

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE JOINTLY WITH  
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

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May 10, 2019  
Start: 12:00 p.m.  
Recess: 3:12 p.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E: Daniel Dromm  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Adrienne E. Adams  
Andrew Cohen  
Robert E. Cornegy, Jr.  
Laurie A. Cumbo  
Vanessa L. Gibson  
Mark Gjonaj  
Barry S. Grodenchik  
Rory I. Lancman  
Steven Matteo  
Francisco P. Moya  
Keith Powers  
Helen K. Rosenthal  
James G. Van Bramer

## A P P E A R A N C E S

Bill Heinzen

Acting Commissioner of the New York City Taxi and  
Limousine Commission

Jennifer Tavis

Deputy Commissioner for Finance Administration

Vincent Chin

Assistant Commissioner for Finance Administration  
Vincent Chin

Elizabeth Franklin

Associate Commissioner for Budget and Capital  
Program Management

Ben Smith

Director of City Legislative Affairs

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE JOINTLY WITH THE  
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

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1  
2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [Gavel] Okay, good afternoon  
3 and welcome to the City Council's fourth day of  
4 hearings on the Mayor's Executive Budget for Fiscal  
5 2020. My name is Daniel Dromm and I Chair the  
6 Finance Committee. We are joined by the Committee on  
7 Transportation Chaired by Council Member Ydanis  
8 Rodriguez.

9 I have been joined by my colleagues Council  
10 Member Andy Cohen; Council Member Debbie Rose;  
11 Council Member Adrienne Adams; and others will  
12 probably be joining us shortly.

13 Today, we will hear from the Taxi and Limousine  
14 Commission and the Department of Transportation.  
15 Before we begin, I'd like to thank the Finance  
16 Division staff for putting today's hearing together  
17 including the Director Latonia McKinney; Committee  
18 Counsels Rebecca Chasan and Noah Brick; Deputy  
19 Director's Regina Poreda Ryan and Nathan Toth; Unit  
20 Head Chima Obichere; Finance Analyst Jon Basile; and  
21 the Finance Division Administrative Support Unit  
22 Nicole Anderson, Maria Pegan[SP?], Latina Brown and  
23 Cortney Summerize[SP?], who pull everything together.

24 Thank you all for your efforts. I would also  
25 like to remind everyone that the public will be

1 invited to testify on the last day of Budget hearings  
2 on May 23<sup>rd</sup>, beginning at approximately 2 p.m. in  
3 this room.  
4

5 For members of the public who wish to testify but  
6 cannot attend the hearing, you can email your  
7 testimony to the Finance Division at  
8 [financetestimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:financetestimony@council.nyc.gov) and the staff will  
9 make it a part of the official record.

10 Today's Executive Budget hearing starts with the  
11 Taxi and Limousine Commission. We hold this hearing  
12 against the backdrop of today's initial public  
13 offerings by Uber which follows closely on the heels  
14 of Lyft's own offering at the end of March.

15 For app based For-Hire Vehicle companies,  
16 business is clearly booming. However, despite the  
17 important minimum pay rules that recently went into  
18 effect thanks to the Council's legislation. For-Hire  
19 Vehicle drivers are largely being left out.  
20 Meanwhile, the flood of app-based transportation  
21 options has permanently altered the city's  
22 transportation landscape and left the street hail  
23 drivers and also Medallion owners in a precarious  
24 position.  
25

1  
2 Traffic is up and demand is down. The states  
3 staged introduction of congestion pricing only on TLC  
4 vehicles for now, with private cars not to follow  
5 until 2021 has further exacerbated existing  
6 challenges. None of this is news exactly, there are  
7 no easy answers.

8 The Taxi and Limousine Commission is a tiny part  
9 of the City's Budget, less than 0.60 percent but it  
10 sits on top of a ticking timebomb. Nevertheless, I  
11 wanted to use my remarks this morning or this  
12 afternoon actually, to offer the Taxi and Limousine  
13 Commission, the Council's partnership in addressing  
14 these many problems.

15 Before we begin, I'd like to remind my colleagues  
16 that the first round of questions for the agency will  
17 be limited to three minutes per Council Member and if  
18 Council Members have additional questions, we will  
19 have a second round of questions at two minutes per  
20 Council Member.

21 I will now turn the mic over to my Co-Chair,  
22 Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez for his statement and  
23 then we will hear from Bill Heinzen, Acting  
24 Commissioner of TLC.

1 COMMITTEE ON FINANCE JOINTLY WITH THE  
2 COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

6

3 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Thank you Chair Dromm. So,  
4 you are the future of our City. It doesn't matter  
5 when and how we come here. The Statue of Liberty is  
6 always there sending a signal that this city, this  
7 nation has been built by immigrant and it should be  
8 for immigrant to. Thank you.

9 Good morning and welcome to the City Council  
10 Finance Committee and the Transportation Committee's  
11 joint hearing on the Fiscal 2020 Executive Budget.  
12 My name is Ydanis Rodriguez, Chairman of this  
13 Committee and I have the privilege of Chairing the  
14 Transportation Committee. Before we begin, I would  
15 like to thank the Chair of the Committee on Finance,  
16 Council Member Danny Dromm for the great job that he  
17 is doing in this Committee and as a leader in our  
18 city.

19 We are here to continue the Fiscal 2020 Budget  
20 process. A process we hope will lead to the Adoption  
21 of a Budget that is progressive, responsible and fair  
22 for all New Yorkers.

23 We will start by hearing testimony from the Taxi  
24 and Limousine Commission, followed by the City  
25 Department of Transportation. Since we have members  
here that represent the drivers and the labor

3 industry and others. I want to be sure that the new  
4 leadership on the TLC as they share with us  
5 information about this budget, they should know that  
6 we need to save the industry. We need to be sure  
7 that all the Taxi drivers, yellow, black, and livery,  
8 they should know that we are here to support them for  
9 the great services that they provide.

10 Today, we will hear from the Acting TLC  
11 Commissioner Bill Heinzen. Congratulations and thank  
12 you for your new responsibility on the TLC Expense  
13 Budgets for Fiscal 2020.

14 TLC proposed Fiscal 2020 Expense Budget totals  
15 \$51.7 million. Major actions in TLC Executive Budget  
16 include a savings of \$5.5 million to lower than  
17 anticipated demand for accessible street Hail  
18 License. The Committee looks forward to hearing  
19 about the future of this program under a new  
20 restructuring. Since TLC issued its first For-Hire  
21 Vehicle, base licenses over in 2011. At base  
22 companies have dramatically increased in popularity.

