able to do is because I've noticed this over time, having first taken the subway system in the mid 1950s, my feel for the system is I just kind of have a feel for how the system works because I grew up with it. Uhm, a lot more people need to understand how robust our system is, how interoperable it is, you know if there is a

problem on the 4, 5 and 6 and you are coming into lower Manhattan and you get to 23rd street, Union Square, there are other opportunities, you don't nec... you should be able. We need to do a better job of explaining exactly if you need to get to Fulton Station or you need to get to lower Manhattan there are multiple ways to get there. Uhm, just have a better understanding of how robust our system is; remember, as I didn't say this in my testimony the system was actually conceived in the late 1800s, it opened in 1904. It's quite ancient and as part of it we need to do everything we can to maintain it but as also, we also have to do a better job of explaining how it operates.

COREY JOHNSON: We deserve to have a system and I know that you agree with this that resembles major cities in Asia and in Europe where they have beautiful reliable systems that have modern day infrastructure. We are a long way from that, in the meantime I look forward to stabilizing the system with you and lastly I would say, if ultimately the City Council and this Administration decide to participate in the Subway Action Plan and splitting it with the state I would say that the negotiations

that take place beyond the Subway Action Plan but on other items that are important to members of this council whether it be express F train service to south Brooklyn or express bus service from the north shore of Staton Island or mid-Staton Island or service out in Queens on the 7 train, or service into the Bronx for riders that have a long commute into Manhattan every single days, you have council members and elected officials who have been pushing for better options for their constituents I really, really hope that as we start to have more earnest discussions about the money that the city would put forward that we could also talk about the MTA putting together and taking into consideration in a meaningful way that we will see results on these other issues which aren't directly tied to the Subway Action Plan but are tied from what council members hear from their constituents every single day. I want to hand it back over to the chair and I want to thank you Chairman and Managing Director for being here today.

JOE LOHTA: Thank you Mr. Chairman and you have my word on what you just said. I would be more than happy to sit with any members and actually

go through and in detail. Buy the Daily News it's not that expensive.

COREY JOHNSON: Somebody in the office has it. I read it ever, I read it every day, I read it religiously. He's got it. And he actually points out what I should read.

JOE LOHTA: Thanks, I need somebody to do that for me. Thanks.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you speaker and I would like to acknowledge another college who is here; Council Members Levine, Koo, Rose, Richards, Rosenthal, Brannan and Constantinides. I also would like to thank the staff who worked with us to put this hearing together from the Finance, Latonia, Regina, Nathan and Paul and also Milia (SP?), Jonathan, Aliya and of course Chima and John Basile. (SPEAKING SPANISH). We've been dealing with this crisis you know for decades and you have played a major role, especially, you know, bringing your expertise and leadership after Sandy you showed what a leader was to bring the system back on track on time but I have a few questions. One is in MTA established that in the proposal for installing the CBTC 1991 and 1997 the plan was to computerize the

whole system by 2017. I assume that that decision can weigh funding in the capital and expense of the MTA for those years 1991 and 1997.

JOE LOHTA: It did not.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Was that the case? Was there commitment at that stay or you was only like war and dream?

JOE LOHTA: Right it was.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Creating expectation to New Yorker but like 2017 we will have a computerized signal system completed again by last year; however, the only line that we have today is the L line and the plan to upgrade the signal system is 2045 it means I would be 80 years old if we follow the schedule. Of course, I know that you have different view, you have a different vision. What is that we should expect to cut the date of completing the signal system by today's 2045?

JOE LOHTA: So we are I will try to be brief because I am realizing the time and I am talking to long on each answer so I will be cut right to the point. 1) That the thing from 1991 that you talked about did not include funding. To directly answer the question. 2) We are in the process right

now, tomorrow we will be uhm unveiling the results of the Genius Competition that was put together last June and part of that is talking about new and different signalization systems. Separately we have been working on new wireless signalization systems. We believe and I believe personally that there are new technologies out there that can be installed quicker and faster but we are in the proof of concept stage at this point in time and testing it so once we know that is, we will be able to develop a plan that we will be able to share with you and the public on how quickly we can put in the signal system. Also the signal system needs to be done in a less, you know, quite honestly the signal system that was put on the L train was put in with the redundancy. The old system is there, the new system is there, the old system is maintained, the new system is maintained, you know that kind of duplication of effort is not necessary. There are other ways to do it faster. We need to do it faster and here's why. The new signalization system will allow us to have more trains come more frequently but remember, the cost of that is not just the signalization system, every single one of our trains are being used. We will

need more cars and those are even more expensive than the signalization system so I just want to say you know each one of these things trips into another category and the other part is signalization is not, you know, the modern signalization system, uhm, as you have talked about is not just how do you change the red lights to green lights and the yellow lights that you see on the side of the uhm of the right of way next to the track, what you, what you really have to do is each and every car or train talks to the all the other trains and the computer helps speed them up, slow them down so that we can do you know quite honestly our goal, well, right now on the #7 line when there are you know no other delays we are getting uhm we are something like 26 trains per hour, every 2 minutes and 30 seconds coming through during rush hour, through that, we would like to get that down to every 2 minutes. We would get many more trains per hour in there. That's the whole point of the signalization but signalization is complex but it also means not just signalization it is going to need all new cars.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: But the institution that has a value of \$1 trillion, the MTA, deciding

that it want to that here by 1991, repeat in 1997, there was a vision, a plan and they understood in it because the signal system as you have described here in another conversation was not accurate and we cannot continue running the train system with what we had and what we had today. So when, so are you saying that when did the MTA start investing, because you said there was no money dedicated for that plan so when did the MTA start dedicating funding to upgrade the signal system?

JOE LOHTA: So I will have to get back to you when they started the L but in addition to the L we have also now got all the hardware on the #7, we are in the finalization stages of doing the software necessary and we should see that mid-2018 so the #7 which goes from Flushing over to the Westside Yards will be at CBTC. The Queens Boulevard line is in, is in the budget right now as is the Cover (SP?) line which is the F line was also in line so those are in the, already in the budget. Those already have the planning and some of the implementation has already started uhm and the next Capital Plan is to lay out all of the other lines necessary; hopefully with new technology that is being develop right now.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Okay, can we expect that the priority in the Capital Management for this coming year and for the next few years will be focused on maintenance and repair?

JOE LOHTA: Yes.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: On transparency, how many companies bid for major MTA projects and what is being done to attract more bids from more contractors so that projects can be finished on time.

JOE LOHTA: Right.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: And with less money?

JOE LOHTA: So, so, uhm that really I think that is a capital related question, the large projects, we generally get 3 to 4 bidders, we need to get more. We need to do everything we can to encourage more companies to be able to provide bids. Look the problem exists for the MTA, the problem exists at the school of construction authority, the problem exists at the EEP. We need to collectively together work on making the projects that we work on and the organizations that we run more friendly, uhm, user-friendly. There are a lot of companies, there are large, large contractors and I can name some of them that won't come in and do business in New York.

Bechtel which is one of the largest contractors in this country will be more than happy to work on the subway system in Los Angeles but they don't bid on it here and I would like to. I am going to do everything I can to encourage more competition because from that we will get better results. It is a problem I recogni... I recognized when I came back. It is a problem that I am focused on.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Why is, hard, what are you, what should we expect under your leadership? When it comes to, when it comes to controlling, bringing more transparency.

JOE LOHTA: So so New York.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Sorry. Bring more transparency for New Yorkers to know how the MTA is spending the tax payers dollars for any project.

JOE LOHTA: So as I said, as I said at the Democratic Conference earlier this week. We have to do a better job of marketing. I encourage everyone here to go to the MTA website, click on transparency, click on every single one of the capital projects that is included on there. It shows you on a monthly basis how much has been spent, are we on schedule, are we behind schedule, how far are

we ahead of schedule, how far are we behind schedule, how much are we spending, how much did we spend in the prior period. It's, it's there, it's a robust system and I encourage everyone to look at it. Uhm, the, the and if there is more and if people have better ideas I would be more than happy to lay it out differently, provide that information differently. We have gone a long way to providing the information that is there. The number of reports that are put out whether it is by the Citizen's Budget Commission or Transportation Alternative or Mr. Raskin's group, they are all getting information directly from our website, I encourage. You know, it's there so I understand the need to talk about transparency but I also want to understand what is it that we are giving already that needs to be expanded.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Okay, what about busses? You, as you know transportation desert is real in our city in many places, Farouk, Albany, Bronx, Queens, Staton Island and what is a Bus Action Plan that we should expect New Yorker to see what happening in the administrate?

JOE LOHTA: The Bus Action Plan is going to be different than the Subway Action Plan. The

Subway Action Plan really talks about the deteriorating infrastructure that exists within the subway system due to the disinvestment that I have talked about over time. Most of our buses are brand new. Most of our buses are not and many of them are environmentally safe and sound including electric buses which we are trying out right, fully electrified buses that we are trying now and so it's not about the infrastructure it's about two other things, the routing and the congestion. I agree with you. There are certain parts that we need to evaluate. The demographics of the City of New York are changing quicker than ever before in history. People are moving in to what used to be warehouse districts and you know all type of work is going on. The Mayor (music playing) (laughing). Who doesn't like The Who? In any event, it through me for a loop there, in any event, we, we so we have to evaluate our routes, we have gone through the routes, the long term bus routes in Staton Island. We will be more than happy to work on it. I totally agree with you that we need to focus on the changing demographics to be able to mirror image. I also think on our buses and clearly willing to work with the city on

congestion, not just congestion pricing but you know I've been to Albany and I agree that the City of New York needs more red light cameras. I think the City of New York needs the ability to enforce the bus lanes. I want to see the buses flowing as quickly as possible. I agree with the folks who were outside before, we should have all door boarding, I talked about that at Board Meeting I think back in October or November of how important it is that with the new payment system that we are putting in place that we have all door boarding. All of those issues have to happen so I think the mechanics necessary and the and the Bus Action Plan are going to be very, very different than the Subway Action Plan.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Okay, there are 4 ideas to raise funding for the MTA. Congestion price, miliary (SP?) taxes, Denoish (SP?) Plan, Scott Stringer Plan, both all of those 4 ideas and proposed on the table can raise \$27 billion dollars in the next 10 years for the MTA. As you are open on the congestion price, don't you think that also we should look at the 4 proposals that we had on the table.

JOE LOHTA: I'm, I'm as I said publically I'm agnostic to the additional sources of funding.

This is a responsibility of the elected officials. I will be more than happy to testify on each and every one of them what works, what doesn't work, which ones have better credit worthiness, you know, how much of the use of the Capital Plan, how much would be used for the Operating Budget, how much can we, you know, the, the State Legislature made a decision back in 2010 that there would be a fare and toll increase every 2 years. There has been a lot of push back to that but there have been no additional revenues to be able to deal with that. We are on track right now for another fare and toll increase next year in 2019 so we need to have a discussion about the, what will the new Capital Plan look like and how much do we need for the Operating Budget. Uhm, I would be more than happy to work with anybody and everybody, as I said I'm agnostic as to which plan makes, as to which one works, because it's an elected, elected officials have a difficult job, I realize that, you are asking to take money from one area and give it to another area. My job is difficult in that I want to be able to prove to you that I can speed it as effectively and as efficiently as possible.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: So you know when I when I drive by through the, now the Mario Cuomo Bridge when the bridge was under construction I used to tell my daughter, you know look at this because we don't have that opportunity, big project happening sometime in our time. I think that all of us would like to be part of this legacy to transform our transportation system. We, I personally also feel that we should disclose how the city would increase a contribution by extending first that the city is making important contribution already. Second, that the city should know to which particular project those fundings will be going and third should the city have an increase of Board Members at the MTA, what do you think?

JOE LOHTA: Uhm, I regarding the last point, as you know, the Mayor has four appointees, the Governor is required out of his six members to have three additional appointees from the City of New York. You know, again, I inherited the Legislation that exists that is Legislation that comes through the Albany, if you want to propose changing to it, you know, talk to your representatives. I think you know my job every day is to make the trains run on

time, I, how exactly the governing structure works just gets me away from dealing with getting the trains to run on time so if you want to change any part of the governance, please talk to your State Senator, please talk to your Assembly Member, please talk to the Governor.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: We are and we will continue. I believe that this is a time where both the city and the state, we should sit in the room, we should come out a conclusion because this is about 8.5 million New Yorkers and the impact that we have not only has an affect in our city but also in the state and the national level. With that, let's start calling the Council member.

JOE LOHTA: Can I, can I remind the chairman for a second, because I, an hour and a half is what I gave, I have only 15 minutes left. I will do my very best to shorten this. I was here until 11 o'clock because I have another engagement but maybe I can do to 11:10 but that's about it and if I need to come back I will be more than happy to come back.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: I, to recognize Council Member Cabrera and now we are calling on our members because of the time, let's focus, let's put a

time on 2 minutes so that we can be able to accomplish our goal. Let's start it.

FERNANDO CABRERA: Thank you Mr. Chairman, good morning gentlemen.

JOE LOHTA: Good morning Council Member, sir.

FERNANDO CABRERA: You know, I sympathize with you. You don't need me sympathy.

JOE LOHTA: I need your prayers.

FERNANDO CABRERA: But I do sympathize with you and I'm going to tell you why. You are being caught between the fight of two colossals, of two, each one trying to big bill and you are in the middle. But the bylaws say that you cannot serve two masters. As you have a big problem, because as long as these two colossals keep fighting the rest of them the City of New York, the riders, the senior citizens, the wonder users, the subway and the buses are having a big problem and they will continue having the problem until those two yiyen (SP?) try to get together and put the people first and not their personal and political envision. Do, saying that Thursday, February 22, the MTA Board approved \$230 million plan to renovate subway station. I have a

problem in my district, some time ago Parkchester Subway Station was renovated and whoever did the plan, whoever did it forgot the handicap and forgot the wheelchair residents and they don't have an elevator there. Those, that money that was approved, are you intending to solve that problem?

JOE LOHTA: To answer your question first, I agree with you that you can only serve one master, my master are the riders period. Uhm, because that's, that's what I said to the Governor when I got this job uhm and came back to the MTA it's to serve the riders. Two, we have a separate part of the Capital Plan that deals with accessibility for the disabled both elevators and escalators separate and distinct from the subway, the Enhanced Station Improvements that are going in. Parkchester was not included in those projects. That was in the past and I will look up and see what happens with that. But uhm, we have a whole separate effort going on right now with our working group that I convened at the Board level with the Staff and the Board about how to increase our accessibility, how to increase our ability for disabled New Yorkers to be able to access

not part of the system but all of the system and we are in the process of working on that right now.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: I would like to encourage because it think that we can get into a, because of the go... because of the limited time, let's go directly to the question and Chairman after you. Sorry.

FERNANDO CABRERA: So, so can I make one more?

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: I would like to say yes but then we have the other Council Members that they would not be able to answer questions.

JOE LOHTA: So it's only, only one question, as a question but not necessarily the answer can be given or.

FERNANDO CABRERA: Mr. Chairman I was going to say that I get up at 5 o'clock this morning and I was here because I wasn't understanding what happened, I have my questions and it is kind of disrespectful for the Chairman to say I only have an hour and whatever I got to go. I mean we are elected members of the city, the City Council elected by our people to.

JOE LOHTA: I would be more than happy to come back.

FERNANDO CABRERA: I deserve, this is disrespectful. And so Council Member.

COREY JOHNSON: Thank you chair and I appreciate you being helpful here. Just quick questions, so thank you for being here obviously. I wanted to hear a little bit more so obviously the city sends a lot of money to the MTA and I'm interested in hearing a little bit more about a lock box scenario and how we are going to ensure that if the city is entertaining in putting Capital dollars in that that money is going to be spent in New York City and more importantly transparency to the Council would be something that we would want to hear a little bit more about, city ticket, so the City Ticket Program Pilot is coming to southeast Queens, Council Member Miller unfortunately is sick and could not be here but he wanted me to express his sentiment and my sentiment and other elected officials sentiments on the fact that it is being set up for failure because people are being, for you to gain access to the program you would have to go Atlantic Terminal so they do you get the letter, they are

present and many of us sent over saying that we believe that the pilot should focus to more people going in to Penn Station since many of our residents to go. Lastly, A train connectivity to the Ferry System so I know there needs to be some technologies around Metro Cards being accessible, access being accessible from the Ferry and Rockaways and lastly the issue, last two issues A train reliability as you know the Rockaways is very far from here and reliability has been a huge challenge and obviously handicap accessibility around stations in southeast Queens and I'm sure around the city so those four things as quickly as you can touch on those?

JOE LOHTA: Sure, regard, regarding a Freedom Pass which I think was one of the middle questions, I have not yet received the letter, though I had the luxury of reading about it in the newspaper so I have a gist of what was put together on that and we are evaluating the options. It is not set up for failure by any stretch of the imagination. We we need to determine how it would word. We also need to determine the amount of movement. When we originally talked about the program, we had thought that there would be less trains coming into Penn Station that

would allow for more mobility, so we have to look at all that, we have to take it into consideration.

COREY JOHNSON: So you are open to?

JOE LOHTA: I'm open.

COREY JOHNSON: Okay.

JOE LOHTA: Regarding uhm the Ferries, using the Metro Card, we have had discussions with EDC about it. EDC does not want to pursue it. You should ask whenever the President of EDC is in front of you, ask him why it doesn't work that way. I would be more than happy. Just like we.

COREY JOHNSON: Well they are saying opposite so we need to show.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: I'm sorry, because of time.

COREY JOHNSON: Fine.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Council Member Van Bramer followed by Council Member (INAUDIBLE).

JIMMY VAN BRAMER: Thank you very much I will try and be very quick, three things, first uhm I'm glad that council is open to working with everyone on providing more funding but one question that is persistent among my certainly constituents and people in Queens is uhm how effectively we are

managing the money that you do have? E site access? \$10 billion project, I believe you said uhm the other day serving 300,000 primarily Long Islanders, that is way over budget and long overdue. Also CBTC, obviously you are finishing it on the 7 train, that also of course ran over. Uhm concerned about how effectively we are spending the time, if we are going to provide more funding with city dollars, do you have the systems in place to correct what happened to the E site access? And even with CBTC since you are going to expand it and thirdly the L train, it's effect on Long Island City just transporting all the folks on the G train to our neck of the woods uhm already meeting an overcrowded 7 train, those 3 issues really succinctly.

JOE LOHTA: Real, real quickly, regarding E site access and CBTC Capital Programs, I agree we need, we are in the process with Jana Lieber, the new head of the capital program, our development officer finding new and better ways of doing project management. Project management has been abysmal on the capital side, I agree with you and Council Member Rosenthal who it has also been a big issue for her. We need to spend the, I'm a tax payer too and we need

to do a better job of spending this money. Uhm E site access and as I mentioned at the committee, I would be more than happy to bring any member of your council down to look at what has been done already and what is left to be done down there. It will be I think a great asset for the City of New York not just Long Island of what it will be able to do and then finally on the L train and Long Island City, uhm, you know part of what we did in the summer problem with the Long Island Railroad last year regarding Amtrak is we had an array of approaches and of different ideas and different ways in which people. We are going to have to, uhm early on with the closure of the L, of the tunnel, the Knoski Line Tunnel, be able to figure out, give people alternatives so we are going to have to figure out what's the, what works and what doesn't work. We won't know until it actually gets implemented but I understand. I mean I would like to get that project started and over with as quickly as possible so we can get back to normal.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Council Member Yeger followed by Council Member Lander and Deutch.