23 The Committee is interested in hearing about  
24 changing trends in the taxicab industry, including  
25 the growth of higher volume For-Hire vehicles and  
TLC's outlook on the future of this driving industry

1  
2 and it's impact on green street hail and medallion  
3 taxis. I hope also that at some point during this  
4 budget and follow, we can have conversations about  
5 how TLC can work together with us and other  
6 stakeholders such as the black car phone to continue  
7 expanding the Mental Health program that the black  
8 car phone already announced last week.

9 Followed by TLC, we will hear from DOT Executive  
10 Expense Budget for Fiscal 2020, which is  
11 approximately \$1.9 billion. A 4.2 percent increase  
12 from the Fiscal 2019 Adopted Budget. The increase is  
13 associated with various new needs including the  
14 additional 300 near school zone and speed cameras and  
15 the addition of new traffic enforcement agents to  
16 combat black car abuse.

17 The Committee looks forward to hearing updates on  
18 this important transportation initiatives. In  
19 addition, DOT's ten-year capital strategy is \$16.1  
20 billion for Fiscal Years 2020, 2029 of which \$9.4  
21 billion is budgeted. In Fiscal 2020, 2023, we hope  
22 the Department will discuss its goals and prioritize  
23 for the next four years.



1  
2 As well as the scope and progression of work for  
3 Vision Zero project, and the reconstruction of the  
4 BQE Contract Laborer.

5 I also would like, and we will hear later on from  
6 DOT, to hear how the City is ready to work with more  
7 increase of funding so that as we are ready to pass a  
8 bill for the Vision Zero signing, DOT should also  
9 have more resources to be able to do all those  
10 projects.

11 With that, we will go back to Chairman Dromm.

12 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, I am going to ask  
13 Council to swear the panel in and then we will hear  
14 testimony.

15 COUNCIL CLERK: Do you affirm that your testimony  
16 will be truthful to the best of your knowledge,  
17 information and belief?

18 PANEL: I do.

19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, just before we let you  
20 testify. I just want to announce that we've been  
21 joined by Council Member Steve Matteo our Minority  
22 Leader, Council Member Donovan Richards, Council  
23 Member Chaim Deutsch, and Council Member Barry  
24 Grodenchik and Council Member Van Bramer.

3 CO-CHAIR: Also, thanks to the staff from my  
4 office and the Transportation Staff **[INAUDIBLE 17:34-**  
5 **17:44]** for also doing a great job in the Committee of  
6 Transportation in my office.

7 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, please, I'm sorry.  
8 We've also been joined by Council Member Reynoso.  
9 Please begin.

10 BILL HEINZEN: Okay, thank you very much and good  
11 afternoon Chair Dromm and Chair Rodriguez. Chair  
12 Dromm, I appreciate your offer of continued  
13 partnership with the Council. I think as I am going  
14 to discuss today, I think our partnership that we've  
15 had going back over the years including when we  
16 reported to Chair Rodriguez a few years ago has been  
17 very fruitful and has delivered really results for  
18 people in New York City. And Chair Rodriguez, as we  
19 discussed, we are certainly happy to meet with you  
20 after this just to discuss goals and vision going  
21 forward for this agency and the input that you had.

22 I also want to say hello to the students up in  
23 the balcony. I am very excited that you are here. I  
24 hope this portion of the testimony doesn't bore you  
25 too much, but I did want to tee off Chair Rodriguez's  
comments about immigrants and immigration. One of

1  
2 the really amazing things about our industry, the  
3 Taxi and Limousine industry in New York City is we  
4 have 205,000 drivers who we license and over 95  
5 percent of them are immigrants.

6 So, the drivers that we license come from over  
7 125 different countries. So, we're not the Office of  
8 Immigrant Affairs, but we are an agency that has  
9 direct contact with a significant number of the  
10 immigrant population in New York City and we take  
11 that very seriously.

12 The industries we regulate have traditionally  
13 been a means for people who come from other countries  
14 to establish themselves to make money. I know there  
15 are people in this audience who no longer drive but  
16 who did drive at one point in their career and that's  
17 something that we are always mindful of. It's an  
18 important mission and that's something we want to  
19 continue.

20 So, good afternoon and good afternoon to members  
21 of the Finance and Transportation Committees. I am  
22 Bill Heinzen, I am currently the Acting Commissioner  
23 of the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission.  
24 I am here today to present the TLC's Proposed  
25 Executive Budget for Fiscal Year 2020. With me today

1  
2 are Deputy Commissioner for Finance Administration  
3 Jennifer Tavis and also Assistant Commissioner for  
4 Finance Administration, Vincent Chin.

5       The TLC's Budget for Fiscal Year 2020 is \$51.6  
6 million. As Chair Dromm alluded to, it's a small  
7 budget, we are a small agency. However, we are in  
8 the middle of a vast and changing industry and the  
9 decisions that we have made, and that we make in  
10 partnership with the Council have a huge impact. Not  
11 just on the drivers in the industries we regulate but  
12 on all New Yorkers.

13       We are confident that this amount will help us  
14 meet the agencies goals of promoting safe, reliable,  
15 and accessible For-Hire transportation. While at the  
16 same time, providing excellent service to our  
17 licensees and ensuring that our TLC licensed drivers  
18 are paid and treated fairly by the companies they  
19 work with.

20       As I said, the TLC now licenses over 205,000  
21 drivers and over 135,000 vehicles. On a typical day,  
22 our drivers transport over \$1 million passengers  
23 safely and reliably across our city. That's more  
24 than the daily trips that the Washington DC Metro  
25 system offers, just for some scale.

1  
2 Given the large number of licensees we regulate  
3 and the tremendous number of passengers they  
4 transport. The work of the TLC is vital to the  
5 wellbeing of New York City. And I want to update you  
6 on a few important initiatives at TLC that I know are  
7 of particular interest to the City Council.

8 These initiatives that I am going to report to  
9 were begun in partnership with City Council and also  
10 under the leadership of our former Chair Meera Joshi  
11 and we are grateful to her for her leadership in  
12 setting and beginning those initiatives and we intend  
13 to continue them.

14 These initiatives concern our efforts to expand  
15 driver pay protections beyond those currently  
16 existing for yellow taxi drivers to the largest for-  
17 hire vehicle companies. The unprecedented growth of  
18 the for-hire vehicle industry, the impacts that  
19 growth has had on our drivers in the city, as well as  
20 the TLC's efforts to ensure access for all passengers  
21 regardless of race, of destination, whether or not  
22 the person uses a wheelchair, or other illegitimate  
23 factors.

24 We have supported the important work that the TLC  
25 has done in these areas in partnership with the Mayor

1  
2 and you have given us the necessary tools to address  
3 them.

4 First, I want to give you an update on driver  
5 income. In July 2018, the TLC released a report on  
6 the economics of the app dispatching companies.  
7 Prompted by concerns with how these corporations were  
8 compensating drivers. The report found that app  
9 drivers, like many TLC drivers have high expenses,  
10 because they take on most of the business costs and  
11 risks, particularly the cost of purchasing or leasing  
12 a vehicle, maintaining it and insuring it.

13 When these expenses are factored into determining  
14 a drivers net pay, the study concluded that 85  
15 percent of drivers who drive for the four app  
16 companies in New York City, were earning less than  
17 the equivalent of the city's minimum wage.

18 Based on that report, and following Local Law 150  
19 of 2018, that was enacted over the summer, TLC  
20 adopted rules in December 2018 to expand pay  
21 protection for drivers working for the four largest  
22 For-Hire vehicle companies, specifically Uber, Lyft,  
23 Via and Juno. Each of which dispatches over 10,000  
24 trips every day. These companies are now categorized  
25 as high volume For-Hire services under Local Law 49,

1  
2 which was also enacted last year, and which requires  
3 that these companies apply for a separate license to  
4 do business in New York City.

5 The rules TLC passed require these high-volume  
6 service providers to pay drivers a minimum amount for  
7 each trip based on the trips actual time and  
8 distance. The rates are set to ensure that after  
9 expenses, drivers are earning at least the equivalent  
10 of \$17.22 an hour. Which was the independent  
11 contractor equivalent of a minimum wage with  
12 additional for allowing people, we hope, to take some  
13 time off.

14 These rules went into effect on February 1, 2019  
15 and while it is early, the results have been a  
16 significant victory for workers in New York City.

17 As of April 28<sup>th</sup>, drivers have earned over \$150  
18 million in additional income. This is something that  
19 the Mayor and the Council have done together. I  
20 think this is a major accomplishment and I think we  
21 should all be proud of it.

22 Monitoring and enforcement are obviously critical  
23 to the success of the driver pay rules and we will  
24 continue running administrative data analysis to  
25

1  
2 ensure that all drivers receive the pay they are  
3 owed.

4 Our analysis did identify trips, most of them  
5 just after the rules took effect, in which drivers  
6 were under paid. TLC has sent directives to the  
7 companies to ensure that the drivers are paid any  
8 additional money owed. In addition to seeking  
9 restitution for underpayment, TLC can seek monetary  
10 and non-monetary penalties for non-compliance.

11 In addition to this Administrative Enforcement  
12 that we perform, any drivers who believe they may  
13 have not received proper payment can use the driver  
14 pay calculator, which is located on TLC's home page  
15 to determine the minimum pay due to them.

16 Drivers who receive payment less than that  
17 required by rules, should not hesitate to contact  
18 TLC, specifically our driver protection unit. You  
19 can contact our driver protection unit in several  
20 ways. You can call 311, you can call our driver  
21 protection hotline which is 718-391-5539. You can  
22 email us at [driverprotection@TLC.nyc.gov](mailto:driverprotection@TLC.nyc.gov) or you can  
23 meet with TLC staff in person, or any combination of  
24 these.



1  
2 Our Driver Protection Unit protects drivers  
3 rights by investigating complaints filed by drivers  
4 of underpayment, lease overcharges and fraud. We've  
5 recently expanded it from working with Yellow Taxi  
6 and traditional For-Hire vehicle drivers to make sure  
7 that it's working with all drivers. As a result of  
8 all the driver complaints that we've received to  
9 date, the Driver Protection Unit has so far helped  
10 Taxi and For-Hire Vehicle Drivers get back more than  
11 \$3.2 million.

12 I also want to talk about the vehicle license  
13 clause. Another significant accomplishment that the  
14 Council and the Mayor enacted last summer in what was  
15 I think for all of us, an extremely busy summer.

16 All New Yorkers are aware of the consequences  
17 that the unprecedented growth we have experienced in  
18 the high volume For-Hire vehicle services sector over  
19 the last several years. To address these issues and  
20 develop long-term solutions, Mayor de Blasio and the  
21 Council enacted Local Law 147 last year, to establish  
22 a yearlong moratorium on the issuance of new TLC For-  
23 Hire Vehicle Licenses. While also providing the TLC  
24 the critical tools necessary to develop, along with  
25 our partners at the Department of Transportation,

1 approaches to managing long-term growth and  
2 congestion, including for the first-time giving TLC  
3 the power to establish a number of For-Hire Vehicle  
4 licenses and to set vehicle utilization rates for  
5 For-Hire vehicles operating in the city. The study  
6 is ongoing, and the city will release its findings  
7 this summer as well as the actions that we intend to  
8 take.  
9

10 I also want to give you an update on  
11 accessibility, which is a key priority not only for  
12 the entire city, for the Mayor and I know for this  
13 Council. Wheelchair accessible For-Hire  
14 transportation is vital for our city's residence and  
15 visitors. Helping passengers meet friends or family,  
16 travel to work, see a movie, or visit a doctor.

17 The TLC and the Taxi industries have taken great  
18 steps to increase access to For-Hire service for  
19 passengers who use wheelchairs. It hasn't been easy,  
20 but we've all worked extremely hard on this. Today,  
21 there are over 2,500 accessible taxis and passengers  
22 can now hail an accessible taxi or order one through  
23 TLC's Accessible Dispatch program. Taxis also play a  
24 vital role in the MTA's Access-A-Ride program.  
25 Although significant progress has been made with

1  
2 taxi, the city faced years of delay from the For-  
3 Hire Vehicle sector despite the significant growth in  
4 vehicles affiliated with the app companies, which now  
5 account for several more vehicles and several more  
6 drivers than the taxi industry.

7 As a result of new rules that just went into  
8 effect in January of this year, TLC now requires that  
9 all For-Hire Vehicle bases including the app  
10 companies, provide meaningful accessible service. To  
11 comply with the City's new accessibility rules, For-  
12 Hire Vehicle bases may either send a specific  
13 percentage of their trips to wheelchair accessible  
14 vehicles and that percentage increases each year.  
15 And that ensure that vehicles remain in regular  
16 circulation or they may work with a TLC approved  
17 accessible vehicle dispatcher to provide wheelchair  
18 accessible vehicles upon request but within specified  
19 and monitored response times.

20 We should all of us be proud that New York City  
21 is the first city in the United States to  
22 successfully require the high volume For-Hire service  
23 companies to provide accessible service and these new  
24 accountability requirements in the For-Hire sector  
25 are already beginning to have impacts. Today, there

1  
2 are over 564 accessible For-Hire Vehicles. That is  
3 up from only 50 in 2014. I know that the Council and  
4 your response to the Preliminary Budget identified  
5 that the Mayor's Management Report, although it  
6 reports on the number of active yellow and green  
7 taxis, it does not include reporting on the number of  
8 active accessible For-Hire Vehicles. We thank you  
9 for that, when we saw it, we all agreed that that was  
10 important. We are going to include that separate  
11 indicator going forward.