KALMAN YEGER: Thank you Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair I am here for about 67 days, as a young aide to

a Council Member in this chamber in the 90s and to our President I never anticipated sitting across from Joe Lohta and asking him questions. So welcome back to the Chamber that you own far more than I do. Uhm my question involves value capture. I know you are familiar with it and uhm you have an incredible history and legacy here in the City of Public Service. Uhm you've run far more things than the MTA. My question is, you know, and for those who may not be aware but I think you are aware very quickly the value capture would allow people to, would allow the MTA an unelected body to create a subdistrict of approximately a mile or there up to a mile around an improvement and essentially tax based on that 75% of the revenue going to the MTA, 25% going to the city and uhm with no expiration date. Uhm continue, it can continue in theory long past when the value is recaptured. When you were here at City Hall I think if somebody proposed something like that and an elected body imposing a tax on the people of New York City I don't think you would stand for it, I think you would be screaming from the rooftops Mr. Chair as that is your style and and I like it very much because that's that's what we need. This is, this is

a, a, a taxation without representation in the, in the very essence of what it is. I would like you to address that and I understand you have testified that you are agnostic about where the revenue comes from because your current role is as a fiduciary of the MTA to bring in what you can and spend it wisely but ultimately you are a New Yorker, you are a New York City Resident, uhm you will be paying for it in some way, particularly where you live and one quick question that you can tag on to the end, you testified that close to \$1 billion of the \$16 billion comes from New York City, does that include tax revenue, dedicated revenue sources or is that strictly the money that we write a check from here in the City of New York to the MTA? And does that also include Fare Revenue and if not can you add those numbers in, give us that money, that number and what percentage it relates to the \$16 billion. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

JOE LOHTA: The \$1 billion, the \$1 billion dollar number that I mentioned is money that comes directly from the budget, you get to vote on. All the other things that you have talked about, I don't have with me but I'll ask a staff member to be

able to provide it to your office Council Member.

Uhm, the value capture proposal does not put on an additional tax. There is a lot of misinformation about it and I'm working with the Legislature right now as they are developing their budget to discuss how there would be more city involvement, how there would be more of a partnership with the city, on how value capture increment financing would work. Let me just briefly, and I'll try to do this as quickly as possible and do this in a separate meeting on how value capture would work but essentially there is current, you know, when you, uhm this has been done by the way not in, in Chicago and Los Angeles, it has been done all over and so basically the city determines what the tax rate is, if the value of the area goes up above what it is today, directly related because of an investment. Similar to what happened with what Council and Mayor Bloomberg did regarding the Westside Yards. He was able to dedicate a piece of that to pay off the debt. That's exactly what the tax increment financing would do. If there is any incremental revenue above what is currently you know expected now and the city has a four year plan and that four year plan has growth rate within the plan

so it's not a constant or stagnant number, any amount above that is to be shared. I don't want to get into a discussion about the percentage because I think, I think that's, let's wait for the new legislation to come forward. With that said, it's a, it's a function of you know and I also agree that it needs to be tighter than a mile this way or that way, we need to, it needs to be more constrained. Uhm but the function is it has been a traditional financing structure in 48 out of the 50 states and all over Europe as well as in Asia and it is one worth having there. And I think.

KALMAN YEGER: But you testified yourself and your exact words were.

COREY JOHNSON: Sorry, member, Council Member, I'm sorry, its because of, let me let the chair. Excuse me, Council Member, end it now.

KALMAN YEGER: I'll let the chair conclude I'm done.

JOE LOHTA: I, I did state that it requires the elected officials and the elected officials would put together the program and I believe that you know each and every project would be a function of, of folks that have been elected at the

state and elected at the city and how they come to it on a project by project basis. Sorry.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: I apologize to my colleagues dealing with the pressures to be sure as many as of us to ask question. Council Member Lander.

BRAD LANDER: Thank you Mr. Chair. Thank you Mr. Chair. Last year as you were not yet in leadership but the crisis was beginning to come in view, what we got from the MTA at this preliminary budget hearing were two junior staff who answered none of our questions and the chair in mine and Chair Ferreras' heads were about to explode. So I appreciate you being here, I appreciate the leadership you are providing so far. I want to focus again on signals. Am I correct that the number one cause of subway rider delays are signal failures?

JOE LOHTA: Yes.

BRAD LANDER: Uhm, it loks that way for sure from the major subway incidents by cause charted on the dashboard but I will point out that dashboard does not current track all signal failures, it only collects the major one that's why we launched signal fail dot com which we are building out from your

twitter feed. Would you commit to put all subway signal failures on the MTA dashboard so all riders could see them?

JOE LOHTA: I think it needs to be broken down as to what causes the signal failure, because again it.

BRAD LANDER: That would be fine but right now you are only collecting. You only put the ones that cause major delays on which are an average of about 24 a week, there is about 38 a week according to our records, so if you would look into that, the dashboard ought to collect all information about signal failures, it doesn't currently. Check out.

JOE LOHTA: There are only 38 a week.
Okay, sorry.

BRAD LANDER: Uhm well since we launched it in November, 13 million riders have been delayed by those average of 38 a week signal failures so they are adding up but the public should not be able to get more information from our website than your website.

JOE LOHTA: I'll look into it. I'll look in to it.

BRAD LANDER: So I'd ask you to fix it and I guess here is where I would go, those 13 million riders delayed, the Subway Action Plan has added some money to repair the old signals but so far under your leadership we can debate whether we subtract it but we sure haven't added anything to modernize the system. Although with CBC's Budget Analysis, on our current patch it is going to take us 50 years. London and Paris are way ahead of us. Now I appreciate that you are testing the ultra-wide band radio technology in a top secret task that I read about in the Daily News so good reason to buy it as the, as the speaker said. I appreciate the genius grant that we are doing proof of concept but like someday I'm going to have a jet backpack that I can get around with. I can't wait until proof of concept of jet backpacks and I feel that is going to be sooner than when the signal system is modernized. If you are asking for more money, if you want congestion pricing which I do you've got to come to us with a comprehensive program to fix this signal in 15 years and not 50 years.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you Council Member.

JOE LOHTA: I agree. I totally agree and we will be doing it but as I said before, we are putting it, we are almost finished with the #7 train and then the Queens Boulevard Line is partially done already. We will continue with it, it will happen much faster, it has to happen faster. However, one thing I do want to highlight in in people to focus on and when they make these comparisons to places like Paris. There is no interoperability in Paris. There are one, there are lines goes from one line from point A to point B, they don't intersect, they don't change like the F train or the various different trains that we have here that are interoperable. That doesn't exist there and for the signal system it is a lot more complex because the signals are not just what is one the side of the road each and every one of the trains, each and every one of the cars has to be adapted.

BRAD LANDER: I don't doubt it's hard, when can we expect it.

JOE LOHTA: It's not hard.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Sorry, sorry, thank you council member.

BRAD LANDER: When we can we expect the plan. I'm sorry I just got to.

JOE LOHTA: Later this year, we will have a better idea of where we stand on ultra widening.

BRAD LANDER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Council member Deutsch.

CHAIM DEUTSCH: Thank you very much and I'm, I'm actually not going to expect any answers out of respect to my colleagues but the first question, I'm going to go out of order because my first question is not for someone on the panel, my first question is for one of my colleagues, here I want to know what a colossus is?

FERNANDO CABRERA: That is a Greek name for a person or a thing of no move.

CHAIM DEUTSCH: Okay thank you.

FERNANDO CABRERA: Statues of importance or ability.

CHAIM DEUTSCH: Thank you, gracias. Okay so I am now, my next question is uhm for Mr. Lohta, so I've noticed that the uhm the MTA over the last 4 years has not been as forthcoming as they have been and I appreciate over the last 2 weeks you have

really been a great partner coming to the council, speaking at the conference, being here today so we appreciate that. So also uhm we understand that the MTA is asking the city for over \$400 million dollars so that is a lot of money, we all know that and we have 51 council districts throughout our city so the question is oh so what is going to happen, what is the MTA going to do to tackle some of those issues the council members had over the last 4 years that you know if we do consider about giving \$418 million to take care of those issues that affect all our districts, because if, let's say I agree on \$418 million and the \$418 does not come into my district then I have a problem with that. So how are going to make sure that it is spread out? We all understand where the money? And what the money is being used for and how it is going to benefit all of our districts, that's my first thing. The second thing I wanted to mention is that we mentioned congestion pricing so I just want to bring up that we have I believe 3 HOV lanes throughout our city, Manhattan Bridge if you use the left lane of the upper roadway in downtown Manhattan. The second one Long Island Expressway in to Queens to the Mid-Town Tunnel and the third one

Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel onto the Gowanus Expressway. So many times when you are driving on these roadways the HOV lanes are completely empty because you need 3 people or more so if we make a charge for let's say, throwing out a number \$20 dollar if anyone three people or less wants to use the HOV lanes it will, two things will happen, you will get revenue city and state for those paying for the HOV lanes and #2, it will reduce congestion on those highways and those thoroughfares. Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you council member. Council Member Levine followed by Council Member Koo.

MARK LEVINE: Thank you Mr. Chair and Chairman Lohta, thank you for being here. The funding needs are your agency are so severe that we need every level of government chipping in, state for sure, federal and city as well. I do want to however correct the misimpression that upstate New Yorkers are somehow subsidizing the system. Yes, we put in a \$1 billion or more in direct money out of city coffers but as Council Member Yeger pointed out many of the taxes that are considered state funding are paid by us the Mortgage Transfer Tax, the Business

Petroleum Tax and others and then there is what we pay at the Fare Box but even the money coming out of the state fund I would argue that is mostly paid by people in the 5 boroughs, we send \$8 billion more per year to Albany than we get back. Uhm New York City is the economic engine of this state and the Transit System is the life blood of that economy so it only makes sense that we have robust state and other public investment in this system. In my remaining time I do want to focus my questions on an issue that you and I have spoken about which I know you care a lot about, the buses, New York City's other transit crisis and the wonderful technological solution of allowing buses to pass through intersections with the green light through transit signal priority. Now, a lot of that is on us because DOT controls the streets and the signals but we do need software on the buses. Can you tell out of the 5800 buses in your system, how many have the software upgrades for transit signal priority?

RONNIE HAKIM: We currently have traffic signal prioritization along 7 of our, our existing bus routes, we are of course, looking to increase that, uhm as well. I'm working with DOT very closely

in terms of the number of our buses, over the next several years, 5700 of our buses will be able to support the new TSP software and we are accelerating the addition of that, that software implementation.

MARK LEVINE: Do you know what the number is today?

RONNIE HAKIM: I'll, I'll get the specific number for you.

MARK LEVINE: Alright thank you Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you, Council Member Koo.

PETER KOO: Thank you Chairman I have 100 questions to ask but I am going to ask 3 today. The first one is as Chairman of the MTA your job is to provide safe, reliable and efficient public transportation for our citizens at a modest cost. So, uhm, my suggestion, my question #1 is when are you going to build those platform doors because everytime when we have somebody killed on the track and then the next day, the new thing you hear is the when are we going to build those doors? Every year a couple of hundred people die from it either by suicide or by pushing, crazy people push, passengers

to the tracks and I get when I ride the subway at night. I always watch along, make sure there are no crazy people around me. So that second question is we want you to stop building monumental subway stations, like the \$4 billion Oculus near the World Trade Center. It is a waste of money. I mean it looks good, it's a monument. MTA's job is to build efficient train stations not museums, you know. Why spend \$4 billion. Even the Fulton Square and the Fulton Station is a waste of time and space such as no use. Your job is to bring in more revenues from the space, being used for commercial and all of this other stuff, advertising but MTA is not doing those. So those are a few questions, platform doors, stop those monumental stations and then bring in more revenue from the stations, either digital or space wise.

JOE LOHTA: So, so and uhm one would I know, I know of no monumental stations that are under development under my watch so I fully understand your feelings about Fulton, I understand that. We, we have expanded and we are expanding our additional revenues coming into the system digitally, taking advantage of the fact that we have put now wi-fi

pretty much throughout the system, the ability to do digital is there. Regard platform doors, platform doors are going to be, we are, we are evaluating it, we are testing it now. Uhm, not the easiest thing to do because as I mentioned earlier, many if you think about some of the stations, especially down here that were built 115 years ago it wasn't expected, we already have narrow platforms. It will make the platforms even narrower, but as we look to new stations we can look to doing that, especially with the expansion of CBTC. We will be doing the experiment as we, when we close down the L as to what we will do with those doors.

PETER KOO: If you can...

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: I'm sorry Council Member.

PETER KOO: You can build gates, not, like, like amusement park gates, it's just 5 feet tall then people won't push people to the, to the tracks.

JOE LOHTA: Yes. Thank you.

PETER KOO: There is a barrier there.

JOE LOHTA: Just have to make sure all the trains stop where the doors open up, not the

easiest thing in the world to do since they are driven by ...

PETER KOO: Thank you.

JOE LOHTA: Right I'll stay, I'll stay.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Council Member Rosenthal followed by Council Member Menchaca.

HELEN ROSENTHAL: Thank you so much Chair Rodriguez, thank you for staying Chair Lohta. Uhm two quick questions, uhm both are in the spirit of bringing in more elevators. Uhm, for those who can't use the stairs, so the first one has to do with design and construction methods, uhm, given the outsized cost of phase 1 of the 2nd avenue subway, what will the MTA do specifically to bring down cost of phase 2, would you consider cut and cover station construction for instance or other construction methodology changes? And secondly, has to do with procurement. You have talked about just now the existing transparency mechanisms that are in place but I think that it's clear that very important gaps remain. For example, why does the MTA sign nondisclosure bid agreements with its contractors?

JOE LOHTA: So, uhm, we are looking at other methodologies. Part of the 2nd Avenue Subway

will be part cut and cover and part into the ground and you know it has already been built, portions of it has been built when you and I were children and Lindsay was the Mayor, part, they had the actual tunnels being built, we are going to connect to those tunnels that are already in the ground for the extension of the, of the 2nd Avenue Subway. Uhm, and I'll get back to you on the non-disclosure. I, it's the first time I have ever heard that?

RONNIE HAKIM: Do you want me to jump in?

JOE LOHTA: Sure.

RONNIE HAKIM: So quickly among the things that we are taking a hard look at, the Chairman has asked us to look at how we are doing procurement and cost containment in these large projects. Can we minimize our back of house space? Can we use designed built contract packages? Can we package the work differently? Can we eliminate customization of systems? Can we reduce the mechanical costs? All of that contributes to cost efficiency.

HELEN ROSENTHAL: I'd love to meet with you to hear more about the specific steps that you are taking?

JOE LOHTA: Great.

HELEN ROSENTHAL: Especially to get more bidders on projects.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you, Council Member Menchaca.

CARLOS MENCHACA: Uhm, Chairman Lohta, I think one of the things that we spoke about in conference is a real crisis of confidence where I feel New Yorkers just don't trust the MTA right now, don't trust them to get them where they've gotta go and uhm and I think that trickles down to electeds as well. So, if the city were to put in the \$418 million which has been said would be a one shot deal, how do we know? Or can you tell us that you wouldn't come back for personnel changes and stuff like that for more money? It seems you know the state of good repair has been sort of elusive so if we do put the money forward.

JOE LOHTA: So, so uhm the Subway Action Plan is an unique jumpstart program given the years of disinvestment. But, the, the construct of the MTA and it's relationship with the City and it's relationship with the State is probably best to find by the agreement in 2010 that we are going to be

coming back to the city and the state every 2 years for a Fare and Toll Increase, for other forms of revenue so I can't make that commitment but I can make a commitment that what I put together in the subway action plan is a jumpstart surge to get the system into a better state of reliability. I came back because I agree with you, there is a level of creditability program at the MTA. My, my respect to the organization, my respect for what it needs to do is what has brought me back. I want, I want to see it through to be able to make sure that that level of creditability. Now, I'll be honest with you, the creditability in the 1950s, you know, I was born in 1954, my first experience of running away from home when I was 4 years old in 1958, uhm using the subway system. There was a creditability crisis back then too, so I'm not telling you it, you know, it's part of being a New Yorker, we have to rail against something and the reality is that I will do my best not to make it the #1 issue and, and of one of creditability. Because we needed to get to work, we needed to get to the doctor's office, our children need to get to school, we need it, 24/7, 365, something I didn't say in my testimony but I can say

enough of the only subway system in the world open 365 days a year, every single day of the year. It is extraordinary but it also has provided for a problem in making sure the repairs happen. As you know, it is even in your district, you know on the weekends we are getting more and more shutdown because of the failure to keep up and you know I'm doing my best to get everything back so that we can have a little bit more normalcy.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. Council Member Constantinides followed by Council Member Cabrera.

COSTA G. CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you Joe Lohta for being here. I'm going to get talk very quickly so we can get all the questions in. Uhm, enhanced station initiatives. You are spending \$150 million in Western Queens to renovate 4 stations. The questions I have are: How are the SI packages chosen and prioritized? Why wasn't ADA programs such as elevators added to those stations we are doing a complete redesign? You are leaving out our seniors, our, our disabled community and our parents with strollers from being able to access the system. The, what is our plan for city wide accessibility? And

lastly, you know, closing these stations, I have a press release, I want to know how much is actually for needed repairs and how is for aesthetics? Uhm being honest, I have a press release here that talks about cleaning and brighter stations that would be easier to navigate and a modern look and feel. It has a list of 30 stations that were announced as part of this ESI program to improve the travel experience for millions of, of residents but without signals, without track improvements, having it being cleaner and brighter does not get us where we need to go but we are closing stations for 8 months at a time in western Queens, our businesses are hurting, our communities cannot get to where they need to go on time and frankly we are frustrated.

JOE LOHTA: Though, the biggest issue, the biggest issue we have with the Enhanced Station Initiative is nothing to do with cosmetics. It's nothing to do with...

COSTA CONSTANTINIDES: Then why was it in the press release, highlighted, that's the first thing they talk about in the press release for that event.

JOE LOHTA: The first thing that I talk about whenever I talk about it is structural. If I can ask the Sargeant of Arms to please hand this to the Council member. These are pictures of the stations in your district that you think do not need to be repaired. The work that is being done in ESI is to take, get rid of the rot and the amount of disrepair that has been in there. These state, they are all separate, they are all for the Council Member. Sargeant, they are all for him. They are all the same for his stations. These are the stations. The first foremost thing that the Enhanced Station Initiative does is it deals with the leakage problem and the rot and the infrastructure. While we are in there to shut down those stations we are also happening to change the lights, and paint them and all the rest of it. If it's your preference that we just put it back to the way that it was and not have the lights fine. But the fact of the matter is I still need to shut them down because they are such a state of disrepair, your constituents deserve to make sure that every day that they go on to those platforms that they are safe.

COSTA CONSTANTINIDES: I whole heartedly agree with you. I want my constituents to be safe, I want the trains to run as well.

JOE LOHTA: I can do more than one thing at a time. You know, it's a large organization, we can run the trains on time and we can rebuild the stations and we can expand the system and we can do lots of things. You know, the idea that you can only do one thing at a time, well, I think doesn't speak, doesn't speak, I find it absolutely amazing. We, the Government, whether it is the City, the State, the authority together we can do more than one thing at a time.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you, Council Member Cabrera.

FERNANDO CABRERA: Thank you, thank you, Mr. Chair. Uhm, New York City pays \$900 million to rake annual subsidies to MTA and \$900 million in kind contributions and your state claims to pay \$300 per year but 90% of that is merely appropriating dedicated taxes and fees. Do you think that should qualify on a State Contribution since you are asking New York City to foot half of the bill? And my second question for the second time here is in my

district, to start, #4 train had Council Member, Vanessa Gibson from 161st to Fordham Row we don't have ADA accessible elevator. When do you foresee that that will take place because we are in desperate, desperate need, in light of the fact that we have recently.

JOE LOHTA: So let me, let me schedule a time to meet with you or someone from my staff to meet with you to go over the timing of the elevators. We have 25 in the current Capital Plan. We are in the process of developing and even larger plan to be able to look at the, the exact stations on the IRT up into the Bronx.

FERNANDO CABRERA: I really appreciate it. And regarding the first question?

JOE LOHTA: About the state funding and all that stuff I'm sorry but I wasn't fully able to follow it but the question was?

FERNANDO CABRERA: Yeah, should we pay half of the bill in light of the numbers that I just gave you? Do you think you should qualify that as state contributions.

JOE LOHTA: Like I said it was a jump start program. It is a program to provide a surge.

I was looking for some form of equity to be able to begin discussions, 50/50 was I thought a great place to start. I would like to have those discussions.

FERNANDO CABRERA: And thank you for the opportunity to sit together regarding the elevators it means so much. Thank you so much.

JOE LOHTA: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Chairman to close, I have 2 questions, one is uhm, first of all I would like to appreciate about riders alliance and the whole correlation we are doing to improve buses in our city but one concern that especially New Yorkers and I know that you understand it so our challenges to make our train stations more accessible.

JOE LOHTA: Sure.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Is not only for the senior population today but also that is what we are going with if we are so lucky to live long. So what is your vision on taking more train stations to be accessible?

RONNIE HAKIM: So in addition to the nearly \$1 billion investment that is in the current Capital Program, the Chairman has asked us to do a couple of things and we have a board working group

working on this right now. How can we build elevators well expensively? How can we make this easier to do in a community? And how can work with the advocacy communities of our disabled riders to be able to see where we should be making these investments and how can we communicate better about the existing elevators and accessible stations that we have? Those are the charges that we are working on right now.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Great. And, and the last one is about, as you know, like I'm going through a resorting inward and definitely we need to improve transportation but as a community board we will be voting yes or no that we put a lot of conditions. So condition is always important, so for me, I'm not involved in and I know that many of my colleagues are which is yes we will, we are ready for advocate for the city to increase contribution but the question is about details, the condition, all the things that we want. One thing for me is relate to the New York City Veto Power on Capital, like the shifting that makes sense that that power would be line by line instead of it being a for the whole Capital Plan.

JOE LOHTA: I have to read the legislation that was put in place to do that. I, I don't know what it says. I have to look at that to be able to properly answer your question.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Okay because that's my end, I believe that New York City make and all of us we are New Yorkers so we are make an important contribution, is not only what we take for our budget but there, there are different other ways and as I said before, I personally feel and I know that is not on your control, there are all the players. I hope to see increase in New York City, the City and the Mayor in this case, sit at the board but also when it comes to the veto power I would like to see that veto power to be line by line instead of voting for the whole one. But we know would like to thank you for being here and the whole thing.

JOE LOHTA: Thanks. Thank you Mr. Chairman, thank you to the members, again, any issues, any questions, call my office, call Michael, anybody on the Government Affairs Staff at the MTA. We will be more than happy to sit with you, meet with you, talk about Capital and all the rest of it. Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: And we also welcome, even though he is not here but I know that he took a train to go and meet with us at the District office, I know that is a great access that we have to live in New York City Transit.

JOE LOHTA: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

Recognize Council Member Gibson and I am calling members of the public, Jaqi Cohen, Stephanie Bergas-Verras (SP?), Matt Tomich and Mario Garbera (SP?). Sorry. Those names from the public, if you are here, please come and sit: Mario Garbera, Matt, Stephanie and Jaqi Cohen because of the time limit you have one minute to do the summary and then you have any testimony then give it to us, there is another hearing happening at 12 here too.

JAQI COHEN: Alright, we will make this as brief as possible, uhm, so my name is Jaqi Cohen, I am campaign coordinator for the Straphangers Campaign, I am joined by my colleagues, Stephanie Bergas-Verras, Senior Organizer at the.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: I put the clock on 2 minutes.

JAQI COHEN: Thank you. Uhm, so the New York Subway System is in crisis. Today the Council heard a request from the MTA Chair Lohta for the City to contribute to the MTA's \$800 million Subway Action Plan. The Subway Action Plan is a set of short-term fixes designed to enhance maintenance and stabilize a faltering system. When New Yorkers so sorely need a functioning subway, Chair Lohta's request for Subway Action Plan money is something of a red herring. Before having a conversation about appropriate city contribution, Governor Cuomo who controls the MTA and State Budget Process should lay out and fund a credible plan to modernize our transit system. The city doesn't control the subway but it can make a huge difference in improving public transit, particularly by focusing on bus service. New York City is home to the largest bus system in the country providing more trips on average each day than LA, Chicago and Philadelphia combined. Bus Service is a vital mode of transportation for 2.5 million New Yorkers, many of who are low income living out of boroughs without proximity to rapid transit and don't have access to other modes of transportation. Additionally, New York City's entire bus fleet is ADA

compliant unlike it's subway system which is largely inaccessible for riders with disabilities. Bus service provides a critical link for these New Yorkers without subway access to get jobs, education, health services and new opportunities. Yet despite the immense need for well-functioning bus service, New York City's buses are failing. This February, our Coalition released Average Speed and Reliability Report Cards that graded 75% of the 246 local bus routes in our city as these are bus speeds and bunching have noticeably worsened over the past year alone, poor service has resulted in riders abandoning bus service altogether. In 2017, bus ridership experienced the worse single year drop in the past 15 years. Fortunately, poor bus service doesn't have to be the normal and with that I turn to my colleague, Stephanie, who will discuss solutions that the city can take to turn around bus service.

STEPHANIE BERGAS-VERRAS: Thank you so much Jaqi. I'll take those 10 seconds as well. Uhm, so there are many, there's a myriad of solutions that the city can take to turn around our bus service and make it a viable transportation option for all of New Yorkers and our coalition which is the Bus Turnaround

Coalition have outlined 3 short-term solution that the city and Mayor De Blasio and the Council here should be tak... should take in 2018 to provide faster and more reliable and better service for our riders. Those solutions include installing more enforced bus lanes. Uhm the use of dedicated lanes allows buses to travel faster and more efficiently on our city's most congested streets. And the city should install bus lanes on the 10 local bus routes that the Bus Turnaround Coalition has identified as priorities which are in your packets and you can see those 10 highlighted, uhm and not only just putting on bus lanes but we need effective enforcements that are critical to ensure that the success of bus lanes could be felt by riders. NYPD and DOT should work together to enforce our lanes and may use quick curb traffic barriers, bus lane enforcement cameras and strategic controls. Another thing that they should be doing is expediting the roll out of transit signal priority and optimizing our traffic signals with transit signal priority allows buses to keep to schedule but reducing the amount of time that they spend at red lights. And we are asking that the city should accelerate the roll out of transit signal

priority to 60 routes by 2020, not what is it 15 by 2020 and the third thing that we are asking the city to do is to expand the number of countdown clocks with real time passenger information to one to 1000 busiest stops by 2020. Bus riders are often left in the dark while they are waiting for their bus. They have no idea when it is going to come. Sometimes they wait up to 40 minutes and having information at the bus stop like bus maps, route information and countdown clocks will make the bus easier and more intuitive for riders and it helps provide an all around better travel experience. And I know as New York City continues to grow, we need to expand or bus service for a better commute and so the last thing I have to say is "It's time for New York City to envision it's bus system and provide riders with fast, reliable and accessible service that they need."

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

STEPHANIE BERGAS-VERRAS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: The next speaker was speaker loza (SP?) I would also like to ask Chair Sherlock Bender from the Transit Workers Union, also

to join us here on the table as also Matt Herscher from the AARP, please join the table now.

MATT TOMICH: I too will be speaking about buses, I am Matt Tomich, the President of Energy Vision, a New York City based environmental research group with decades of experience and expertise and alternative fuels especially for heavy duty vehicles. Four years ago, the city committed to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions including from transportation 40% by 2030, 80% by 2050. We are also committed to having the cleanest air of any major city over that same time frame but the continued purchase of diesel buses will not get us there. Fortunately there are options that exist. The MTA has successfully operated over 800 natural gas buses for years. The technology is proven, commercial and in fact 20% of all transit buses in the country are running on natural gas today. Better yet, there are new natural gas buses equipped with advanced and near 0 emission engines that would provide even better results. The new engine is certified by the Air Resources Board of California as well as the USEPA. It cuts emissions of health threatening particulates and knocks 90% below the

most stringent standards. In addition to these new engines, the city also has the opportunity to use a new fuel with more advantages than conventional natural gas. That fuel is bio-methane. Bio-methane also called renewable natural gas or RNG. It is made by collecting and purifying methane rich bio-gases emitted by organics such as food and municipal waste and waste water which there is plenty of in New York City. Some of the benefits of this fuel, being a renewable resource it requires no drilling. It is clean burning as conventional gas can be used in the same infrastructure which means the 800 buses today running can use it with minimal changes to operations. There is a lot of this fuel available. It is available on the market today. It is running in 20,000 buses and trucks across the US. LA metro just purchased 295 and parallel with its pilot of 95 electric buses and Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus along with several other municipal fleets are experimenting and deploying this fuel. So in the foreseeable future, the city's organics which the sanitation department is working hard to collect could be utilized to produce local homegrown ultra low carbon fuel for our buses and truck fleets and the existing

infrastructure including MTA's Spring Creek Depot is already using CMG buses. So for all those reasons, we encourage the transportation committee to urge the MTA to pursue 0 and near 0 emission technology, especially bio-methane and near 0 engines during the L-train shutdown and beyond. I appreciate the opportunity and would take any questions.

REPRESENTATIVE FOR MARIO GUERRA: Good morning everybody, thank you Chair, thank you everyone from the Transportation Committee from hearing me. I'm sorry my member got caught up, actually on the train so I am testifying on her behalf in the very array. Uhm so I wanted to speak on behalf of him, whose he's a division chair for the signals and line maintenance division of the MTA. Uhm, they represent 78,000 members in the Line Equipment Signal Division and are responsible for maintaining the upkeep and the infrastructure of the New York Phase Subway System, specifically handling the lighting, signals and other line equipment throughout the subway. Much ado has been made about the system's crumbling infrastructure following high-profile major derailments that left Straphangers zoid for hours last year and while New York City has the

most expansive Public Transportation System in the world, unfortunately has the worse on time performance of any rapid transit system in the world. That is unfortunate and we are experiencing the effects of the deteriorating system that was caused by decades, particularly the diversion of necessary funds from the budget. While we are happy that transportation funding is being seen as more of a priority we are asking for all sides to step up and address the crisis we have at hand. We are asking the city to fulfill its half of the MTA Emergency Response Action Plan also known as the Subway Action Plan which amounts to \$428 million of the \$836 million and I will just fast forward through some of it but although the demand for both the severances have gone up causing the expenses to increase the MTA has continued to pay without any reimbursement to the city and this is in reference to the fact that we, the MTA subsidizes both student transportation and accesseride (SP?) unlike Nassau or Suffolk County and so I feel that the city is kind of how would you say there, they can't have it both ways, right. They, the MTA has been subsidizing services that other counties don't and so it is unfair for them to

abrogate their share and their responsibility of the subway system so. I didn't do as well as my member but I wanted to put that on record.

MATT KERSCHNER: Good morning chairperson Rodriguez and members of the Transportation Committee, my name is Matt Kerschner and I am a graduate policy intern at AARP, currently working towards a Master's of Public Administration Degree at Columbia University. On behalf of our 800,000 members age 50 and over in New York City, I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify today on the topic. New York City's population is aging, nearly 1/3 of residents in the 5 boroughs is over the age of 50 and that group is expected to grow by nearly 20% by 2040. The growth for the 65+ age group is projected to be even more dramatic with a whopping 40% increase and our city is not just aging, we are becoming more diverse, African-Americans, Blacks, Hispanics, Latinos, Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders account for 62% of New York City residents 50+ and half of all of those 65+ living here were born in a foreign country. We know from our recent report, disrupting racial and ethnic disparities, solutions for New Yorkers age 50+ partnership with

the New York Urban League and NAACP, Hispanic Federation and Asian-American Federation that people of color over the age of 50 experience stark disparities in the areas of health, economic security and the ability to live and remain in their communities. All this means, we must make meeting the needs of older New Yorkers a bigger priority. We are grateful to the increased and baseline funding increases made to the DFTA Budget last year, but aging is not just a DFTA issue. That is why we were here today along with some of our 800,000 New York City members and that is why we plan to attend budget hearings for a host of agencies. It is time for the needs of New Yorkers to be addressed across City Government. After all, meeting the needs of aging residents and helping them to stay in their neighborhoods is critical to retaining their tremendous economic, social, cultural and family contributions, it is also the right thing to do. One of the keys to helping our older neighbors continue to live in their neighborhoods, the neighborhoods they call home is having good, reliable, accessible transportation and we have a long way to go. AARP's Liveability Index found that in low income

neighborhoods and neighborhoods of color accessible public transportation is inadequate or lacking. For aging New Yorkers to be able to get to doctor's appointments, to work or to go grocery shopping they need improved transportation options, that means more elevators and escalators at subway stations as well as more reliable buses but we also need to make other improvements which will hopefully be addressed throughout the day today. According to the city's latest update on the age friendly NYC new commitments for city for all ages initiative, the plan was to expand transportation options through a pilot program that gives seniors a \$1000 a year credit for car service, did the pilot launch? And how is the city tracking the pilot's success? The city also planned to expand dispatch, wheelchair, accessible taxi service across the 5 boroughs. Has that happened? Is it helping wheelchair bound residents age 50+? And are recent disparities report found that changes are needed at the street level. Neighborhoods of color have more pedestrian accidents due to unsafe street crossings, those crossings needs to be addressed beyond what Vision Zero is already doing and other streets gave improvements including curb

cuts, pedestrian islands and pedestrian islands need to be made to make the streets safer for aging residents. The bottom line is that we hope that all the discussion that will happen here today and that all budget hearings will consider the needs of aging New Yorkers, let's disrupt aging together and help ensure all New Yorkers can age safely and happily in the city that they love.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Now my colleagues, I recognize Council Member Gibson, Council Member Cabrera has a question.

FERNANDO CABRERA: Sure, thank you Mr. Chair and thank you for AARP, I am actually a member and so I do care uhm about our seniors and the accessibility problems that we do have and looking forward through the rezoning in Jerome Avenue we were able to address a lot of these issues so, but that is just a small piece of city. So, please keep advocating. I had a question regarding uhm the criteria. You mentioned that 75% of a local bus routes of the 246 receive a letter grade of D and F. If you could share what was the criteria and the delays, are these delays being caused because of traffic? I know in the Bronx traffic is just

becoming horrendous and I see the bus drivers doing their best. I even saw one jump the sidewalk just this week because I could see he was, he was being blocked and he was just such in a hurry to get moving because I know they are under pressure because of supervisors telling them you got to get there on time and the last question is regarding have you looked at new technology? For example, from Tesla who now they have just awesome trucks, powerful trucks and run on electric power?

REPRESENTATIVE FOR MARIO GUERRA: So issue our grades, the analysis was done by our colleagues at Transit Center and we can send your office the report cards themselves on the methodology but we based our grades on speed and reliability of buses. So how fast do they travel, how often do they arrive on schedule, how often do they you know bunched together, sometimes riders wait 30 minutes for a bus and then they get 3 for the price of 30 minutes and so that was how we issued our grades and there is a number of reasons buses have become slower and less reliability, congestion is absolutely a cause of slower buses, bus speeds have reduced I believe from 2015 to 2017, bus speeds were at, I

think 2015 they were at speeds of an average of 7.3 miles an hour, now they are at 7. Uhm, bus bunching has gotten much worse, as you can see in the testimony as well so that is really where we based our grades on, the things that riders care the most about, how fast is my bus traveling? Most of them are very slow, definitely Bronx buses, often mid-town buses or cross-town buses are some of the slowest as well.

FERNANDO CABRERA: And I think this is why you mentioned the countdown clocks, which I was the first one to put them in the Bronx and I loved them, people loved them, they are awesome. We should put a lot more in the city so thank you for. And also the question regarding the electric.

MATT TOMICH: Yes absolutely, we we've looked at all types of alternative fuels and refueling and electrification has gotten a lot of attention in recent times. We've done an analysis looking at kind of the 3 important as we see them aspects, first being cost, second being the operational realities and the third is kind of the environmental public health climate impact. Uhm, on all of those electrification where it works is

fantastic except on the cost front and a lot of it is determined by the geography, the routes, the range, there are a number of variables that need to be considered. On the flip side, natural gas technology you know has been proven out over the past decade plus and we know it works, we know it is cost effective, the incremental cost for a natural gas bus is in the order of \$40,000 to \$50,000 where as an all electric bus could be several hundred thousand dollars. So certainly it is being tested. There are about 700 all electric buses on the road all across the country today and there will be much more and we would love to see some in New York but on the natural gas side we can utilize ultra low-carbon bio-methane made from waste in the 800 buses we have already and deployed in the infrastructure that is already there at minimal to no additional cost.

FERNANDO CABRERA: Thank you so much.

Thank you so much Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you, with that, I would like to, I have a question but before that I would like to thank the AARP for being here, turning 53 in June I hope to join your group very soon but I also, I think that your role that you play

especially advocating for senior citizens is very important and I want to bring a particular case here when you talk about most of the 469 train station being unaccessible like in Dagma (SP) Street, #1 train, even someone in a wheelchair would have to go to their one train, 233rd Street. They will have to take the 1 train which has an elevator only going downtown to 96th Street in order to transfer from 96th Street and be able to go there and all the way up to 231st. That is a reality and I know that you are advocating together with the whole coalition to make our train stations accessible, very important for all of us. And I also would like to acknowledge, as I say, right as a line for the, you know the big companion, the Coalition that you are leading and with that also recognizing that TWU also local 100 for the great job that you are doing because now that more funding will be allocated to the MTA, the question is how are we taking care of our workers, because they are the one who are moving our city, so thank you for the job and we are always be here ready to work together with you. With that, I would like to thank my staff, Jose Louis, Stephanie Miliano, Vladamir Acosta and workers being also from City

College, Sabir (SP?) Acosta who is here with us. With that, we finish, we will take a recess and at 12 the Chairman of the Taxi Committee will be holding the hearing at 12. We will come back from the Transportation Committee at 3 p.m. to hear from their DOT commissioner who will be joining us and now we will take a recess.