12 Early data; it's early now, but early data does  
13 indicate that the bases are complying the response  
14 time requirements, but TLC will continue to monitor  
15 report and enforce as necessary to ensure as  
16 compliance. I look forward to having more to say  
17 about this in the summer of this year.

18 On the issue of Service Refusal and  
19 discriminations, I want to update you on our push to  
20 combat the legal service refusals. To many New  
21 Yorkers are refused service when they attempt to use  
22 For-Hire transportation. Over the years, TLC has  
23 enforced against service refusals and thoroughly  
24 invested complaints. Drivers found guilty of these  
25 legal refusals face significant fines and they

1 ultimately face license suspension and even  
2 revocation for repeat offenses. It became very clear  
3 however, that more was needed because this  
4 unacceptable situation has persisted.  
5

6 On July 31, 2018, Mayor de Blasio and Speaker  
7 Johnson announced support for a new office of  
8 inclusion within the TLC, whose mission is to ensure  
9 that all passengers receive the service they expect  
10 and to which they are legally entitled.

11 Legislation creating this new office of inclusion  
12 was introduced by Council Member Richards and passed  
13 into law later this year. We have taking this charge  
14 from City Council very seriously. The new office led  
15 by Malcolm Kane has assembled an interdisciplinary  
16 team working to combat a legal service refusal  
17 through Driver Education, data collection and  
18 analysis, community outreach, and continued  
19 prosecution.

20 The office has met with drivers, industry groups,  
21 civil rights stakeholders and disability advocates.  
22 Additionally, we are developing relationships with  
23 other agencies to expand existing programs and  
24 resources and the office began passenger outreach at  
25 transportation hubs in every borough and we have

1  
2 begun an extensive social marketing campaign to  
3 explain how to file complaints that will include  
4 PSA's, social media and adds on Link NYC kiosks. We  
5 also recently completed a video on the topic  
6 featuring New York One's Aaron Lewis whose offered  
7 his own perspective on being on the receiving end of  
8 service refusals.

9 I also want to make very clear that we do not  
10 consider this a problem that is only limited to the  
11 Taxi industry. We know that this is also a problem  
12 in the For-Hire industry. This is a problem in the  
13 app industry. They may solicit and accept passengers  
14 in different ways, but discrimination can still play  
15 an unnecessary impact and can still have negative  
16 impacts on passengers and potential passengers. We  
17 are very pleased to provide additional updates and  
18 briefings on the work of this office and we look  
19 forward to collaborating with the Council to make  
20 more passengers and potential passengers aware of  
21 their rights.

22 I now want to turn to the TLC's Executive Budget  
23 for Fiscal Year 2020. The Budget at \$51.6 million is  
24 comprised of \$39.2 million in personal services and  
25 \$12.4 million in other than personal services. This

1 Executive Budget is \$5.7 less than the Preliminary  
2 Budget that TLC presented to you in March. This  
3 revision results from a reduction in the funding for  
4 TLC's Green Grant program to reflect the lower level  
5 of demand that experienced. TLC has greatly enhanced  
6 the incentives available under the Green Grant  
7 program. We are confident that this new level of  
8 funding will meet demand.  
9

10 Funding for the program is now allocated through  
11 Fiscal 2023 at a level that will meet the adjusted  
12 demand for these grants. TLC's projected revenue of  
13 \$61.5 million for Fiscal Year 2020 remains unchanged  
14 from our Preliminary Budget. Licensing revenue  
15 continues to be our largest source of revenue  
16 followed by revenue from fines and vehicle inspection  
17 fees.

18 Several factors may cause actual revenue  
19 collected to differ from the initial projection  
20 including changes in demand for driver and vehicle  
21 licenses. We will monitor revenue during the year,  
22 and we work closely with OMB on any adjustments to  
23 the projection.

24 Working together, Mayor de Blasio, the Council,  
25 and the TLC have achieved real benefits for drivers

1 and passengers. Obviously important work remains.  
2  
3 We look forward to our ongoing partnership and as we  
4 continue working for pay and equity, ensuring access  
5 for all passengers to our regulated industries and  
6 developing long-term solutions to the many issues  
7 resulting from the unprecedented growth in the For-  
8 Hire Vehicle sector.

9 Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much  
11 Commissioner and I know in your testimony, you began  
12 to address some questions around the Green Grant  
13 program. So, let me just say that the Green Grant's  
14 program current awards \$30,000 to green taxi drivers  
15 to help them purchase vehicles that are wheelchair  
16 accessible or to retrofit their vehicles to become  
17 wheelchair accessible vehicles.

18 As currently structured, eligible participants  
19 receive an upfront grant of \$14,000 to help offset  
20 the cost of conversion and \$4,000 annually thereafter  
21 until a \$30,000 cap is reached. Due to changes in  
22 the taxicab industry, the number of applicants to the  
23 Green Grant's program has significantly declined, as  
24 you mentioned in your testimony.



3 In Fiscal 2016, 209 grants were awarded. In  
4 Fiscal 2017, 81 grants were awarded. In Fiscal 2018,  
5 12 grants were awarded and in Fiscal 2019, year to  
6 date, only 7 grants have been awarded.

7 As a result of this change in demand, DLC plans  
8 on restructuring it's Green Grants program. As you  
9 mentioned in Fiscal 2020 to eliminate the \$30,000 cap  
10 and allow program participants to collect \$4,000  
11 annually. TLC currently anticipates that with this  
12 new structure it will award 15 Green Grants annually  
13 beginning in Fiscal 2020. That's about double of  
14 what was given out last year in terms of the old  
15 program.

16 So, when can we expect to see the restructuring  
17 of the Green Grant program? When will you be able to  
18 give us more details of what they will look like?

19 BILL HEINZEN: It has occurred, and you actually  
20 did a great job of providing most of the details of  
21 that restructuring. We have increased the amount of  
22 funding that is available to people who purchase  
23 Green Grants. As you said, it's \$14,000 up front and  
24 then it's \$4,000 a year for every year that they pass  
25 inspections and perform a minimum amount of trips.

1  
2 One other thing I want to highlight is that  
3 drivers in green wheelchair accessible vehicles now  
4 get, for the first time, they get a dollar a trip,  
5 which is equal to what yellow wheelchair accessible  
6 vehicles drivers earn, which we also recently  
7 increased.