BACKGROUND CONVERSATION: ... a car. I used to be one of the students going to school at night and during the daytime and having my car at night so last year, I should say and I'm going to say the only thing that stopped me...

(Sound check for the Capital Budget and Transportation Continuation and Preliminary Budget Meeting of March 8, 2018 being recorded by Israel Martinez. Taking place council chambers).

(SPEAKING SPANISH).

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Good afternoon and welcome back, back for the Part II of the City Council Transportation Committee's Hearing on the Fiscal 2019 Preliminary Budget and the Fiscal 2018 Preliminary Mayor's Management report. My name is Ydanis Rodriguez and I have the privilege of chairing this committee. Early this morning, the committee

heard testimony from the Metropolitan Transit Authority. This afternoon we will hear from the Department of Transportation (DOT). Today we are joined by the subcommittee on Capital Budget chaired by Council Member Vanessa Gibson. The DOT Preliminary Expense Budget for Fiscal 2019 is approximately \$965.2 million. In addition \$8.8 billion is budget in Fiscal 2019 for the Department Capital Program. We look forward to the commissioner updating this committee on the department's effort to maintain and improve the city's roadway infrastructure, improve pedestrian safety and the implementation of the Vision Zero Action Plan. Additionally, we hope the department will discuss its four-year Capital Plan, particularly in terms of its goal and priorities for the next four years, the scope and the progression of work on the East River Bridges and the reconstruction of the Pedestrian Ramps and the roadways citywide, the reconstruction of the BQE Cantilever and the ongoing installation of the traffic safety bollards (SP?) around the city. While overall bus ridership has declined, selectable services ridership has increased, selectable services has the ability to make transportation in the city

more accessible and reliable for New Yorkers, particularly those living in neighborhood underserved by the subways. The committee anticipates receiving an update on the current status of selectable services and the agencies plans for expansion. Additionally, as average bus speeds have fallen, we hope to hear about the department's plans for Transit Signal Priority Installation as well as additional bus lane camera enforcements to ensure that SBA's buses move quickly and efficiently. We need to have a Bus Action Plan. Finally, last fall the administration released a series of initiatives with a hope of reducing congestion in Manhattan Central Business District. The committee would like to hear an update on this initiative which includes restricting parking, streamlining curbside deliveries and increasing block the box enforcement. Before we hear from the Commissioner, let me take a moment to recognize my colleagues on the committee on the Transportation who had joined us this morning Council Member Vanessa Gibson, Chairmen of the Capital Committee, Council Members Constantinides, Grodenchik, Van Bramer, Powers, Lander and Deutsch. Uhm, and Mario, sorry. Let's hear from the, the

Chairman of the Committee on Capital and then we will start with the DOT commissioner.

VANESSA GIBSON: Thank you so much to Chair Rodriguez. Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen it's great to be here. I am Council Member Vanessa Gibson of the 16th District in the Bronx and I am so proud to be here and serving in a new capacity as the Chair of the Subcommittee on Capital Budget. I first and foremost want to thank our speaker, Corey Johnson, for the incredible leadership and certainly for appointing me to Chair this new Subcommittee on Capital Budget. I look forward to not only today's conversation but certainly for the remainder of this month in having extremely important conversations with all of our agency heads as it relates to the Capital Budget. I want to thank my co-chair, Chair Ydanis Rodriguez for chairing this important hearing with me today and certainly I want to highlight the City Council's renewed focus on the city's Capital Program, which for far too long has truly not received the same level of attention and priority as the Expense and Revenue Portions of our overall Budget. The Department of Transportations FY2019 Preliminary Capital Budget includes \$8.8 billion in

FY2019 through FY2022. This represents approximately 19% of the city's total \$45.9 billion Capital Budget for 2019 through 2022 and is in addition to the \$7.6 billion that has already been appropriated in Fiscal 2018. Although this means that the department has the authority to spend \$16.4 billion between Fiscal 2018 and Fiscal 2022, the agency's planned commitments as set forth in the Commitment Plan total only \$13.3 billion. The Department's Commitment Rate is extremely good and I want to commend DOT for that when you compare it to the city as a whole. Between Fiscal 2014 and Fiscal 2017, the department committed 68% of its projects on schedule, compared to the citywide average of 56%, so we certainly look forward to hearing testimony this afternoon about the agency's best practices and best measures and learning how other agencies may be able to emulate some of DOT's work in order to bring up their own commitment rates. Like many agencies in this city, however, DOT's Budget makes use of overly broad budget lines to cover a wide variety of projects within each of those lines. While this gives the agency the flexibility that is needed to complete the individual projects within the lines, it greatly

reduces the city council's ability to hold meaningful oversight to ensure accountability. Before I turn back to Chair Rodriguez, I also want to make mention of an urgent Capital Issue that is pending before the State Legislature which would have a great and positive impact on DOT's Capital Plan in particular. The State must authorize the city to use design build for the Brooklyn Queen's Expressway Repair Project. If anyone drives in our city and drives on the BQE you know that the BQE is in need of attention. Design Build has the ability to expedite the Capital work that DOT needs to do in order to increase the productivity and the longevity of the BQE and certainly DOT has been leading the conversation and had a press conference a few weeks ago and we do not want to revert any truck traffic onto our local streets off of the BQE. That would be a disservice to New Yorkers and certainly to the neighboring communities that abut the BQE. So our Commissioner has estimated that Design Build Authority from the State would save \$158 million and 2 years of construction time on this project alone. The State has granted itself their authority to complete major transportation projects such as the Tappan Zee

Bridge, the Kosciuszko Bridge, both of which were completed on time and on budget at a significantly reduced price than had been, then they would have been if they had used the traditional design Bid Build Model. There is absolutely no good reason why the City should not also benefit from Design Build so I certainly want to urge all of our colleagues to join our speaker in calling upon the state and colleagues in Albany to prevent the needless waste of City Taxpayer dollars and pass this authorization as quickly as possible so we can authorize Design Build in the City of New York. I want to thank the members of our subcommittee who are here with us, our Minority Leader Council Member Steven Matteo, Council Member Keith Powers and Council Member Barry Grodenchik who have joined us. I want to thank them and certainly to the Finance Team, I always want to recognize for their hard work, Latonia McKinney our Director, Regina Poreda Ryan, our Deputy Director Nathan Toth and Paul Scimone, our Financial Analyst John Basile and our Unit Head Chima Obichere and I want to thank Chair Rodriguez once again and I look forward to today's testimony and certainly our

conversations that will continue after today's hearing. Thank you once again Chair Rodriguez.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you Chairman and Chairwoman and I also would like to acknowledge Council Member Koo and Commissioner Happy International Women's Day to you and everyone here. Thank you for everything that you do, about DOT and especially also thank you for visions. We are now taking the lead with you and your team on the Car Free Day that will take place Saturday the 21st, the day before Earth Day. We then now as a committee council to administer the oath.

LEGAL COUNSEL: Please raise your right hand. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth in your testimony before this committee and to respond honestly to Council Member questions? Thank you.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: Okay. Yes thank you. Happy National Women's Day to our women colleagues up on the dias (SP?) as well. Good afternoon Chairman Rodriguez and Chairwoman Gibson and Members of the Transportation Committee and the Subcommittee on Capital Budget. I am Polly Trottenberg, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Transportation and

with me today are Elizabeth Franklin, Associate Commissioner for Budget and Capital Program Management and Rebecca Zack, Assistant Commissioner for Intergovernmental and Community Affairs. We are pleased to be here today on behalf of Mayor Bill de Blasio to testify on DOT's Fiscal Year 2019 Preliminary Expense Budget and Capital Plan. We are also very happy to be testifying today before the Council's new Subcommittee on the Capital Budget. I will attempt today, my testimony is long, so I will attempt to summarize in a couple of places the written testimony you have in front of me. The Proposed Budget will support DOT and its mission to provide for the safe, efficient and environmentally sustainable movement of people and goods in New York City and maintain and enhance the transportation infrastructure crucial to our economic vitality and the quality of life of our customers, city residents, commuters and dissidents. The Budget also comes at a time when we are responding to a number of major transportation challenges facing our city: First, our continued work on Vision Zero. I want to start by acknowledging this week's tragic crash in Park Slope in which we lost two young children and three

others were injured. We are all mourning this heart-breaking loss and we will be taking action. I have directed my planning and engineering experts to analyze and redesign the 9th street corridor including protected bike lanes and other pedestrian safety treatments. We are going to have a more detailed plan to unveil in the next few weeks. We will then present our plan to local residents, businesses, elected officials and the community board next month to gather valuable input and plan to implement as soon as the weather permits. At the same time, the Mayor has promised to roll out a set of Legislative Proposals to address the legal loopholes that allow deadly drivers to remain on New York's roads. This terrible crash is a reminder that even after four straight years of declining roadway fatalities under Vision Zero and the great work that we have done with the Council and other partners our work is far from done. Today I will also discuss the impending L-train tunnel closure, now a little over a year ago, tackling increased congestion as our city experiences record growth and how DOT and New York City Transit can work together to improve bus service and reverse the trend of declining bus ridership and

I will discuss some of our major capital challenges: Including the need to reconstruct the BQE Expressway as the Chairwoman has mentioned and do all of this while operating and maintaining the vast roadway and bridge network which New Yorkers rely on every day. In our FY18 to 22 Capital Budget the Mayor commits to historic investments and infrastructure with a focus on Vision Zero and State of Good Repair. DOT has dramatically increased the size of our Capital Program and we are proud that we have doubled the rate at which we initiate construction and we continue to improve our delivery of Capital Projects to save time and TaxPayer Dollars. You have in front of you the written breakdown of our Capital Plan our \$13.3 billion for Bridge Reconstruction, Street Reconstruction, Sidewalks and Pedestrian Ramps, the Staton Island Ferry, Street Lights and Signals and Facilities and Equipment needed to support our operations. You also have before you the breakdown of our Preliminary Financial Plan for \$965 million for Traffic Operations, Roadway Maintenance, our DOT Operations, Bridge Maintenance and Inspection, Transportation Planning and Management and Ferry Operations and Maintenance. I will now take a minute

to walk through some of the challenges I mentioned. Thanks to our partnership with the NYPD, our sister agencies as well as the council, as you all know traffic deaths have declined by 27% in the last four years with pedestrian fatalities down 44%. New York City has bucked the national trend where fatalities have increased 15% over the same time period; however, as we saw with the tragic crash this week in Park Slope, more remains to be done, 217 people lost their lives in vehicle crashes last year and we are committed to continuing the aggressive pace of our Safety Work under Vision Zero. DOT's proposed Vision Zero Capital Budget is \$1.5 billion in Fiscal years 18 to 22, including \$57.5 million in new approved funding in this January plan. The Expense Budget contains nearly \$270 million over that same time period. This past year, we completed a record 114 Safety Improvement Projects, up 138% over the PreVision Zero five year average, installed nearly 25 miles of protected bike lanes, implemented left turn calming treatments at 110 intersections and installed 832 Pedestrian Headstart Signal Timings. With the release of our Safer Cycling Report in July 2017, DOT is committed to building 75 bike lane miles in 10

priority bicycle districts by 2022. These areas represent neighborhoods in Brooklyn and Queens outside of the city central core such as Bed-Stuy, East New York, Sheepshead Bay, Jackson Heights, Elmhurst and Ridgewood where we are seeing that fully 25% of the city's serious bicycle crashes are concentrated and as part of our overall strategic plan we will continue to implement at least 50 miles of bike lanes a year citywide including at least 10 protected miles. On the Capital side, we have a number of exciting projects moving forward, explained in more detail in my testimony but Downtown Far Rockaway, more work on the Brooklyn Waterway Greenfront, the second phase of the reconstruction of Tillary Street and our Grades (SP?) Streets Works continues on Atlantic Avenue, Grand Concourse, Brooklyn's Fourth Avenue now with a protected bike lane and the redesign and of course Queen's Boulevard where we have now seen three years without a cyclist or pedestrian fatality. The comprehensive overhauls of these four critical quarters once known for their sky-high rates of pedestrian injuries and fatalities have allowed us to do more than make permanent safety enhancements. The changes have brought and will

bring livable, vibrant green and high quality streets to underserved neighborhoods and invaluable contribution to the long-term culture change needed to support Vision Zero. Lastly on the topic of Vision Zero I want to remind the Council that the State authorization for our Life Saving Speed Camera Program expires on July 25, 2018. Since this program began over four years ago, it has reduced speeding violations by an average of 63% where cameras are deployed. The city is working hard to advocate for reauthorization and expansion of this vital program, this session up in Albany. Last year, the Council sent a strong signal of support with a home role message and we ask for your help and support again this year. Speed Cameras have saved lives and this law must not be allowed to lapse. As you know, starting in April of next year, 275,000 daily L-Train customers and hundreds of thousands of other commuters will be deeply affected by the 15 month closure of the L-line from 8th Avenue in Manhattan to Bedford Ave. in Brooklyn. As you may recall from the testimony I offered here at the Council in December with MTA Managing Director, Ronnie Hakim, DOT has been working closely with our partners at New York

City Transit. We have proposed an aggressive menu of travel options including increased Subway Service, alternative buses that will use Bus Priority Lanes and HOV Restrictions on the Williamsburg Bridge. All of this will be complemented by protected bicycle lanes in Brooklyn and Manhattan and a new Ferry Route connecting the two boroughs. At our presentation in December, we laid out detailed proposals for a Bus Lane on 14th Street and a protected two-way bike lane on 13th Street in Manhattan. Since then, at the request of the speaker and other elected officials representing affected Manhattan neighborhoods, we have publically provided the traffic analysis that undergirded those plans. We have also now announced our proposed plans for Protected Bike Lanes on Grand Street in Williamsburg which will allow local deliveries and keep buses moving to and from the Williamsburg Bridge by affectively preventing Grand's use by through traffic. DOT and New York City Transit have also continued and extensive and spirited public outreach campaign, our open houses in Manhattan and Brooklyn attended by near 1000 people have been supplemented by dozens of smaller stakeholder meetings with elected officials, local

residents, businesses and major institutions. New York City Transit President Andy Byford and I have spoken to a lot of very passionate people who both support and opposed our proposed mitigation plans. We are taking everything that we have heard into account and in the weeks ahead plan to host more town hall events before we present the next set of refinements to our plan. Let me now turn to congestion, as you know the city with its thriving economy has attracted more visitors, workers and residents than ever before. Since 1990, we have added 1.2 million people to our population. The equivalent of a city nearly the size of Dallas, our subway, streets, sidewalks and crosswalks are busier than ever and construction and increased deliveries have added even more to the mix. It is also now quite clear that the rapid growth of the for hire vehicle industry has contributed to congestion, particularly in the Manhattan core and in all boroughs except Manhattan, the number of registered passenger vehicles has risen faster than the rate of population growth. We have heard loud and clear from community boards, elected officials, business, motorist, bus riders and pedestrians that New Yorkers

are frustrated by congestion and its impact on their daily lives. For the City's part, DOT has moved forward with the Mayor's Congestion Plan announced last October using the tools at our disposal to aggressively address key congestion hot spots. Earlier this week, NYPD Transportation Chief Thomas Chan and I announced installation of new Don't Block the Box markings and signage at 50 targeted intersection with aggressive enforcement by NYPD. Later this month, we will be rolling out new clear curb delivery restrictions and two key quarters, Flatbush Ave. in Brooklyn and Roosevelt Ave. in Queens restricting curbside parking and loading on both sides of the street during peak morning and evening hours. Subsequently in mid-town Manhattan, similar restrictions during peak morning and evenings hours will go to in effect in a zone from 6th to Madison Ave. and from 45th to 50th Streets. In addition, we will streamline curb regulations to allow loading on only one side of the street from 7 to 7 on weekends on 11 cross town streets along with new turn lanes and intersections. Turning to Albany, we welcome the robust discussion that has grown out of Governor Cuomo's Commission on Congestion

including a focus on commercial and for hire vehicles. The Mayor has expressed some openness to the latest set of Congestion Proposals. The Mayor has said though that any Congestion Pricing Plan that charges New Yorkers must prioritize the needs of the New York City Subway and Bus System. This includes a requirement that all the proceeds are invested in Mass Transit and a mechanism for real input by the City of New York on Transit Products and Priorities and not just a Nuclear Option Veto at the end of the process. The Mayor has also said that any pricing scheme for passenger vehicles must take the needs of those who are long income and those with disabilities into account. I have been to both London and Stockholm and talked to those cities experts who successfully implemented their pricing systems. Should the Legislature pass some form of Congestion Pricing, DOT will diligently implement whatever is enacted. In addition, the Mayor has urged the Legislature to consider expediting a surcharge on for hire vehicles and taxis as long as it is done in an industry-wide equitable way. Going back quickly to the subject of Block the Box I also want to note that we were especially encouraged by the inclusion of new

automated enforcement of Block the Box in Manhattan among the Governor's 30-day Budget Amendments last month. This would empower New York City to tackle and further expand enforcement of a violation that contributes to gridlock. In addition, the City would also strongly support receiving broad authorization for the use of bus lane cameras in the proposed congestion zone south of 60th street in Manhattan. As members of this committee and others have said, speeding up buses in the mid-town core is an important priority. An Automated Enforcement which cities like London use could be a key element of that. On behalf of Mayor de Blasio I want to say thank you to Chairman Rodriguez and many of your colleagues for your letter of January 24th on the improvement of bus service which is a priority that the city shares. In my written response, I have provided a program update. I also wanted today to extend an offer for members of this committee and/or their staff to join me and the DOT for a field trip to a future select bus service route. That will allow us to together experience some of the implementation opportunities and challenges first hand. For today, I want to quickly highlight several

ways the City and the MTA are committed to working together for faster and more reliable bus service citywide. SBS has been the best example of that partnership, over 10 years and 15 SBS routes are two agencies have together improved travel times for over 300,000 daily riders by 10-30%, boosting ridership by 10%, provided more reliable service, generated very high customer satisfaction and reduced crashes. To continue this progress, Mayor de Blasio announced in October that DOT and the MTA would grow SBS further with 21 new routes selected as part of a new Bus Forward Plan. As part of the Bus Forward, DOT and MTA also identified local non-SBS route segments that have low speeds, poor reliability or particularly long and slow trips. Our two agencies will work together to target these segments using some of our established techniques, some of them learned from SBS including new dedicated bus lanes, Q jumps and other traffic engineering changes. As an MTA Board Member I have also consistently pushed for the substantial expansion of all door boarding on busy bus routes around the city and I am looking forward to the next generation Contactless Fare Payment System that will ease the technological conversion to all door