8 I think that I do want to stress, as I said in my  
9 testimony, I think that the amount that we have  
10 allocated for this with OMB is sufficient to meet the  
11 demand we have now. We are hoping that with these  
12 new incentives, we will be able to increase demand  
13 and we are trying to get the word out. We would love  
14 to partner with any members of the Council to help us  
15 get the word out. I know that there are people who  
16 drive green wheelchair accessible vehicles who  
17 haven't signed up for the payment plan. It is very  
18 easy to sign up and then you will receive that dollar  
19 a trip.

20 So, those drivers are leaving money on the table  
21 and it adds up. It's real money, so we are trying to  
22 increase that outreach and as I said, we would like  
23 to work with you. So, that's where we are.

24

25

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, am I correct in my  
3 numbers in saying that only 7 have signed up for the  
4 Green Grants program this year?

5 BILL HEINZEN: I think that is correct. That is  
6 correct.

7 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Are enrollees in the Green  
8 Grant program required to drive a certain amount of  
9 hours per year before they receive the annual \$4,000?

10 BILL HEINZEN: They are required to do a minimum  
11 amount of trips each year.

12 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And what is that number?

13 BILL HEINZEN: I think it is 250. 250 between  
14 inspections.

15 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Oh, between inspections. And  
16 they get inspected how often?

17 BILL HEINZEN: Twice a year, so they have to pass  
18 inspection and they have to do the 250 trips.

19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, meanwhile in a federal  
20 class action lawsuit filed in Westchester County,  
21 again, Lyft contends that it is not in the  
22 transportation business and thus is a matter of lower  
23 exempt from ADA requirements. Is the projected 15  
24 Green Grant awards per year sufficient to address  
25

1  
2 accessibility needs? And what else are you doing to  
3 incentivize folks to get into that program?

4 BILL HEINZEN: So, in terms of the position taken  
5 by Lyft in Westchester County, that is interesting to  
6 us. At that point, we are well past that in New York  
7 City and I am proud to say that we are well past  
8 that.

9 In addition to green wheelchair accessible  
10 vehicles and yellow wheelchair accessible vehicles,  
11 as I said, we passed our For-Hire Vehicle  
12 Accessibility Rules last year. They went into effect  
13 in January. All bases are now required to provide  
14 wheelchair accessible service to their passengers and  
15 that absolutely includes Lyft, Juno, Via, and Uber.

16 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, alright, thank you.  
17 Chair Rodriguez.

18 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Thank you Chair. A few  
19 questions. The first thing is that I feel that you  
20 know, we are at the moment where we have been trying  
21 to do the best we can, but still I don't see that we  
22 are at all space of crisis when it comes to the taxi  
23 industry. You see that one here from livery and  
24 livery bases. You know, they are suffering every  
25 day. Many of them, they have been closing. Many of

1  
2 them they have been reducing the driver from 700 to  
3 200 and you hear how many drivers also are approached  
4 with you know, a level of enforcement for Vision  
5 Zero. But I feel that that concern that used to be  
6 used in the past, the practice of entrapment. Is  
7 something that also you hear from members of delivery  
8 taxis. And this is about what I hear from the  
9 sector, it's about if someone you know, passes a red  
10 light or a stop sign, of course, they should get a  
11 ticket. But to be one that is supposed to be a  
12 senior citizen or a child when they are standing at a  
13 taxi stop, you know, that used to be a TLC traffic  
14 enforcement agent, that's another story. So, is the  
15 practice completely erased by TLC?

16 BILL HEINZEN: So, in terms of enforcement, I  
17 know that you have suggested to me that you wanted to  
18 meet with members of the livery community and I just  
19 want to say again, I am happy to do that. Generally,  
20 in enforcement, I just want to stress that -

21 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: I am sorry Bill, if you  
22 don't mind, I am for enforcement.

23 BILL HEINZEN: Of course, you are.

24 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: So, it is about practice  
25 that we hear complaints. Especially in the outer

1  
2 borough areas, but my specific question with that one  
3 is, and I know that in the previous Commissioner, I  
4 brought up the issue which is about the practice or  
5 entrapment. Is that something that you can promise  
6 that you know, have not been used anymore by TLC?

7 BILL HEINZEN: I can tell you that one of the  
8 complaints that I remember was people who appeared to  
9 be in medical distress and said they needed to get to  
10 a hospital and that was a specific concern and it was  
11 felt that that was not the best way to do it. So,  
12 that has been eliminated.

13 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Okay, I just wanted to know,  
14 and I am happy that you are in front of TLC right now  
15 and I know that we will continue finding solutions to  
16 concerns and problems that we hear. But that  
17 particular piece on entrapment, makes you wonder.  
18 You know, one of the many things that I wanted to  
19 highlight. But again, livery taxi, livery owners  
20 hear that concern about how they have been reducing  
21 their numbers.

22 Then when you talk to the black cars, then you  
23 hear from the traditional black cars which is, we  
24 have been treated the same as you know, those of us  
25 who have a bank account to provide the services but I

1  
2 don't know right now, but in the previous information  
3 that we have besides Lyft and Uber, there was an  
4 addition of 73 add company raised during the TLC.  
5 And you know, when I used to share the Committee  
6 there was a less number. Is it still the 75 add  
7 company that we have today, or that number has  
8 increased?

9 BILL HEINZEN: I mean, some of the traditional  
10 livery and traditional black car now use apps in  
11 their dispatch but the four companies that do that  
12 most business that only dispatch through app are  
13 Uber, Lyft, Juno and Via.

14 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Okay. So, can issue problem  
15 from everywhere. Yellow taxi, same thing. You know,  
16 most of those individual drivers committed suicide  
17 are yellow medallion owners. Many of them, they are  
18 individuals that you know, 6,000 individuals,  
19 medallion owners from the 15,000 that we have in the  
20 City of New York, are people who are behind the wheel  
21 and are individuals that they got into the mortgage  
22 to by the house. They got into a loan to send their  
23 kids to college. What is the hope that we have for  
24 the Yellow Taxi industry?  
25

1  
2 BILL HEINZEN: No one denies it's been very  
3 difficult for the Yellow Taxi industry. We've had  
4 this unprecedented industry change. I think that we  
5 and by we, I mean the Council, the Mayor, TLC have  
6 started taking pretty significant steps toward trying  
7 to help them.

8 One, we have done a lot of things in  
9 partnerships, often in partnership with you to try to  
10 reduce some of the burdens on the Yellow Taxi  
11 industry, get rid of the owner must drive  
12 requirement, reduce the transfer tax for medallions.  
13 There is the incentive programs that we have had for  
14 wheelchair accessible vehicles but from a larger  
15 point of view, I think the vehicle license cap that  
16 was put into effect last summer gave us all time to  
17 pause and to study the impact of it and to determine  
18 what type of steps we need to take going forward in  
19 terms of setting vehicle licenses.