boarding for all buses. We are also looking to enhance our efforts on Transit Signal Priority or TSP where buses communicate with traffic signals to hold green lights or turn them green early. While we plan to greatly increase our pace of TSP Installations we also want to make sure that we do high quality work. Our traffic engineers need to do the data collection and analysis that will ensure bus riders the greatest travel time benefits, while still promoting good overall traffic flow and protecting pedestrian safety. I would like to discuss steps we have taken to Improve Capital Project Delivery while acknowledging more needs to be done. As a result of Streamlining DOTs Internal Procedures and more Advanced Project Management IT, I am proud that we have doubled our Annual Capital Project Rate over the last three years from an average of 41% in FY08 to 14 to 79% in FY15 to 17. This greater efficiency comes as our entire Capital Plan doubled under Mayor de Blasio from \$6.7 billion to its current level of \$13.3 billion. Of course, no discussion of Capital Projects would be complete without once again underscoring the importance of state designed Bill Legislation and I think Chairman Gibson did a perfect

job of explaining how important it is. It was traffic to join Speaker Johnson, Senator Kavanagh, Assemblywoman Simon and others a couple of weeks ago in the Brooklyn Heights Promenade to make that case. It is essential for the BQE Triple Cantilever Project. It could also be utilized for building new jail facilities so that we can close Riker's Island and to speed up the urgently needed repairs at major facilities. When it comes to Capital Delivery, in addition to the street reconstruction work I highlighted earlier I am also happy to say that this past year we have opened two new bridges, the brand new City Island Bridge and the new Mill Basin Bridge along the Belk Parkway. In this past Fiscal Year DOT continue its record level of in-house street resurfacing with 1,324 lane miles resurfaced in Fiscal year 17. We are on track to continue that record pace in Fiscal year 18 and this budget maintains the previously increased funding to continue those lane miles Fiscal 19. Let me close by saying that I believe there is much the administration and the Council can do together to improve project delivery. Individually each step in the process for executing Capital Projects had an

understandable and reasonable purpose at one time but now the accumulation of each of these requirements taken together has made New York City's Procurement and Capital Delivery Process arguably the most complicated in the world. DOT stands ready to be a helpful and engaged participant in this discussion. Finally, my written testimony details areas of savings that DOT has identified, \$14.9 million in Fiscal year 18 and \$11.6 million in Fiscal year 19. The Mayor has once again challenged City Agencies ways to reduce expenses and DOT has worked closely with the Mayor's Office of Management and Budget to find efficiencies in our operations. Let me conclude by saying we have many important challenges and opportunities as we continue to keep New Yorkers moving safely, equitably and sustainably while supporting our City's economic growth and prosperity. I want to thank the Council for their support, for the opportunity to testify before you today. I am happy to answer your questions.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. I would like to acknowledge also that we have been joined by Council Members Rosenthal and Menachaca. Let me start with something that we can see every day now in

our streets because of the winter which is potholes. How are we doing today with potholes? Are we on target? How much more action should we expect now that the snow hopefully will be over, in winter, what is the goal and what have we accomplished and also what is our plan?

POLLY TROTTEBERG: Alright I am happy to say that I am looking now to be joined by your colleague from Staton Island. When I started in this job a little over four years, it was the number one complaint that I got everywhere, probably no where more than in Staton Island and you know, I want to thank the Mayor and the Council. The major investments that we have made in resurfacing. We have now over the last four years resurfaced over $\frac{1}{4}$ of the city's roadways and we have really tried to focus. We have changed our whole operation to focus on doing more night work and really getting at the biggest and most challenging roads. We have seen in those four years, the pothole complaints that come in largely through 3-1-1 and others, they have gone down by 50%. So I take that as a real and now our response time has dropped I think from 2-1/2 days to under 2 days. Now, we have had a rough couple of

months. We have had some real freeze and thaw and at this time of year, it is always the pothole season and we are working hard to keep on top of it but I think overall the investments that we have made in improving roadway conditions have helped reduce potholes tremendously and we have again in this budget at least two more years of very robust resurfacing investments which I hope will continue that good trend. One challenge we are starting to see again and we hear about it in Staton Island and other places, because there is such a record pace of construction happening in the city, it is a challenge, now that we are resurfacing so many roads, it can be more noticeable to see when construction and utilities and other activities then cut in to those roads. That is another area where we are trying to work with our partners, the private utilities, fellow city agencies and the private construction industry to minimize the damage and the impact on these newly resurfaced roadways and to make sure that we restore them as best as we can if work needs to be done on them.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Great. So,
connecting we, we resurfacing the street and as you

know, as you have seen yesterday, we will stand together, for safe streets, transportation with it, I think the common cause that we have which is continue redesigning our street, thinking new and how all the work that we do are connecting with Vision, connecting with Vision Zero and you know one good call that I would say the whole advocate coalition is putting on the table, I know that you've been always a partner of listening and working with us is as we would see more resurfacing the street, how can we talk advantage also to do both things at the same time. Resurfacing the street but also doing it in a way that we can redo the speed limit, especially in intersections to bring more features, connected to Vision Zero.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah, it's, it's a good question and, and one that I think we are really trying to do a good job on it. We do very much try and coordinate our resurfacing and our safety work and certainly right now as we are resurfacing, when we restore markings we are using what is now the most up to date set of marking practices and doing you know whatever we can to make those roadways safer but there can sometimes be two separate tracks of

projects. I mean our resurfacing follows where we see that roadways have the most damage. Our most impactful roadway redesign safety work goes where we see the highest crash data. Sometimes those sets of roadways are aligned but sometimes they are not and you know some of the things the advocates want us to do, particularly more involved safety treatments, putting in Pedestrian Islands, Bike Lanes, putting in some of those more major treatments, those are things that can take time and that we want to make sure we get right and that often involves working with local elected officials, community boards, local businesses, so where we can put things in quickly we do but where things take more time and need closer design we are going to need to do that. So, we agree with the spirit of what they want us to do and we are always trying to do a better job of aligning but we won't always be able to do it.

(Background question)

POLLY TROTTEMBERG: You mean for, for markings? It's another area where I want I want to thank the Mayor. He has actually tremendously increased the City's commitment in terms of working with the Council in terms of funding for marking.

When I, when I came to DOT, I will admit, one of the things, and perhaps it had crept up on the agency a little bit in the last administration and a bit in ours. As we have expanded our Vision Zero work and our bike lanes and bus lanes. That's a lot of markings, you know, millions and millions of linear feet of marking and markings in this city they take a pounding. Obviously we have heavy traffic in the city, we have you know rough winters and so we have realized over the past few years we really need to increase the investment at the pace in which we refurbish markings. One of the challenges that have had quite frankly is it's not an industry with a lot of players. I mean this gets a little bit at some of the things I think that the Subcommittee on Capital Budget will be looking at. There are certain services and contracts that the city procures where you don't necessarily have 20 firms all competing to give you the best deal, you might only have one or two players in the industry. In the markings area, we have been trying to nurture some new firms so that we get more entrance, we get more capacity, we get better prices. I'd say that is a project we are still working our way through. Some of the firms

that we have brought on board, I think they are still learning how to do good markings work on the tough streets of New York, so it's an on, I would say that is one of the challenges my agency faces, continuing to expand our markings work, get high quality contractors to come and you know one of the reasons why particularly after a difficult winter like this one we are trying to move as aggressively as we can to refurbish markings where they've faded.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Who is responsible for the sidewalk?

POLLY TROTTEBERG: The side, the sidewalk in New York City is a shared responsibility and it is interesting. It is part of what makes it a complicated infrastructure and one I know that produces a lot of frustration on the part of elected officials, community boards and average New Yorkers. Building owners are responsible for the sidewalks in front of their buildings. The City is responsible for the curb. And this is not an easy thing to litigate. Uhm, we have undertaken at the City level as you know a very energetic effort now to increase our investments and improving sidewalks and particularly I am proud to say in terms of sidewalks

around NYCHA, uhm the city is making a much bigger contribution. We have more than tripled the amount of money that we are putting in to fixing sidewalks around NYCHA. We are also now greatly expanding our work on pedestrian ramps. As you know, the City has faced a lot of litigation over the years on making our pedestrian ramps more accessible, we are putting a lot of investments into that but we are also trying to work with the utilities and all the private property owners and construction firms that are cutting into our sidewalks on any given day. I mean part of the challenge is it is a system that is owned by hundred of thousands of owners and at any different time being cut into and operated on by thousands of different players and making sure that all of that work is being done to appropriate standards and that we are keeping all the ADA accessibility requirements enforced is certainly I think one of the big, the big challenges facing us right now.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Buses, I, I think that, and you mentioned a couple of things in your, uhm, in your opening. What more, what more can we do when it comes to putting together our own Bus

Action Plan but something has to do with the MTA and the MTA say this morning that they are open, they have been a working collaboration with DOT but you know buses are so important, especially in many part of the five boroughs and so and they are running so slow and they are not getting there on time and so and this is like a shared responsibility that we feel that enforcement as I say in my opening statement is enough so how can we create the level of involvement to increase enforcement to protect the buses to have priority not to work with MTA to install the technology so that we are running on time, that we can put together our own New York City Buses Action Plan?

POLLY TROTTENBERG: Well, I, I, I'm glad you started with enforcement because I absolutely think that is a key component and you know as I said in my testimony I mean we were very heartened by the fact that in the Governor's 30-day Budget Amendments he proposed that the City be allowed to use Camera Enforcement for Block the Box violations south of 60th Street in Manhattan. We desperately need a similar kind of ability to use cameras to enforce bus lanes. Right now the city has the ability to use

cameras only on 16 bus routes throughout the city and as much as NYPD has their own enforcement, as much as NYPD has their own enforcement I don't think it's realistic to say that NYPD is going to enforce every bus route every day. A lot of cities again like London and other places are moving to automated enforcement. That is a much more effective way to ensure you are keeping those, those bus lanes clear so that is something the city certainly would love to see happen up in Albany. We would love the support of Council Members. That is just a key fundamental thing we need to do on the enforcement front. Not to say NYPD can't be doing more but I think realistically speaking we need camera enforcement ability.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Okay. So Council Member has a few words to the Commissioner and we just had a question with the co...

BRAD LANDER: I have to go get a root canal so I am going to skip my question which I know is a big disappointment to everyone here. Uhm but I just want to say thank you for moving so quickly to make those commitments on 9th Street and you know we have all just been really shattered in the

neighborhood by the deaths of Abby and Josh this week and I think the way that you put it out, I know we've done a lot, the fact that pedestrian fatalities are at their lowest level ever is real and we got a lot more to do and everytime something like this happens it is just hard to feel anything other than the commitment to do more so to move so quickly and make those commitments today really means a lot to me and to my constituents.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: Thank you Council Member and your leadership at this tough time. Obviously I will be working closely with you and I think other members by nearby neighborhoods. I think many of us that live in that part of Brooklyn feel this keenly and you know I think we will all be ready to move really quickly.

BRAD LANDER: Thank you, thank you both.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you
chairwoman.

VANESSA GIBSON: Thank you so much Chair Rodriguez and good afternoon Commissioner to you and your team once again. I first and foremost certainly want to recognize and thank you for you and your agency's commitment to Vision Zero. When I

previously chaired Public Safety, Chair Rodriguez and I traveled to every borough to hear from New Yorkers around what we can do to improve pedestrian bicyclist safety, driver safety and really make sure that we continue to share our streets. They belong to all of us and not just to one population and you know that was a very ambitious initiative and I am proud to see that Vision Zero has achieved so much and certainly like Council Member Van Bramer with Queens Boulevard, the Grand Concourse also has had major reconstruction so I am so grateful that we have been able to achieve great success and not having any fatalities along the Grand Concourse which is most of my district so I really want to thank you for that and certainly as we continue to implement Vision Zero and certainly Speed Cameras and other measures where we may need Albany's approval, you know that you can always count on me, I'm no stranger to Albany.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: Thank you.

VANESSA GIBSON: So first I wanted to ask a basic question and it is just the interagency coordination, that DOT does all of the Capital Work on our streets but there is a lot of interagency coordination with DEP, with utility companies like

Con-Edison, so my primary question is who is the primary agency that is tasked with ensuring that when DOT is done we let Con-Edison know, we let you know the Buildings Department? How does all of that work because I guess many of us have been frustrated that when projects are completed the streets are messed up and they are certainly in worse condition than when projects have started and most of the time it's not DOT's work that caused these issues it's another agency or maybe a utility company, so my question is how do we make sure that we increase the capacity of communication with inter-agencies and making sure that if DOT is doing work, the work is done on time and then the streets are repaved and it is back to what we deem as normal.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: So it's a great question and I certainly know an area that is a big challenge and where I think all of us, we've made a lot of efforts which I'll describe it, certainly always more that we could do. DOT, we meet monthly with all the major utilities and we try best we can to harmonize our upcoming resurfacing schedules with planned work that they need to do. We also work with our fellow sister agencies, one of the other agency

that is most in the street is DEP with all of the tremendous water and sewer work they need to do on the water and sewer system which in some places over 100 years old. So, we, we try very hard to coordinate and part of the reason, one of the things I hear frustration from Council Members is you mill the street, you scrape off the asphalt and then you leave it milled for two to three weeks and it drives everybody crazy, you should resurface it right away, part of the reason we leave the street open is to try and encourage utilities or sister agencies to get in there while the street is open and do the work they need to do and a lot of time they do, do that, sometimes not but that, I know it annoys people to no end when the street is milled and unpaved but there, there is a method to the madness. That is part of the reason that we do that but it is also true particularly for utilities like DEP or Con-Ed or National Grid that if there is some kind of an emergency condition and they need to get back into the street they are going to have to cut the street back open and you all know what those conditions could be, could be a pipe leaking, could be a gas leak, could be a power outage, I mean one of the

things that makes the New York Street so complicated is we have such a dense bundle of infrastructure under the surface and a lot of that infrastructure is very old so I don't think we have totally solved the problem of making sure that everything gets fixed everytime we open up a roadway but we do try and meet regularly and coordinate and I know it is an area the Council has expressed interest in being involved and one we would be certainly happy to do so, I think if there are ways we can make the system better, we would love to explore those.

VANESSA GIBSON: Thank you uhm Design Build. I mean we have talked a lot about it and I think my colleagues and I have a good understanding of what we can achieve with Design Build authorization. This is nothing new. Agencies have received this authorization before. You joined colleagues in announcing that you wanted to put pressure on the state and we joined you in terms of the BQE Project, so I wanted to first understand how soon must the City receive the authorization in order to begin using Design Build and then what happens if we don't get Design Build, how would the process of Design Bid Build Procurement Method, certainly

delaying us, we could potentially save \$158 million, shave off two years. So tell us about some of the consequences that we face if we don't get Design Build authorization.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: Right and I know you are asking, you are referring specifically to the portion of the BQE Project, but just to be clear. I mean the City's initial opening point is the city should have broad design build authority for a whole bunch of projects, not just that one. I mean, we can think of a number of DOT projects where we could, you know shave time and money off the project and I mentioned some of the other areas could be useful for speeding up nightshift projects, for building new prison facilities as we try and close Riker's, for new police facilities, new libraries. I mean it is a tool as you correctly point out. It is not new. We are probably one of the only cities now in the country that doesn't have the ability to use it and in other countries in Europe and Asia it has been state of the art for decades. In terms specifically of the BQE, time is short. I've been up in Albany, you know, joined by city colleagues and others for the past few years lobbying on behalf of Design

Build. We are kind of at the crunch time. To stay, we have a bit of a, as you mentioned, we have a bit of a deadline now looming which is in around the year 2026. We are going to have to probably start putting weight restrictions on that structure which is an antiquated Robert Moses Era, it's structure never designed to carry nearly the volume and weight of vehicles that it carries and that means if a weight restriction, as you said that means diverting trucks onto local streets which I don't think anybody wants to have happen. So we very much from the city's point of view need to get Design Build Authority in this current budget and I am pleased to say and I think you know the Governor's Council just wrote a letter to the speaker, I think some of you were copied on it, saying very explicitly that the Governor agrees that Design Build is essential for the BQE so we were heartened to see that and we really hope that will come to pass. Because if we can't get that in the next couple of months and we have to go the traditional, if we get Design Build, we can get the project done we believe by 2026 and avert that situation. If we can't, we are probably running a year or two after that and uhm, that's

going to have severe impacts on the local community and again cost city taxpayers extra dollars. The state isn't giving us any money for this project. It is all city dollars right now and again magnify those impacts on the local community. So we were heartened to see the letter from the Governor's Council and we have had much support here on the City Council, we are making a big push in this budget cycle, if we don't get it, we will you know we will explore if there is potentially any other options for the city but we will find ourselves in a very difficult position.

VANESSA GIBSON: And let me also for clarity, the state can give Agency Design Build as well as project base authorization as well. So there are two types of measures where they say you can do Design Build for any project or specifically a project?

POLLY TROTTEBERG: Right or the state could say anyone could do Design Build anytime they wanted on anything. I mean the state could provide as broad an authority as it chose to. In some states around the country, Design Build is the main method used for all procurement so the state could on any

continuum go from we are giving it to you for one project to everybody everywhere can use it as needed and I would just say you, we would never use it in every instance it is just one procurement tool that we would like to have in our toolbox as almost every other jurisdiction around the world does at this point.

VANESSA GIBSON: Okay.

POLLY TROTTENBERG: Including the state.

VANESSA GIBSON: Right so DOT's Capital Plan is broken down into six divisions, the waterway bridges, ferries and aviation, highway bridges, highways, transportation equipment and traffic and as I mentioned in my opening, your commitment rate is above the City's average of commitment rates uhm but there are two divisions that I notice are below the City's commitment rate and that is the waterway bridges which we have around 24% and then the transportation which is about 41% so I wanted to ask you specifically in terms of the fluctuation in commitment rates, what challenges did DOT face in waterway bridges and transportation that caused the commitment rate to be at this level.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: And I, I have to confess I know that those are some of the categories that you all look at our budget it, well not actually really the categories in which we breakdown our division so maybe my Budget Director will look. I'll talk a little bit about the commitment rate and then speculate, we may have to get back to you on those details because those categories aren't really how we breakdown our program.

VANESSA GIBSON: Okay.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: I'm pleased you mentioned the commitment rate, because when I, when I came in as Commissioner four years ago we did have a very low Capital Commitment Rate and to be fair it was not something that the city necessarily put a lot of focus on but in this administration at that time O&B Director Dean Fuleihan said to me your Capital Commitment Rate is not good and we really, we really took a lot of steps to try and improve that percentage, I mean first of all to be more accurate and honest and exactly asking for what we thought we could spend and then doing a scrub of everything that we do internally to try and speed up that process and making a dashboard to track our Capital Projects and

in some ways really husbanding certain projects through the process which as you know can involve numerous oversight agencies, the controllers office, all kinds of different steps along the way so to get that Capital Commitment Rate up has taken a lot of very hands on work. It has not been easy. Now I think well I will have to get back to... I mean I have a speculation on what you are calling the waterborn bridges which are maybe one that are moveable bridges that potentially involve.

VANESSA GIBSON: State and Federal Agencies.