20 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Okay.

21 BILL HEINZEN: Sorry, vehicle license numbers.

22 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: What does it take for TLC to  
23 create a mental health financial advisory center to  
24 provide the services similar to the one that the  
25



1  
2 black car fund already started doing in the City of  
3 New York?

4 BILL HEINZEN: I think and there were two pieces  
5 of legislation, there was a driver's service center  
6 and there was another piece of legislation requiring  
7 us to partner with consumer affairs on financial  
8 education. Maybe not last summer but this past last  
9 year and the effective dates are about now, but we  
10 have already started working on them.

11 I think rather than seeing TLC as providing  
12 itself mental health services, I think the best use  
13 for us is since we do touch so many New Yorkers and  
14 we are out there and we go to so many driver  
15 meetings, I think it's to continue that. We do  
16 partner with Thrive, we partner with the Office of  
17 Financial Education, with Small Business Service. We  
18 go to their resource fairs. We have done several of  
19 those events. We've done them either at things that  
20 we've organized that we call TLC on your borough or  
21 we have gone to events organized by either other city  
22 agencies or at houses of worship where we've been  
23 traveling. I think we get out the word about the  
24 services that are available, and we help connect  
25 drivers with that.

1  
2 I know that at TLC there is something called  
3 Mental Health First Aid Training. And over 63  
4 percent of our staff have received that. And we  
5 focused on the people who have day to day in person  
6 contact with drivers that's at prosecution,  
7 licensing, external affairs.

8 So, I think for us, it is about continuing and  
9 deepening the work we are doing and partnering to  
10 help people get access to existing city services.

11 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Okay, I just would like to  
12 encourage you also for you and your team to look at  
13 you know, what a black are fund is already, having  
14 able to put together and see if there is something  
15 how we can compliment or learn from if that's fine  
16 with you?

17 BILL HEINZEN: Absolutely and I know that event  
18 took place earlier this week. I wasn't able to  
19 attend but we did have TLC staff there and we have  
20 been in touch with them and in fact, we have promoted  
21 that service. We have a newsletter called, Case of  
22 the City that we send to all of our drivers that  
23 gives them information about different types of city  
24 services that are available to them and we did  
25 promote that, and we are happy to continue

1  
2 discussions both with you and the black car fund  
3 about those services.

4 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Okay, let's try to look at  
5 it because for me is that, yes, we know we passed  
6 this bill but I would like to see specific locations  
7 where you know, as you say those 200,000 drivers,  
8 they should know we can go to these places if we need  
9 support on the mental health and also on the  
10 financial advisory area.

11 You know, in government you know that sometimes  
12 we can connect people with ten, fifteen places about  
13 it unless there is someone to help to navigate the  
14 system. Sometimes, you know, people get lost in the  
15 process.

16 BILL HEINZEN: Yes, and we've been trying to  
17 that, not only through External Affairs but through  
18 licensing and other places where drivers come, and I  
19 can share with you a list of the different events and  
20 outreach that we've done since those bills were  
21 passed. Some of which we had started before. I  
22 understand you point that we can't just say we passed  
23 a bill and we solved the problem; we are taking it  
24 very seriously.

1  
2 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: How many drivers based – if  
3 you have the number, if not, you can look at, have  
4 their car leased in order to provide the service?  
5 What percent do you think are those numbers that you  
6 share on a driver that they have license by TLC has  
7 been leasing their vehicles?

8 BILL HEINZEN: It is a very significant number  
9 partly because leasing is just the structure by which  
10 many people now get a car or purchase a car. We've  
11 got 85,000 vehicles affiliated with the four app  
12 companies. So, a strong majority of those would be  
13 leased vehicles. I can get you more numbers because  
14 obviously the leasing situations differ. We don't  
15 always have that insight into the terms of the leases  
16 or what type of leases there are.

17 Some of the companies you know, own large blocks  
18 of vehicles which they then lease out. Some people  
19 just do one off leases with the leasing companies.

20 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Okay, yeah that is  
21 information that is important, if you can share with  
22 us on those numbers, that percentage.

23 BILL HEINZEN: Sure.

24 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Alright, how many taxi  
25 medallions have been foreclosed on this year?

1  
2 BILL HEINZEN: I know that in this Fiscal Year  
3 there have been 322 medallion transfers. I am not  
4 sure right now what percentage of those are a result  
5 of foreclosures, rather than other types of transfers  
6 but I will get back to you with that.

7 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Okay.

8 BILL HEINZEN: I know the number is high.

9 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Okay. When was the last  
10 time or the last year where the city advertised you  
11 know, the medallion?

12 BILL HEINZEN: The last time the city?

13 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: The last year, because I  
14 know for the last couple of years, we don't include  
15 any projection to raise revenue by the selling of  
16 medallion, so when was the last year that the city  
17 went out advertising through a different way the  
18 opportunity for people to buy yellow taxi medallion?

19 BILL HEINZEN: So, I am going to answer your  
20 question, but first, it was last year that OMB  
21 differed projected revenue from any kind of medallion  
22 auction from the budget. Prior to that, the last  
23 city auctions of medallions began in 2013. That  
24 series had largely ended by early 2014. I think  
25 February was the last auction.

1  
2 The city has not auctioned any medallions since  
3 February of 2014.

4 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: So, don't you think that the  
5 city already knew by that time that value of the  
6 medallion was going down?

7 BILL HEINZEN: I don't really know what the city  
8 knew at that time, but in earlier auctions, the  
9 medallion prizes were quite high. So, it was  
10 probably reasonable to assume that the medallion  
11 value was still quite high.

12 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Okay, kind of like going  
13 back to the Chair of Financing, my colleague has a  
14 question. I just want again to go back to say, well,  
15 I have one more question, but besides the last  
16 question that we asked, I just hope that we - first  
17 of all, we need to be there for all sectors. We need  
18 to do better, and I trust, led by you but by the time  
19 that you will be serving your role in whatever role  
20 you continue playing, we have to seed all the  
21 sectors. We need to work harder to lift up black  
22 car, yellow For-Hire Vehicles and see how everyone is  
23 able to do better. I know that it is a big  
24 responsibility; I know that the industry has changed,  
25 and I don't think that this was successful of one

1 industry. Surely, by others suffering and going  
2 down, which is what we have seen in the City of New  
3 York.  
4

5 So, hopefully we will continue working together  
6 with you and all the stakeholders. But my last  
7 question is based on the budget for TLC in the last  
8 budget when the one percenters, what opportunity did  
9 TLC create for women in minority?

10 BILL HEINZEN: You know, we have done well. I am  
11 going let Jenny answer that question.

12 JENNIFER TAVIS: So, I am sure you know that the  
13 target is 30 percent of contracting. At the end of  
14 December 2018, TLC's MWBE utilization rate was 48  
15 percent. So, in this Fiscal Year, we are confident  
16 we are going to significantly exceed the target and  
17 we anticipate being able to meet or exceed the target  
18 next year as well.

19 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Can you mention some of the  
20 most important projects where opportunity where it is  
21 given for women in minority?

22 JENNIFER TAVIS: I am going to let Vincent Chin  
23 speak to the details on the contracts.

24 VINCENT CHIN: Yeah, I mean most of our  
25 purchasing towards MWBE's is for electronics and

1  
2 equipment. We are very small budget as you know and  
3 so, we do a lot of micro-purchases and we direct as  
4 many as we can to MWBE's.

5 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Okay, you know, this is on  
6 debate for us and we know that sometimes we in the  
7 city like information and as much as we can  
8 collaborate to spread this information, the most  
9 opportunity we create to more players in the City of  
10 New York. You know when I've been offering more  
11 information, education, or opportunity on how they  
12 should prepare because also that's you know, I have  
13 an issue on how the women in minority numbers and  
14 it's not just TLC, in our city.

15 We have seen growing but then I don't see faces.  
16 You know, it's about I don't know, it would be good  
17 to know the faces. Not just TLC but citywide on who  
18 are those players on the women minority. So,  
19 whatever we can continue, you know collaborating at  
20 least to spread this information will be important.

21 BILL HEINZEN: Absolutely and Chair Rodriguez if  
22 you will just indulge me on the medallion questions  
23 and in terms of the city's role, I do always like to  
24 look broadly and there were significant players in  
25 the medallion transactions. There were banks, there



1  
2 were credit unions, they offered loans, they  
3 continued to offer loans in the face of changing  
4 markets. They continued to vary aggressively  
5 influence people to refinance those loans often  
6 against what seemed to be in their best interest.  
7 So, I think it is important as we go forward as we  
8 focus on what we can do for medallion and accessing  
9 medallion value that we remember we have a big  
10 problem with the financial institutions that were  
11 involved with this and they have a role I think in  
12 any ultimate solutions in trying to right size some  
13 of those loans.

14 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Okay, thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much. We have  
16 been joined by Council Member Rosenthal, Menchaca and  
17 Moya. And now, we have a question from Council  
18 Member Rosenthal.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you so much  
20 Chair, welcome Commissioner.

21 BILL HEINZEN: Good afternoon.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I want to better  
23 understand whats going on with the Access-A-Ride  
24 Pilot program.

1  
2 BILL HEINZEN: So, as you know, the Access-A-Ride  
3 program is run by the MTA. But what has been a  
4 development that we think has been very positive for  
5 our licensees, is that they have begun to incorporate  
6 yellow and green taxis. And that has benefited our  
7 drivers and the vehicle owners obviously and it has  
8 also benefited the passengers who can get faster  
9 service, better service, more personalized service.

10 I think we all know that the alternative is not  
11 great, if you are getting an Access-A-Ride trip.  
12 They created the pilot with 1,200 people for on  
13 demand. They announced in April that they were  
14 extending that pilot through the end of this year, so  
15 that continues but it continues at that number of  
16 1,200 participants.

17 We have conversations with them, we have told  
18 them our views on what we think of the success of  
19 that and of the benefits of using our vehicles. A  
20 shift that they have done that they have recently  
21 announced is an enhanced brokerage system and there  
22 the passengers request accessible transportation.  
23 The brokerage then makes a determination, is that  
24 trip best served in a yellow or green taxi that is  
25 accessible or maybe in one of the other licensed

1  
2 vehicles at their disposal. We don't control those  
3 choices; we don't control those contracts.

4 So, what we do is we meet with them on a regular  
5 basis, we advocate, we've been talking to some of our  
6 drivers to better understand their experience, not  
7 just the passengers but the driver's themselves.  
8 What experience they have in terms of when they are  
9 notified of possible trips, how it is made available.

10 So, we've been talking through that and that's  
11 information then that we try to share with the MTA in  
12 an effort to make this better, so that more  
13 passengers are served and also, that more of our  
14 drivers utilize these. Access-A-Ride trips are  
15 extremely crucial for several of our driver's.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Yeah, we are at a  
17 point and time where this could be a real win-win for  
18 the Taxi drivers, the medallion Taxi drivers in  
19 particular. Has the MTA said what will happen after  
20 December?

21 BILL HEINZEN: MTA has not said anything to me  
22 that they haven't said publicly. They said it will  
23 go on until the end of the year and they are  
24 reevaluating.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I am sorry, the last  
3 sentence.

4 BILL HEINZEN: They are evaluating their next  
5 steps, but I haven't heard anything in addition to  
6 that. And obviously, we are always happy to meet  
7 with you and talk about ways in which we can improve  
8 that access through Access-A-Ride or through our  
9 accessible dispatch program.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Do city funds go into  
11 the taxi program? May I just have another minute  
12 Chair?

13 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Yes.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you. Or is that  
15 MTA funds?

16 BILL HEINZEN: I'm sorry, meaning into the  
17 Access-A-Ride program?

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Into the pilot.

19 BILL HEINZEN: So, specifically, there may be  
20 some city contribution to the overall Access-A-Ride  
21 budget, but it is not a specific line item or  
22 something the city pays for.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Okay, I mean, so what  
24 I've heard from my colleagues in the disability  
25 community is that first of all, it was their

1  
2 understanding that the program currently was cut in  
3 half. So, it sounds like that's misinformation. I  
4 am happy to take that back.

5 BILL HEINZEN: I don't mean to interrupt you. I  
6 think that around the enhanced brokerage system, I  
7 think initially it was somewhat confusing what the  
8 impact and the result of that was. But I have to  
9 separate that from the pilot. The pilot had 1,200  
10 participants and continues to have 1,200  
11 participants.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Okay, so what I'm  
13 hearing is that with the brokerage system, they might  
14 be spreading around who gets called. Not just Taxi  
15 drivers, medallion taxi drivers, but also now  
16 possibly Uber, Lyft, other black car, services right?

17 BILL HEINZEN: I don't think Uber and Lyft are  
18 participants, Vincent, do you want to -

19 VINCENT CHIN: No, as far as the brokerage that  
20 we were talking about, it's just for the yellow and  
21 green taxi drivers.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Oh, so there's no  
23 other black car service. The brokerage service is  
24 just for yellow and green?

1  
2 VINCENT CHIN: There are two other bases that are  
3 TLC licensed and they are black cars, but they are  
4 not dispatched through Uber or Lyft.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Gotcha.