POLLY TROTTEMBERG: Yeah but let us, let us double. I'm sorry to say not I hadn't seen that particular breakdown so we will try to get you an answer for that while we are sitting here today.

VANESSA GIBSON: Okay, sure that's fine. We can follow up on that. Uhm and then I also lastly wanted to ask before we get to our other colleagues, DOT works very closely with DDC, Department of Design and Construction on certain Capital Projects and they are to date managing of several of your DOT Projects so I wanted to ask about your relationship and partnership with DDC, when do you decide to bring

them on board, during the design phase and how has that partnership been and in terms of the work you are doing and improvements and more efficiencies where are those areas where you see DOT being able to improve?

POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah this, this is a rich topic and one probably I assume your subcommittee may spend a lot of time exploring because I think New York has a pretty unique system which some of you may recall was sort of created back in the Giuliani Administration of trying, because as I have said our roadways are so complex. We have, the roadway infrastructure above, water and sewer and utility infrastructure below and DDC was created to try and harmonize all of that work and then obviously they took on other types of work, buildings and a whole bunch of different projects for the city and I would say DDC now has a lot of projects on their plate. You know the way we do Project Planning, you know over the past few years we have really tried to improve that coordination and in fact the major capital agencies DOT, DDC, DP and Parks, we all now meet on a very regular basis, basically to troubleshoot because so many of our projects of

integrated and so many times we will find that there is a bottleneck happening in some corner of some agency and when all the Commissioners and the teams come together we can work through them. But we do have a Capital Process where DOT works through the projects that are priorities we work with you all and City Hall to determine those priorities. DEP has their own set of priorities. Ours are above the surface, theirs are below the surface and to some degree it does fall to DDC to try and harmonize that and it can be, it can be challenging and we have tried to better align that upfront planning process. DDC is trying to do more of that now but definitely this is one of the, you know, the arrangements that makes the New York City Capital Process so complicated.

VANESSA GIBSON: Okay thank you. Chair Rodriguez.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you Chair, so colleagues instead of having to run of one three minutes and then two, do you want to put in five minutes so that you can use it to the best of your ability. So Council Member Grodenchik followed by Council Member Van Bramer and Powers.

BARRY GRODENCHIK: Thank you very much. Thank you Chair, thank you Madam Chair. Thank you Commissioner for being here today. Generally a pleasure to work with Commissioner Garcia in Queens and her and her team have been very responsive. I will be in Albany on Tuesday so we will be pushing Design Build. I will be speaking to my former colleagues and I will say about milling streets, sometimes the milled product is better than what was there before depending on how bad it was so it's not always so bad. A couple of quick questions, with DOT I have I think 14 speed cameras and they are a source of great aggravation to many of my constituents. I do tell them to slow down but not that often because you know I'd like to get re-elected but the truth of the matter is, would you support signage before the speed camera because if the real idea is create public safety and I know that bill was carried before he passed away in Albany by my dear friend, Mike Samanowich (SP?) but would you support legislation in the State Legislature that would require signage to say within the next 100 200 yards, whatever the distance we determine there is a speed camera.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: We have said that we would support it in the context of doing some kind of expansion of the program.

BARRY GRODENCHIK: Okay and we.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: And just, I mean we have put up signs all over the city that do say city speed limit photo enforced. I mean, I am hoping that New Yorkers are on some notice that the city does deploy speed cameras around.

BARRY GRODENCHIK: Well I get that but but it you know it hits my area a lot harder than some other areas, uhm I don't want to pick on anybody else's district but 14 is a lot and you know I'll leave it at that. Second question, uhm curbing. This goes back to I've been in government 30 years. I have never had an easy time of getting anybody a new curb. I've owned three houses in New York City, all three of them had either a curb that was about this high or just totally obliterated curbs from decades and decades, the curbs in front of my house I guess are about 65 years old. David Weippert (SP?) is carrying Legislation at my behest in Albany that would allow a property tax credit for anybody that wanted to rebuild their curb. The curb is the

responsibility of the City DOT, could the city support that Legislation, we put people to work. I know it would mean less tax revenue for the city but it would also give us new curbs and it would keep our sewage from being filled up as quickly as possible with the schnooks that comes off of my lawn.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: I think probably supporting a bill like that would be a decision made above my pay grade, but ...

BARRY GRODENCHIK: Would you, would you be happy to recommend that to.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: Well, I will certainly bring your recommendation back to our, back to our leadership at City Hall and we recognize, look I'll just be honest, cause we've been to many Town Halls and some of you at your Town Halls the issue of curbs has come up and we have, yours being one and, and there are some places where we are making investments in curbs and as you know we have a new contract now. It's, I got a note here it is going to be registered this spring by DDC. So we will...

BARRY GRODENCHIK: How big a contract will that be Ms. Commissioner.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: How much is it? We will check on the number. It's not enormous and look, there is a reason why and you know I think we are going to, I think in the obviously in this coming budget cycle talk about all the city's Capital Needs and we are going to be putting some money into curbs but it is competing against a lot of other, as you know, very important priorities, building housing...

BARRY GRODENCHIK: No I get all of that but that's why I proposed the Property Tax Credit so that people could do it themselves with your approval of course, it would have to have a permit issued and DOT would have to inspect and approve of the work. It is my experience that it would be easier to drive to Mars than it is to get a curb installed in the City of New York. But I will leave it at that.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: We will have a new contract.

BARRY GRODENCHIK: That is over many Commissioners.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: It is going to be easier than going to Mars.

BARRY GRODENCHIK: I don't know about that. Anyway, my last question is Congestion

Pricing, not a fan, lot of people in Eastern Queens, one of the things that I have talked about when I've talked to the press about this is perhaps we have HOV lanes on the Long Island Expressway, the Staton Island Expressway, other, the Gowanus, would you, would you be in favor of putting in, and there is an HOV lane leading up to the Mid-Town Tunnel as you approach from the Queen side. Would you be in favor of putting HOV lanes on the major bridges going into Manhattan at rush out so that people would maybe have some incentive to double up or triple up and they would be able to get into Manhattan faster?

POLLY TROTTENBERG: It's interesting, the issue of HOV lanes has very much arisen in the context of the L-train shutdown as I mentioned in my testimony, we will be pursuing putting in an HOV lane on the Williamsburg Bridge and the Mayor has actually said publicly, I mean, I think he is a little bit with you and probably given a choice would prefer to go the HOV route. We will have an opportunity to see how well it works. Uhm, we would like to have some potentially automated enforcement availability there too because again they are not particularly on our

East River Bridges unlike the MTAs bridges there aren't big toll plaza areas.

BARRY GRODENCHIK: No I understand that.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: Where you can just pull people over and enforce it.

BARRY GRODENCHIK: I understand that.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: Enforcing is a challenge but we are certainly going to be trying it out.

BARRY GRODENCHIK: I'm all for reducing congestion but my constituents driving and then they park and then they leave. They are not really the part, it's really, I believe the 30,000 plus the ALYFT, UBER people that have taken over the streets of Manhattan. With that, I thank you Madam Chair and Mr. Chairman, thank you Commissioner.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Council Member Van Bramer followed by Council Member Powers.

JIMMY VAN BRAMER: Thank you very much to both Chairs. Commissioner, first let me just say uhm I'm very excited about Queens Boulevard, Phase I, our Capital Project moving forward. I know it went to the Transportation Committee. I know there are some questions about the bus treatments there but I am

very supportive of that moving forward as quickly as possible and some of the things that I am more proud of in my career and certainly working together with you and your agency on that. I wanted to ask a couple of questions, uhm, very specific to Long Island City. Tomorrow we are going to be Vernon Boulevard, again rallying with parents for some more traffic calming measures, uhm, which I hope we can get accomplished but I wanted to talk because I know that there is a comprehensive study with respect to Long Island City. There is also the Capital Reconstruction Project that we announced together, some \$40 million a couple of years ago. And I was wondering if you could provide an update on both and how they come together to make our streets safer in Long Island City, one of the fastest growing, busiest sections of Long Island City, obviously parents all over the city of New York are feeling this much more so in the wake of the wake of the tragedy in Brooklyn.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: They certainly are. We recognize that and you know we have been working very closely with you I think on a bunch of good improvements in Long Island City and we are hoping

with more to come we are working in double time on it. I think on the sort of the larger project study, I'd actually like to sit down and give you a briefing on it because I think there are some places where we could talk some things through and get some input so if that will be okay maybe we can set that up.

JIMMY VAN BRAMER: And the Capital Reconstruction I know that there was some delays perhaps because of DEP work but also because of the potential effect of a BQX Route?

POLLY TROTTENBERG: Y, y, y, yes, I mean yes there have been as is always, sometimes the case with complicated potential street reconstruction work, yeah we've had some DEP issue and making sure that the infrastructure that they are going to have there is going to be adequate for all the growth that's to come and then you know some BQX issues, so again, maybe I can sit down with you and walk you through the latest.

JIMMY VAN BRAMER: Okay I just think it would be, who knows what is going to happen with the BQX but obviously the people in the city need and want those changes ASAP. Uhm, I wanted to ask about, because you mentioned SBS and you know the

administration has some grand plans for Long Island City which include even more growth. Uhm, that has a lot of people concerned. Of course, one of the main concerns is where are people going to... how are people going to get to and from Manhattan. How are they going to get to work. The #7 Train can only accommodate just so many folks. Uhm and I know that my colleague to my right experiences that as well with folks originating there and flushing but do you as the Transportation Commissioner and/or your department sit with Department City Planning and is select bus service and other additional bus service, is this something that you all are considering? Clearly it is something that I am asking of the Mayor but I am a little alarmed that we don't seem to be in the pipeline.

POLLY TROTTENBERG: I mean, we do sit with Department of City Planning and with the MTA and planning out what the next set of bus routes are going to look like and you know particularly we have focused on bus routes where there is not good subway service and very high ridership. If there are bus routes you think should be on the, and this, I would say this in general because many Council Members

wrote and said we want to see a lot more bus lanes. We would be thrilled to work with you on that. We would welcome your suggestions on where you would like them, because as you know some communities embrace them and some communities they can be astonishing unpopular, so if there are places you think we are overlooking, we would love to work with you on that. Uhm.

JIMMY VAN BRAMER: Trust me, we could, we will, we will provide you with routes. Multiple routes all over western Queens. I know it can be difficult to implement in some ways but and my next question is the L-train and its affect on the 7 line. We have no other choice, right, we desperate need those other options for people to get to and from work because with the pace of development with where we are already at with the 7 train folks can't get on, which leads me to my next question. So we will get you those select bus service routes but then of course needs to be the funding and the will to do it. Uhm, but with the L train, we are very concerned that a lot of folks from Brooklyn, our friends from Brooklyn are going to find their way to Queens to connect from the G to the 7 or the E and/or E. We

are already at capacity if not over capacity and I would love to hear your thoughts and how we are going to make sure that Brooklyn can continue to get to work but not at the expense of the good people of Queens who are going to be fighting with the good people of Brooklyn to get on those 7 and E trains if everyone is coming from Brooklyn on the G to go north.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: I hope that peace can remain between Brooklyn and Queens so that we can have hands over the New Town Creek. Uhm, and as I mentioned in my testimony, we have had a really now with the MTA over a 2-year planning process and they I think they have done, and maybe, I've been hearing I think there is more interest in us perhaps coming and spending more time talking to some of the Queens stakeholders. I think they have done a very thorough and detailed job of figuring out where to add subway service and their goal is to be basically accommodate about 80-85% of the Brooklyn subway riders on not so much on the 7 but on the G, on the JMZ, and then to take what will be this 15-20 remaining of this population and run some really good bus service and that is why HOV over the Williamsburg Bridge

dedicated bus lanes in Williamsburg and then along 14th Street to try to make that bus riding experience one that is reliable and that has travel times that will keep people on the bus. They will be running, we will be running a Ferry and you know building out some very, very robust protected bicycle infrastructure as well as potentially working with Motivate to really make bike share a bigger component. So, we are leaving no stone unturned and trying to make sure that we can help the Brooklynites come in directly to Manhattan but I think would be happy to sit down and talk to you and believe me I am well aware of how crowded the #7 is and that the MTA still has a lot of work they need to do on that line which is only making the challenge that much greater.

JIMMY VAN BRAMER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. Council Member Powers followed by Council Member Deutsch.

KEITH POWERS: Thank you, thank you for being here, thank you for your testimony and congratulations to our new Chair on the Subcommittee for Capital Funding on your first hearing. I had wanted to pick up on the L-train just for a second, which is to say, first of all, thank you to for

coming to City Hall a few weeks back an meeting all the people on the Manhattan side to talk about impact and hear their questions and concerns. When do we on the, on the Manhattan side, I know there are a lot of boroughs involved here, Queen, Brooklyn, when are we, or I mean all of us expected to see a final plan or a new plan that incorporates all the comments and concerns that will come and then what is the process after that?

POLLY TROTTEBERG: Alright so as you know we have had a number of meetings with stakeholders and elected officials. We did, we did a round of meetings last year and then in the past couple of months we have done a series of open houses, east and west side around 14th Street and then as well in Williamsburg. We are getting a lot of feedback from all of those meetings. We are doing now another round of stakeholder meetings, particularly on the Manhattan side with some of the block association and institutions along 13th and 14th Street and we have committed to and we are going to do some more public Town Hall Meetings where I know I think it will be a very spirited debate. We are hoping I think to do that. I am looking over at

Rebecca Zack, I think in the next month or so and we are absorbing all of the input that people are making and we are going to I would say probably within the end of that process within a month or so put out what will be our next iteration. Next refinements and I think yes, I think obviously for lower Manhattan the two big issues that are debating is are we happy with the configuration of the bus way on 14th Street and how many hours a day should it operate? And the protected bike lane, should it be two way on 13th Street, should it be on 12th and 13th? Should it be on others? I think those, I mean that is my sense of the big issues we are still debating on the Manhattan side. I think we are taking input in and I am hoping in about a month from now we will come down with what we think is really our final set of recommendations. Some of these things we need to start implementing this spring as the weather turns warm because you know the L-train shuts down in April of 2019 and we can't wait until then to do all the markings and other work we need to do after the winter we won't have enough time.

KEITH POWERS: Thank you and I appreciate your large imagination on 14th Street. I supported

doing the mostly what you guys are doing too. So I appreciate that. Uhm switching topics on my 2-1/2 minutes left here. The Mid-Town Congestion Plan, I want to get an update. You guys had, the Mayor's Congestion Planning announced in October. I know you are in different stages. You had just announced this week the Block the Box. Can you tell me where you've been, I'd say briefly just tell me where you are on the other measures.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: I said with Chief Chair and we put the paint down on the 50th of the 50 Block of Box sites we are doing where NYPD is going to be doing stepped up enforcement. If you go on our website or we can supply to the committee. We have that list, it's 30 sites in Manhattan and 20 in the outer boroughs. Next step coming this month is going to be in Brooklyn and Flatbush and in Queens, what we are calling the clear curbs which is basically trying to keep the curbs free of delivery and double parking, etc. during the rush hour period. Flatbush from Grand Army Plaza down to the Manhattan Bridge and then in Roosevelt and Jackson Heights. Coming in April, we are going to get to the mid-Town portions.

KEITH POWERS: What's the date in April?

POLLY TROTTEBERG: I think April, early April like April 2nd we will get that underway and remember there are two components to that. There is also what we are calling a clear curbs portion in that block that I mentioned in my testimony trying to minimize deliveries during the rush hour periods and also on some of the crosstown pairs, trying to clear one side of the street and make it a travel lane.

KEITH POWERS: So, I, as you can imagine we are three weeks ago from the Manhattan side of it and I'm wondering, well I've heard at least I should say about some concern about the delivery aspect of it and not just folks that are and I was at the press conference of the Mayor supportive of ways to reduce congestion. I support congestion pricing but I, I'm concerned that we are, we are weeks ago and that we had a big group of property owners, businesses, restaurant owners, small grocery stores, schools perhaps who are going to have a radical shift in what they are going to have to do in terms of deliveries, perhaps even add more trucks on. I, can you give me some since of where you are and outreach those groups and what their feedback is?

POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yes and I completely understand the concern and just, just so you know, we shippers, we are having our street ambassadors go door to door to businesses to make sure they know what is coming and look, we view this as a pilot so I heard you say like this is going to be a radical shift. I have a feeling that this sort of be something that will come together with a little bit of gradualness. I don't think we are going to flip a switch tomorrow and everything will be cleared. I think it will be an iterative process and I have committed to local bids to the business groups, etc. that we will try and work with them. Our goal here is not to come out on day one and blanket vehicles with 1000 tickets but I think the Mayor does feel strongly and we have heard it from Council Members and from so many other people that we need to try to set up our enforcement and for a lot of what we are trying to do in Mid-Town it is basically enforcing the curb restrictions that already exist but just have not been as enforced as they should be but I can assure you that we will try and work very much with the Business Committee and the Shipper Committee. We will have an open line of communication. If you see

there are ways that things are really coming off the rails you know we will make sure that we are in communication with you. We are not trying to do this as a something that is going to punitive and drastic.

KEITH POWERS: And I will just hand it back over because I know that my time is up but I will just note that I was there in October. I had heard, and thought very little in between maybe there was average happening but from my side, after that October hearing I thought it was actually going in effect in like January but I heard from little from there about it so I'm not surprised that others are, are surprised that there is, it's dropping in.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: But just to note the reason it didn't go in to effect in January is because we talked to the shippers and some of the businesses and they told us we are not ready in January so we agreed to move the date. There has been some do... I agree more, we need to do more to get the word out.

KEITH POWERS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: And before calling the next, colleague, I also would like to voice to Mr. Powers which is we've been getting a lot of push

from the advocate and also from the stakeholders which many of them make sense, which is about the impact of that it will have on delivering food and all of those type of items in that area, especially in the Mid-Town and so I don't know. I am one of those believe that deliveries should happen at night. I believe that if there is no effort or continued conversations with all those groups you have been meeting for years and trying to come out with a plan that you know that we also build some consensus of a win-win situation. I think that this is something that I hope to see some progress in that direction and that will mean that the starting date should be delayed to give some time for conversation I think that I would like to bring it to the table for you to consider.

POLLY TROTTENBERG: Well let's, I mean maybe we can follow up on this and we have certainly been talking to some of the major shippers and the major businesses in the City, what can we do to shift more deliveries to nighttime and it has proven a very complicated discussion. There is a lot of reluctance to change, you know, driver's work schedules, there can be union rules there. A lot of times in

neighborhoods where there is both residential and commercial, residential doesn't want to have the noise of trucks at night although there are technologies now that can make trucks quieter, so an area that we are certainly exploring but one that is not without its challenges.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Alright thank you. Council Member Deutsch followed by Council Member Koo and Menachaca.

CHAIM DEUTSCH: Thank you very much. Good afternoon Commissioner, good afternoon Rebecca and I don't know your name.

ELIZABETH: Elizabeth, good afternoon.

CHAIM DEUTSCH: Elizabeth, good afternoon. Uhm so first there are two things that I would like to touch upon. Number one is that we all know is parking in New York City is a major problem and by people looking for parking, it causes congestion, it causes pollution and everything else that comes with it. So uhm, I have brought this up once in the past and I also had the conversations with the fire department through the Commissioner and that would be there are 110,000 fire hydrants throughout the city and if we could relocate some of

those hydrants, they are near bus shelters or near curb cuts the areas where anyway you cannot park to increase the amount of parking spots throughout the city. So even if we get a fraction of that 110,000 fire hydrants then we have, we will come a long way with increasing parking throughout the city because we all know with the new SDSs that are going on all over the City, I used to be so happy to see you Commissioner when you come to City Hall, now everytime you come in I figure another SBS in my district, uhm, that was a joke, but uhm if we could all work together with DOT. With DOT and DEP and the Fire Department if we could all work together to see, because the Fire Department Commissioner said he is definitely open to it. There is some guidelines but it is not really you know like if you are just moving it like several feet or like mid, as long as it is safe for the residents he has no problem with it. So if we could get DEP involved and put something, a pilot program in my district for this budget that would be great if we could do that and just try some areas to see how it would work out.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: I will even just add to that because it is something we have talked to DDC

about because there is another way which I think could both create some more parking spaces and enhance safety which is to move a lot of the fire hydrants sort of quite a few feet in from the corner. If you put those closer to the corner, that is often a place that we would like to daylight for safety, so we have actually sort of thoughts along those lines as well, happy to be part of that discussion.

CHAIM DEUTSCH: Thank you just name it after me. Second question I have, is you spoke about milling and paving. After milling you have several weeks that you don't pave because you send out notices to utility companies, sister agencies and everything so I know from my district, I don't remember the last time that milling was done and that a sister agency or brother agency or an utility company actually came out to do work. So do you have any figures in 2017 of how many projects, because you would have it because there would be permits on it. How many permits were actually given and done? Work was done during that milling and paving? I'm just curious to know.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah, I'm sure we could get you something on that and I just want to

add because there is one other reason that we leave that gap and I know it's frustrating and something that Council potentially wants to take action on. Part of the way that we get so many lane miles done every year is we work a little nimbleness into the system because weather can sometimes intervene, snow can intervene and pull our crews on to other things, so by leaving a bit of a gap between the milling and the paving, it also gives us a little operational flexibility but let us see, I think we probably could get you some sort of a number for that.

CHAIM DEUTSCH: Yeah because I believe it is the flexible, you know, just to have that because you also have I think it's a different company that comes out or a different contractor that may come out and do the paving so it's very hard to coordinate as soon as you finish milling the street to pave it. But what we should, if the number is not large, you know if we don't have a high number of utility companies, of sister agencies that are actually doing work we need to figure out a way to shorten that because people not only get frustrated because they get property damage and then they come and tell offices, they file a claim with the controller's

office and why should people have to go through a whole hassle and have their vehicles damaged or bikes. How can you drive a bike on a, on a milled street so this is something I think we need to look in to and to close that to make sure that it gets done sooner.

POLLY TROTTENBERG: Okay, well let us, that's a good question, let us see if we can get those numbers.

CHAIM DEUTSCH: Thank you name that after me too. Thank you.

VANESSA GIBSON: Thank you very much Council Member Deutsch and we have also been joined by Council Member Rafael Espinal and Council Member Steve Levin. Next we will have Council Member Koo followed by Council Member Menchaca.

PETER KOO: Thank you, thank you both chairs and thank you Commissioner. I think you are one of the most approachable Commissioners I have ever meet you. We always see you in different districts, doing, helping our local communities. So my, my first question you say, you talk about Box. We have a Box too, use the parking lot between 138 and Union and 38 and 39th Avenue. That used to be

the old Municipal Parking. People always complain to me that once they get in the parking lot they cannot get out. It takes 30 minutes or 45 minutes just to drive two blocks to get out to the Loven (SP?) Boulevard. So somehow many you can, you have to help us to redesign the traffic there so that when they can leave the parking lot easily. We are not going to leave the parking lot, cars keep coming down, you know, so we need either traffic agents or other devices to help them to get out of the parking lot.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: Happy, that is a very challenging spot that I have been to with you, but happy to come out again and maybe do some, some, we have now a really great new leader in our traffic operations division and I have to say that he has been able to come to some spots in the city that have been, places where we have had perineal challenges and bring fresh eyes to it so let us do that and see if we can.

PETER KOO: Yeah, thank you, otherwise we are dying from our own success, you know, because if it's too congested people won't come then the local businesses won't be successful. The second question, you are talking about your Box, the painting on the

street the Big Box in the intersection, cars can enter. I find it usually that it's the buses that are stuck there all the time. Usually, especially the long buses, the SBS buses because when they are making a turn they are always stuck in the box. So do you give them tickets, or no?

POLLY TROTTEMBERG: We don't generally give them tickets and I will admit that it's sort of a special challenge for the buses, given their length again, particularly as you say the articulated buses for SBS. I mean I would ask you as a driver if you can see that you are not really going to make it through an intersection before the light turns red, don't go for it. If you are a bus with 100 people on it and there will never be a space big enough for you, maybe I'll have a little sympathy but sometimes you find yourself stuck there. But certainly we hear from the MTA and from the bus drivers that they are frustrated by the traffic as well so you know we hope they will help us and in some of the Block the Box locations may be if you know if you all have ones where you particularly see buses are getting stuck, those might be places where particularly we need NYPD

intervention. Where we need them to be really directing traffic, you know with actual agents.

PETER KOO: So the next question I have is on the Green Taxes. You know, there are a lot of Green Taxes, especially the one that Roosevelt Avenue, afterwards, they stay on the street and they tie up the traffic, doublepark. So is there way we can put taxi stands for them so they go and wait there instead of parking on Roosevelt and Main Street.

POLLY TROTTENBERG: I mean, we do, we do put taxi stands around the city so we can we can come take a look at that location.

PETER KOO: Sure, that would be good, helpful, a lot of traffic, hey Councilman why do you set up a taxi stand for us to park instead of like driving on the, shuffling along Main Street, Downtown area and parking in other traffic. Okay thanks. And the last question I have is about pedestrian ramps. I noticed that the city has a program for pedestrian ramps so can you define what is a pedestrian ramp, is this the one across the street, you walk up and then go across the street?

POLLY TROTTEBERG: No, no, a pedestrian ramp is what sort of commonly known as the curb cut. That you would see at the corner. You know, now I believe if you come to most corners in New York City you will see a ramp that slopes down. It has often got little what we call truncated domes on it for the visually impaired and it enables people in a wheelchair or people with a stroller or a cart to go down into the street.

PETER KOO: Okay I gotcha. Yeah. So I'm talking about the one over the overpass.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: You mean raised pedestrian, a pedestrian bridge or pedestrian overpass.

PETER KOO: So those are pedestrian bridge?

POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yes.

PETER KOO: So, downtown is frustrating, I think we have a need for those bridges, you know, and also on Coachman (SP?) Boulevard, near Skyview. There are so many people walking across the street and the cars have a time to turn from Roosevelt to College Way because people keep walking, keep walking

so that's my last request, you take, other cities have done it. Build an overpass or build a tunnel.

POLLY TROTTENBERG: I have been, particularly in China, I have seen where they have one of the challenges we have here in the US is pedestrian bridges need to be ADA accessible which means that you even need to have a ramp that is big enough that it is at a slope that a wheelchair can use or you have to build an elevator, and you know, thinking of the streets of Flushing, it would be impossible to do that.

PETER KOO: Tunnel.

POLLY TROTTENBERG: I don't know if you would get many people to go down into a tunnel. Usually people don't like them.

PETER KOO: There are only a couple of blocks and do a tunnel. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Council Member Menchaca followed by Council Member Rosenthal.

CARLOS MENACHACA: Thank you to Chair Gibson and Chair Rodriguez and thank you Commissioner and your team for being here today. I want to start with a conversation that I know that we have been having on the possible Legislative side but just,

just a reconnection to the process that DOT takes to, and the dollars that are used, specifically for cuts in the street for, separate from the milling questions from utilities that come in or any other, a plumber that comes in and essentially uses lower grade materials and all of a sudden there is a pothole and I think that, that is something that is coming from Sensa Park in a big way and I wanted to, I wanted to ask to see if DOT is actually, continues to analyze the impacts of just subpar subcontractors and whether or not that is part of the Budget conversations here today.

POLLY TROTTENBERG: I mean, I'll look over my Budget. I don't know whether we have done sort of a physical impact of that. We have in recent years tightened up our rules and requirements, particularly for making people who cut into the streets do more to restore the concrete bed and we have also tried to step up our inspections. But as I think I have conceded this is an ongoing problem, there are you know so many projects going on in the City in any given day and even sometimes if something is restored it looks like it was restored well and then low and behold a year later perhaps it wasn't

restored as well as it should have been. Uhm, you know one thing we are doing, you all worked with the administration and in the next few years we are going to actually have some funding for trench restoration for problems where there has been major settling in the streets due to you know infrastructure issues underneath so it's an issue we will to continue tackle and one where I'm hearing I think from you and your colleagues perhaps there is some real Council interest in you know seeing if there is some things we can do better here.

CARLOS MENACHACA: Awesome, thank you. Well and we will continue that. I just wanted to throw it out there, that is an important thing to look at because I think there are some dollars to be saved there and some efficiencies. Second, the BQX, I didn't see anything in the, in the Budget but just kind of question for you and we are kind of still putting our own committee together here and we will be launching that formally soon but I wanted to kind of get a sense from you. I know that EDC is kind of another driver of this. What kind of physical impacts that BQX has had on the Budget for DOT today, staff, whatever, whatever levels and whether or not

that is going to show up in any of the Budget Projects for need for DOT.

POLLY TROTTEMBERG: Right, it's, it's, you know so far that the work that we, that DOT has done on the BQX we have done with our in-house forces basically. We have, we have had.

CARLOS MENACHACA: Do you know what the costs of that has, have been like staff time?

POLLY TROTTEMBERG: Well, I, maybe we could put something together but again I think it has been pretty de minimus because it has sort of been for our, for our transit planners and experts. This has just been yet another assignment for them. So uhm maybe we can try and part it out but I don't think it would be a tremendously significant sum. I mean it would be in the yeah the 10s of thousands, maybe, I don't know, maybe Elizabeth would say a little bit more than that but not much more than that. Uhm, and look obviously the bigger question looms, I know, now you have a committee that will be looking at this, sort of where is, where is the administration on the BQX and the honest answer right now and I've said it before is as we have dug deeper into the project I think there are two sets of

questions have become pretty complex ones to answer which is how much work needs to be done with the infrastructure underneath? You know the joke about street car projects is that they are actually infrastr... they are subsurface infrastructure projects with a street car on top. So how, the different routes we would look at? How much would we need to do in terms of water and sewer and utility relocation and that is just proved to be an immensely complicated question. And then the second question and look I think some of the City's deliberations have floated out into the press is the original premises of the BQX was this is a project that would pay for itself through you know increased real estate values and some mechanism to capture those and I think as we have undergone the financial analysis I think the question has been is that really true? And I don't know that we totally have an answer yet and to the extent that it is not true is this a project that we would still want to pursue. Does it still have enough value and is that the best place to put those dollars. So I will admit, I think those deliberations have proved complicated and not quite resolved but obviously as your committee comes

together, we will probably be engaging with you in a more detailed way on that.

CARLOS MENACHACA: Thank you for that and looking forward to that, that discussion so we can kind of think about this together and would that be a request from the DOT since we are kind of on Budget mode right now, would that be uhm, say we get to that point.

POLLY TROTTEMBERG: Yes.

CARLOS MENACHACA: Uhm, could we expect, would your T-ASK was that an EDC Ask just kind of curious about that.

POLLY TROTTEMBERG: I think it is likely, it would be perhaps a bit of a shared responsibility. I think this is a project that would potentially largely be EDC due to sort of their contracting abilities cause I think this is something that would require some unconventional contracting and oversight mechanism but there is no doubt if we really pursue a big project like this DOT would need to do some staffing I think to you know engage in all the work that would have to be done on all the streets.

CARLOS MENACHACA: To be continue and thank you so much.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: To be continued.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Commissioner before calling our Council Woman Rosenthal, how would the DOT be impacted by President Trump's plan on infrastructure?

POLLY TROTTEBERG: Well I mean look, I have to say first of all obviously which has been much in the news now, the enormous fight that is breaking out over gateway. I mean that is obviously it's not a New York City DOT Project but just one that I think I would say from the city's point of view, it's so fundamental to our economic health. It is fundamental to the mobility of the Northeast Quarter and now it sounds now unfortunately if the President has turned against that project that's very worrisome for us. Uhm, you know in addition to that, there are, the larger question of formula funds. To date, Congress has not been inclined to make big changes in the regular highway and transit formula funds. Now that this big tax cut has passed though, that may change, I am not sure. And then there are also the discretionary grant programs where traditionally New York City has done pretty well in terms of Tiger Grants and the MTA and the City have

also done well in terms of Transit Grants. I think those potential grants are very much in jeopardy both because I think there will be a desire to save money on those programs and because you know being a sanctuary city and perhaps not being particular popular with the current administration I don't know how well we will compete so look it is certainly I think worrisome what's brewing in Washington and I think you know the the rippling effect that this big tax cut is going to go have on the Federal Budget, we don't even know yet what the full implications of that are going to be but I think they could be very severe and it wouldn't just be transportation it would be housing and healthcare and you know a whole bunch of different areas.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Uhm, which specific project, uhm I have, how are you doing at DOT?

POLLY TROTTEBERG: I mean look I think again it hasn't affected our formula funds so our day to day work continues but I mean we would like to get some major, perhaps some major funds to help on the BQE, some major funds to help on Woodhaven Boulevard Capital Project. The MTA obviously would like funds for second avenue subway and potentially other

projects. I think those type of projects, you know I'm very, I'm not optimistic that we are going to see that we are going to get Federal Grants for those in the near future unless we see a change in the political climate.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Council Member Rosenthal.

HELEN ROSENTHAL: Sure, thank you Chair and congratulations Subcommittee Chair but awesome Chair of the New Subcommittee on Capital. I really appreciate you leaving there effort here for NASA. Uhm, so good to see you Commissioner it has been a long time. I'm just going to jump in, I guess after saying that it is wonderful to see three woman up there testifying.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: In honor of women's day we arranged it this way.

HELEN ROSENTHAL: Well done. Uhm, what are the barriers to implementing Signal Priority on more bus lines, more quickly?

POLLY TROTTEBERG: So I know this has been a big area of focus for the Council and I discussed it a bit in my testimony just to give a little background on it. I know you talked to

Chairman Lohta about it this morning. And the history of TSP in the city is I think we have lagged behind other cities and there have been a combination of reasons for that. For many years, the MTA was sort of equipping their buses more or less one by one and then last year the Board was able to vote in a new contract for the MTA that will enable them to do it as a much more global software fix and I think you heard I think Ronnie Hakim said they would get them all done in the next few years. Uhm, on the New York City DOT end, we are responsible for adjusting the Signal Timing and I will admit that I think it has been a learning process for us because not only do you want to make the buses move but you also want to make sure and remember most of our bus routes there is probably traffic coming in both directions and we have a lot of pedestrians. So our traffic engineers have wanted to take the time to make sure that we were getting all those things right. We acknowledge that we need to pick up the pace and there has been a lot of numbers thrown out.

HELEN ROSENTHAL: Let me, let me put it to you this way because I have four more questions.

POLLY TROTTEMBERG: Of course.

HELEN ROSENTHAL: DO you need to hire more. You have been through a learning curve it sounds like.

POLLY TROTTENBERG: Yeah.

HELEN ROSENTHAL: It sounds like do you need more engineers? Do you, do you, is it trouble retaining them? Just ...

POLLY TROTTENBERG: I don't know that we need to hire more engineers, I think we need to do the process more efficiently and we have pledged now to basically double, triple the rate at which we are doing it?

HELEN ROSENTHAL: Okay so you are benchmarking it.

POLLY TROTTENBERG: Yeah, we, we're we've pledged out to get up to 1000 intersections by 2020.

HELEN ROSENTHAL: Thank you. I understand DOT is undertaking a pilot project to explore the best way to institute the protected intersections and it may be the case that where I live 83rd and Amsterdam there is one actually there. I don't know if that is possible but it feels like. There has been a change and it forces the car not to go into the bike lane. What's the status of the

pilot and what are your plans for expansion if you think it has been a success?

POLLY TROTTEMBERG: We are, I think we are doing a couple of pilot. We are doing one that is a left turning pilot where we were are.

HELEN ROSENTHAL: This is the last one.

POLLY TROTTEMBERG: Okay, when we are testing I think we have done it at 110 intersections if someone can double check that number for me and so far the results have been good. We have seen a reduction in speeds and preliminarily a reduction in crash data. We are still.

HELEN ROSENTHAL: It feels like it. It would be nice to come back a year from now and see the numbers. It also looks like it is relatively cheap to do.

POLLY TROTTEMBERG: You know, that's the good news. It is relatively cheap and relatively easy to do.

VANESSA GIBSON: Is there, do you find, are you tracking change orders in your uhm you know with your bidding process and have you found ways to reign in excessive change or when you spot them.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: Somewhere we have the change order numbers. Hang on, someone is going to hand them to me. Yes, okay, uhm we do track and we are trying to reduce the number, so FY17 construction change orders took 62 days, design change orders 93 days. So still.

HELEN ROSENTHAL: You know if you have some good insights on that, I would love to meet with you to talk about it also with Chair Gibson because I am sure there could be good learning across agencies on this and here is an area where uhm, I mean I hear what you are responding to but, but also the concern that the change order itself might be excessively priced or that there may be excessive change orders with particular bidders. You know, that sort of deep dive into what is going on here.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: Would love to do that, but we love to flag. There is a systemic issue, we have so many change orders again, not having Design Build. Design Build does a tremendous amount to reduce change orders because you don't have the designer and the constructor pointing fingers at each other.

HELEN ROSENTHAL: Okay sort of meeting the Governor saying fix this. I asked MTA earlier about trying to grow the number of bidders so you can get more competitive bids and you hit the mark talking about growing the number of bidders for the street marking companies. Are you doing that in any other areas and is there anything the Council could do to facilitate that?

POLLY TROTTENBERG: Yes, we try to do that in a bunch of different areas and I think I have told the Council before, when we decided to do the procurement for the Ferry boats which is a very kind of one off procurement. The city only does it every 30 to 40 years. We set out to talk to all the potential shipyards and it was fascinating. We called a bunch of different shipyards around the country and they basically said we will never do New York business with New York City again, you are suing us. The amount of paperwork and red tape and agony you put us through, go away and we, we worked really closely with them to try and help walk them through the process. We try and do that in a bunch of different places and we are particularly trying to do

it with the MWBE Community where the City's Bidding and Procurement Procedures are daunting.

HELEN ROSENTHAL: My two cents is to explore that further, because MTA has the same situation where potential contractors say to them, it's too hard to get through the wall of the ACHOs who are just not going to let other people bid. So there could be all sorts of reasons, it sounds like you learned. I understand you are talking about something else but perhaps there was some.

POLLY TROTTENBERG: I mean I don't understand the wall. I mean I will just tell you speaking from my own agency ACHO she is desperate to get more bidders. It lowers the price of our bids. I mean she spends most of her day going around to industry forums to try to encourage people to bid on our projects.

HELEN ROSENTHAL: So Joe Lohta was saying this morning it is very difficult to get bidders. We are trying to explore the reasons why.

POLLY TROTTENBERG: We would to explore, there are many reasons.

HELEN ROSENTHAL: Great.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you Council Member Levin.

STEPHEN LEVIN: Thank you very much Chairs, thank you Commissioner. A couple of points I want to ask about and I'll keep it as brief as possible. Uhm, in light of you know this horrific tragic we had earlier this week in Park Slope with the loss of these two little children, there has been a lot of talk about streets like 9th Street in Park Slope and others where we need to have I think increased involvement between DOT and the Community on Traffic Calming Measures, both large and small. So my first question is, the proposal that Transportation Alternatives has been talking about at doing these kind of lower impact Traffic Calming Measures you know flexible ballards and reconfiguring travel lanes to make them smaller, reduce speeding, things like that. Is that something you are looking at? And how are you approaching that from a Budgetary perspective. Is that Capital Budget, is that Expense Budget, how are you looking at that?

POLLY TROTTEBERG: I mean that's the work that we do every day. Those are the Safety Projects that we do every day and you know as I have

told this committee, we, we, our work is really based, it is data driven. We look at where the highest crash quarters are and you missed the earlier testimony we are going to do a major redesign on 9th Street. And look I wish I could always predict perfectly everywhere where a terrible crash is going to happen. The best we can do in terms of prediction is look where the crash data sends us and also what we hear from local communities and as I said, we try where we can to do the quick and easy things which can sometimes just be paint but in sometimes bigger interventions and those can take more time, require more work, need to work with the, the local businesses and the other curb side uses. Uhm, you know this past year we did 114 major safety improvement projects which is a record for us and I think, you know when I look at the declining fatality numbers in the City not obviously, obviously we have had a terrible tragedy this week and not to say that we don't have a lot more work to do, I think by targeting where the crash data sends us, we've had a big impact.

STEPHEN LEVIN: Do you have uhm the Capital Budget proposed in FY19 to do all of the

interventions that you have identified and you and your team have identified at this point.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: I mean, I think most of the work that you are talking about is actually Expense Budget and.

STEPHEN LEVIN: Okay.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: We don't have all..

STEPHEN LEVIN: Stuff like neck downs that's not Capital Budget, that's Expense Budget?

POLLY TROTTEBERG: That's Ca, neck downs are Capital.

STEPHEN LEVIN: Okay alright. Do you have enough allocated? I mean do you feel like, uhm I guess my question is are you constrained by cost at this point or constrained by budget or do you have basically enough that you all of the ones that you have identified, that you think are worth doing, you can go ahead, do you have enough planners in your Expense Budget? And enough Design Team? And enough Capital Budget where it requires Capital to go ahead and do all that for FY19 or should we be looking collaboratively between us as the Council and you as an Agency on enhancing your Budget. I mean, really, what I'm asking for is do you need more money?

POLLY TROTTEBERG: Well, I, I, I certainly think we would you know potentially particularly in the out years obviously engage with the Council and with our own OMB on potential funding these. I have to say you know thanks to the Council and the Mayor we have had very robust funding for Vision Zero in these recent years and to some degree, not that we couldn't always use a little more but funding has not really been our major limiting factor. I mean the limiting factor has been, we are only an agency of only so many people with so much bandwidth, there are only so many nights we can go before the Community Board. There is only so much the whole city can kind sort of absorb in terms of disruption, etc. You know, I stand by the fact that I think we have been pretty aggressive in our pace. You know if this obviously a huge priority for the Council that we staff up even further and particularly on the Capital side. Obviously let's, we can engage in that discussion.

STEPHEN LEVIN: Let's keep that conversation ongoing because you know every, every community that has safety concerns, we should also be looking honestly from a practice perspective about

whether we need to be going to the Community Board for every single action when you know major safety issues are involved, which, you know is an open question for me.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: I mean, some of that is Council mandated so I mean if you all wanted to change the rules on some of that, that's, that's within your discretion. I would just say that in general working with the community boards has made our project stronger, has gotten buy in and I think has actually helped us with the success that we have with Vision Zero. Sometimes, you know, even when we have gone to the community board, we have gone ahead with a project if the thing the safety benefits are urgent but in general I think working with community boards has been a very positive experience with the city.

STEPHEN LEVIN: Uhm, my other two questions were around Design Build at BQE and L-train, you know Budgetary, you know, what is being allocated in FY19 to L-train work but I'll, I'll follow up with you in the interest of time here.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you Council Member, I have a few questions that my Councilwoman

here has a few other questions and then we have to go. One is on, on the pedestrian bollards, see now, we are able, we have the Legislation that will mandate DOT to install a number of bollars every year but we were able to work with administration, DOT, with a plan where there was an amount of money, funding basically for pedestrian bollars. From that initiative that we were able to come together like how many bollars has been installed? And what is the funding for completion of that goals? And where were those other bollars would be installed besides Times Square?

POLLY TROTTENBERG: So that the \$50 million that we announced is a DDC Contract and my understanding, the latest is that at the moment they are working to get that registered with the Controller and that there has been some, some back and forth and questions about the details of that contract. So, uhm, you know, we will fi... as soon as we can get more details, we will fill you in on the next steps but I think that contract is still working its way through the city process.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Okay, that's important because as I say my goal is, I think it was

a good compromise when it comes to now moving on the Legislation but with Administration to work announcing those in that initiative but I was spirited to see an aggressive plan in installing as many pedestrian bollars in an area that is very critical for pedestrians and cyclists. I always say that it doesn't make sense to me when you go to 42nd street and the movie theatre from 7th to 8th Avenue not to see pedestrian bollars, when we know that there are pedestrian bollars in front of Bank of America but not on the other side of 42nd and 6th Avenue so I assert that we will see more bollars installed in our street. When I comes to the street calming techniques, like how still I think that we share the concern that drivers get into crashes, especially when the make turns, mostly in the left turn, like within the last year we were able to see an increase of funding for Vision Zero gray street. Like where are we today and what are your goal for the next year or the next 2 year, how much funding do we still have? Should we ask more funding to be sure that under your leadership we see more street coming to reducing the speed limit especially when drivers make turns.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: Well and look I think I testified again and you know thank you both of you Chairs and Council Members for the great support you have given us on the funding for Vision Zero. I think it has been tremendously robust and again our Capital Budget for FY18 to 22 is \$1.5 billion. We have \$270 million in expenses so we have a lot of robust funding here. Uhm, you know happy to sit and talk with the Council about other priorities as we look ahead to the next few years, are there priorities that you all are interested in that you think that we are not getting to. I will just say as we are talking about Capital Delivery and some of those challenges you know there are the money components to it but there are also all the other sort of process and outreach issues that go along with it. So, uhm, you know again happy to explore if there are key priorities that you think we are not getting to and you know if there are things that we can do to either put more funding in or find ways to speed them up.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: The Vision Zero Educational Awareness Fund that we thought that we were able to get them in and working with the

Council, we put like \$5 million so that there would be some funding on putting the ads on the radio and TV, educating our New Yorkers to understand that the only way on how we will accomplish our goal of Vision Zero is by changing the culture. So what I would today, with that allocation, how effective has this funding been so that we can have some idea as we will continue conversation because in the 2019 one more time those \$5 million are not included in the preliminary Budget.

POLLY TROTTENBERG: Well I think, per year, obviously this has been a debate that we have had Mr. Chairman and I think we have always found a way as the administration and the Council negotiate the Budget to find funds to do those campaigns and I think they have been tremendously impactful and it was great to do the one where we rolled out I think some great Vision Zero messages in several languages and you know to some degree, if there have been shortfalls you know our agency has helped put some resources on the table as well from our own internal resources which we will continue to do as needed. That has always been one that for our administration has been a source of negotiation.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Spend all day, I know it's not much, like?

POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah, I will let Elizabeth in a minute talk about that.

ELIZABETH FRANKLIN: Yes, we, we spend it all when we get it. We spent \$4.5 million last year and we have \$3 million this year from the Mayor and we are looking to reallocate internal resources. We put ads on the television, on the radio, uhm billboards, everything you see.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Right, I don't want to see that as a victor for the Council because those are, those are like the type of funding that I hope this administration especially, the leader in Vision Zero understands that that funding should be in the agency. It shouldn't be something that the Council should be here taking credit because we were able to get funding to educate our New Yorkers, you know, I hope that when the Mayor comes back us with the Budget that funding should be there and I hope that it should be baseline so that DOT should be able to know that this is something that we can plan every year. I know it is \$5 million but additional funding.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: Well I think some of the City Hall Team is here so I am sure that they will, they will bring that back to the Mayor. We will, we will as well.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Okay.

VANESSA GIBSON: Thank you, thank you, so I just had a few more questions that I wanted to circle back on, so Council Member Rosenthal talked a little bit about uhm the Change Orders and Change Order Process and I have a little bit of knowledge formerly working for a general contractor and we approved a lot of Change Orders, so I wanted to understand within each project that DOT has in it's portfolio do you project a certain course for overruns and Change Orders that are already factored in. Like is there anything that you do before you designate the total project cost to kind of takes into account that these types of things will happen through Change Orders?

POLLY TROTTEBERG: I mean, we do, we do plan a contingency for our projects but I will also say I mean I think you and Council Member Rosenthal are right to focus on this area. It is one where, you know, I think we should brainstorm about how we

can make the process better, uhm you know again there, the Capital Procurement and Contracting Process is a complicated one and part of I think, as a result of the way that we do things is we do probably wind up with more Change Orders than we should and, you know, I think we could probably come up with some ideas about how we could reduce both the cost of the Change Orders and the time it takes to process them.

VANESSA GIBSON: Okay so how much do you actually plan for contingencies. Like is that something that is factored into all the work that you do or are there certain scenarios where that plays a role?

POLLY TROTTEBERG: I will let Elizabeth take a crack at that one.

ELIZABETH FRANKLIN: Okay, sure I will take a crack at that. Uhm, well one big step in our approval process is getting the CP from OMB. This is to proceed.

VANESSA GIBSON: Yep, I learned about that.

ELIZABETH FRANKLIN: We generally get about 10% contingency in those CPs so that is one

thing that we get that is just, it's just one way that once, if there are Change Orders, we are able to proceed without a hold up of going back and getting another amended CP from OMB, uhm which takes a while.

VANESSA GIBSON: Right.

ELIZABETH FRANKLIN: So, yeah.

VANESSA GIBSON: Okay, if DOT was granted, Design Build Authority, how would, if any would this impact your budgeting strategy for Change Orders moving forward. So I know Design Build would expedite it but you would still have a period of time where a Change Order could potentially delay a particular project?

POLLY TROTTEMBERG: Well I mean, look, I think even on, we would not use Design Build for every project and I'm not saying Design Build with mitigate the need of every Change Orders. I mean sometimes we have Change Orders because again particularly when you do work in the city, when you go subsurface, when you are opening up a bridge that is 134 years old, you will find, and, and other conditions in the change you will find the need for Change Orders but there is no question that a source of Change Orders in the Design Bid Build Process is

you have one person design and then they hand the design back to you and then you bid out the design to a completely separate firm and the designer is not so responsible for the construction and the constructor is not so responsible for the design and there is a lot of disconnects there and it definitely increases the number of Change Orders. So, I, you know, we can get you some of the industry data but I think it can be a real dramatic improvement, a reduction in the number of change orders when you combine the design and the build together.

VANESSA GIBSON: Okay so in my opening, I talked a little bit about the Budget Line Process and this is certainly going to be a focus of the Subcommittee with every agency moving forward during the Budget Process but what would you suggest we could look at as possible measures of improvement that would allow the Agency to retain your ability to keep your commitment rates up, that's important but also at the same time while increasing transparency and really the Council's ability to achieve oversight. We talk a lot about it, so some of the general budget lines that we see are enormous in size and it doesn't really delineate some the specific

projects that DOT undertakes. So what would you suggest moving forward could be potential options that DOT would consider to really allow us to achieve both?

POLLY TROTTEBERG: Look, we are happy to explore ways to provide you with more detailed budget information if you all are interested. I, again this year I had never sort of heard that this was a concern of the Councils. I think to discuss you know what, what are the problems that you want to focus on and the oversight role that you want to play is a, is a conversation that should be very thoughtful. I mean I've said this before, I'm, not sure that there is any government in the country that has as many layers of oversight as New York City does. I mean I'm overseen by a number of internal agencies, Department of Investigations, Department of Justice, Federal Highways, Federal Transit, uhm, I have my own internal auditors so I mean, I think, I understand that there are areas that the Council wants to explore and we welcome that but I think one also wants to ask what are the things where you, you know you are going to perform a good useful function on oversight because I think part of the reason that we

are all so slowed up in our project delivery is the amount of reporting and oversight we have, it's astonishing. It's you know, it takes reams of paper and armies of people to comply with all of it and in that welter of information is good oversight occurring, sometimes it is, and sometimes maybe not so I think that is a really important question but I think it is something that will take some time to explore and ...

VANESSA GIBSON: Absolute, sure. And all the more reason why the Subcommittee was created.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: Well looking forward to it.

VANESSA GIBSON: To give us more of an opportunity to keep talking but I thank you so much for being here and for the work of your office on Vision Zero on so many levels and certainly during this Budget Process we look forward to working with you and getting Design Build. I have to put that last part in there.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: Thank you Madam Chairman, Chairwoman.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: And now member of the public, allow anyone to speak. Excuse me? Okay.

So with that Commissioner thank you and we will hear member of the...

POLLY TROTTEBERG: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

(background talking)

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Now.

BARBARA BLAIR: Good afternoon, thank you Chairpersons Rodriguez and Gibson. I am the President of the Garment District Alliance and I am here this evening to urge you to support the request of DOT for funding of an approved Permanent Plaza in the Garment District. The Garment District embraced the Permanent Plazas when they were created by DOT in 2009 for several reasons. The Plazas address the desperate need for public space in the district. Over the last 20 years, we have seen tremendous growth in the number of jobs in the Garment District, the number of pedestrians in our avenues and the construction of 37 hotels. The Garment District Plazas on Broadway between 36th Street and 41st are they only public space in a 38 block area that is bursting at the seams with tenants and visitors alike. There is literally no place to sit before the establishment of these public spaces. Likewise, this

quarters, a pedestrian connection between Times Square and Herald Square and should appropriately blend these Mid-Town West Districts. Since the Temporary Plazas were created we have noted some unintended negative consequences which need to be address. The narrow sidewalks in the Garment District have created an unsafe condition as pedestrians are force to walk in the traffic lanes due to lack of capacity on the sidewalks. The Plazas are unlit at night and as a result we have homeless and campings during the warm months. Because the area is dark the planters provide a sheltering type of environment and because late at night the Plazas are not as populated as for example Times Square, they have become a magnet for the homeless. On warm nights, we can have between 50 and 60 homeless sleeping on the Garment District Plazas. We believe that illuminating the Plazas will at the very least mitigate this problem. Also when it rains, Broadway has severe ponding conditions that force pedestrians unsafely into traffic and intersections to avoid being ankle deep in water. Reconstructing Broadway with a Permanent Plaza will address and mitigate these infrastructure safety and social conditions.

We understand from DOT that the request to fund the Permanent Plaza which was approved in 2016 was not allocated in the first round of negotiations. This is a significant setback for the area and is of concern to our businesses and property owners. Over the last 9 years, the Alliance has spent well over \$4 million to activate, beautify and maintain the Plazas so as to integrate this neighborhood into the Mid-Town City scape. We did this in the good faith with DOT in the city there was a shared vision and commitment to create a dynamic public space that benefits local community, addresses congestion and safety issues and improves the district for all New Yorkers and countless visitors around the world. I and the Board of Directors of the Garment District Alliance urge you, the City Council to support DOT's request and fund the Garment District's Permanent Plazas. I, I have to apologize, I realize this isn't a major bridge or a tunnel but it is very, very important to the district and we have seen explosive growth.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: And two things that I would say, I know the Council Member that represents your district will have a couple of

questions. One of my suggestion is, work with a Council Member to see how the Manhattan Delegation can work and put some funding and what happen to support colleague in the institution that you represent. The second thing is, we are doing Car Free Day Saturday April 21st.

BARBARA BLAIR: Yes, we are participating, Broadway will be closed.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: In fact.

BARBARA BLAIR: For that day, yes.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: But more than happy again to work with my colleague here to be sure that as you work with him through Manhattan Delegation that we find a way of how to look at yours as a priority for funding.

COREY JOHNSON: Okay, thank and I, and thank you for waiting through to testify. I want you to know that if you could see my paper, the question I couldn't get to was actually about this and asking the DOT so I did ask the Commissioner before she left to give us an update on what was going on and I note that my office will be following up to the recent letter for OMB with our own to continue to advocate and I will work with the Transportation Chair, I

appreciate his support at the Delegation Level to look for funding for this because I think that I share your imag, your, your sort of imagination for what the Plaza could be if we actually put more money into it and the safety concerns. So, I, I just want to offer my support. I want, we will follow up with some additional questions uhm with my office. I know you have been working with staff and we support it. I'm sorry I didn't get a chance to get your question but I thank you for being here. Uhm, what can you just give me from a question here, I know that, I think OMB has come back and not, can you just give us an update on where exactly you stand.

BARBARA BLAIR: Well, so as we understood it we applied in 2015 and were approved in 2016 for a Permanent Plaza and DOT requested the funding through OMB as part of their overall budget and then we heard from DOT that it was not, that it was rejected in the first round. But they did say that this is an ongoing negotiation that will continue over the next month and that there might be an opportunity between now and April for that to be put back in.

COREY JOHNSON: Right.

BARBARA BLAIR: So I was delighted to hear that DOT has such a robust budget and uhm but I'm, I'm hoping, I'm not exactly certain of what the process is now but I was hoping you have been very supportive of us, Councilmember. I know that Speaker Johnson is supporting this initiative, Gail Brewer, Manhattan Borough President is supporting it but it was our understanding that if we could get people to more vocally advocate for it there is a possibility that it could be put back in.

COREY JOHNSON: Thank you, thank you for, for coming here and raising it to, to the committee and I will also, I will speak with the Borough President about it as well. I think we are meeting on some, some projects tomorrow and we will raise it as a concern and we will follow up with a letter and understand that this is a priority for the folks in the Garment District, I've heard from a number of them and I, I want to say thank you for your advocacy and for, and for being here.

BARBARA BLAIR: Okay, thank you for your support and thank you both chairs for staying later.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: All Council Members,
literacy of power that we will sign a letter to send
it to a DOT Commissioner so let's work together.

COREY JOHNSON: Thank you.

BARBARA BLAIR: Okay.

CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: With that this
hearing is adjourned.

C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date April 11, 2018