6 VINCENT CHIN: There will be other livery  
7 companies.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Okay, that's helpful  
9 clarification. I mean, all I would say is the  
10 feedback I am getting about the pilot is that it's  
11 indispensable. The people who were lucky enough to  
12 be in the pilot say that it has changed their lives  
13 and you know, of course, I would hope that that could  
14 be a service available to all New Yorkers with  
15 disabilities. And I am sorry to hear the MTA hasn't  
16 even guaranteed it passed the end of the year and  
17 certainly would like to be helpful in any way I can.  
18 And I am open, please let me know how I could be  
19 helpful, and I am confident there are colleagues here  
20 who would join that effort to be helpful in getting  
21 the MTA to expand that for anyone with a disability.  
22 The Access-A-Ride program is a failure and does  
23 not, you know, I think in many ways causes more  
24 aggravation than anything else.

1  
2 So, this pilot has been very successful and  
3 whatever we can do to encourage its continuation, I  
4 think we are on board to do. Thank you.

5 BILL HEINZEN: Thank you and I have heard some of  
6 the same feedback from people that we work with that  
7 it is an indispensable service and I just want to  
8 point out, I think we have entered a new phase where  
9 we have a really good partnership with the MTA. We  
10 are in constant communication with them and when I  
11 said, I don't know what they are doing next with the  
12 pilot, that's because I don't know what they are  
13 doing next with the pilot.

14 I think that's an internal decision and  
15 discussion they have to have but we are committed to  
16 making the partnership work through whatever means  
17 that is including through the enhanced brokerage and  
18 it really does mean a lot of trips for the drivers  
19 who we license. So, we think it's very positive and  
20 has a lot of potential to grow.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you very much,  
22 thank you Chairs.

23 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you, Chair Rodriguez.

24 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. As you know, a  
25 few days ago I think last week and a few days ago, a

1 driver was assaulted in the Bronx. What percentage  
2 of vehicles today who are required have installed a  
3 camera? And how do you think what much more can be  
4 done to improve safety for drivers?  
5

6 BILL HEINZEN: I think a few things can be done  
7 to improve safety for drivers. I am sorry, that is a  
8 question I should have the answer to, and I don't,  
9 and I can get you the answer to that.

10 Specifically, you would want to know the number  
11 of cars that have in vehicle camera systems.

12 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: I know that in numbers of  
13 vehicles, especially in the For-Hire Vehicle, based  
14 on previews and law that we have passed in the  
15 Council, they have camera, right? For the safety of  
16 the driver. Is that something that is mandated today  
17 for all For-Hire vehicles to have cameras including  
18 the green taxi?

19 BILL HEINZEN: It is not mandated in all  
20 vehicles. In taxis, you can have a camera, or you  
21 can have a partition in livery and in black car. I  
22 know that in black car, if you have a camera, you  
23 have to notify the passengers that there is a camera.  
24 And livery, I don't remember right now what the  
25



1  
2 specific requirement for camera is for livery, but I  
3 know that many of them have the camera.

4 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Okay, I think that you know,  
5 looking for the safety and see how is the industry  
6 doing especially those drivers.

7 BILL HEINZEN: It's a challenge. As you know,  
8 it's a challenge a specific delivery because delivery  
9 still does a mostly cash business.

10 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Okay, and I would like to  
11 end saying that as I will always stand for all the  
12 drivers, it is also unacceptable for any drivers and  
13 I know that we have a bad apple everywhere. We have  
14 it the government, we have it in the private, we have  
15 it in the academic sector, everywhere. And I don't  
16 feel that a few bad apples reflect the majority. I  
17 believe that again, that most taxi drivers, they do a  
18 great job. They pick up the passenger and they take  
19 the passenger to whatever destination they are going  
20 but the practice you know, there is still those few  
21 get involved which is to refusing to take any  
22 passenger because how the passenger looked like.  
23 That is something that you know, even reported from  
24 the New York Times and other have been going through  
25 that experience and I think that you know, the

1  
2 message should be that as we will stand for all the  
3 drivers, that practice that was very common in the  
4 past, it still continues today. It is on a sector  
5 where someone is not able to get a taxi because of  
6 the color of the skin or how that individual looked  
7 like. So, hopefully we will continue working  
8 together to eradicate that practice.

9 Also, at the same time, we need to continue  
10 working together to level the playing field, so that  
11 all drivers also they get all the support that they  
12 need from us.

13 BILL HEINZEN: Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much and with  
15 that, we are going to end here, and I thank you for  
16 coming in and giving testimony and your whole team.  
17 Thank you again.

18 BILL HEINZEN: Thank you very much.

19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Alright, so, we are going to  
20 take a five-minute break and then we will come back  
21 with the Department of Transportation.

22 [GAVEL] Okay, we will now resume the City  
23 Council's hearing on the Mayor's Executive Budget for  
24 Fiscal 2020. The Finance Committee is joined with  
25 the Committee on Transportation Chaired by my

1  
2 colleague Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez. We just  
3 heard from the Taxi and Limousine Commission and now  
4 we will hear from Polly Trottenberg, Commissioner of  
5 Department of Transportation.

6 In the interest of time, I will forego an opening  
7 statement, but before we hear testimony, I will open  
8 the mic to my Co-Chair Council Member Rodriguez.

9 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Thank you Chair and good  
10 afternoon Commissioner. First of all, thank you for  
11 being a partner in Vision Zero and your team for also  
12 being partners with our Car Free Day. Be ready for  
13 the 2020, so we will be knocking on your door very  
14 soon, so that we can start planning to do the fifth  
15 Car Free Day bigger than the previous four that we  
16 have done.

17 As I said before, the budget for Fiscal 2020 is  
18 approximately \$1.9 billion, a 4.2 percent increase  
19 from the Fiscal 2019 Adopted Budget. The increase is  
20 associated with various new needs including the  
21 addition of 300 near school zone, speed cameras in  
22 addition of new traffic enforcement agents who combat  
23 black car abuse.

24 The Committee looks forward to hearing an update  
25 on this important transportation initiatives. In

1  
2 addition, DOT's ten-year capital strategy is \$16.1  
3 billion for Fiscal Year 2020, 2029 of which \$9.4  
4 billion is budgeted in Fiscal Years 2020, 2023.

5 We hope the Department will discuss its goals and  
6 prioritize for the next four years as well as the  
7 scope and progression of work for Vision Zero project  
8 and the reconstruction of the BQE Contract Laborer.

9 I also would like as we will have this conversation  
10 with the Commissioner today to talk about the need to  
11 increase funding for DOT's, so that they can redesign  
12 all dangerous intersections before the end of this  
13 Administration.

14 I know that this is a common goal and I know that  
15 we can have conversation about where we are and what  
16 is our goal for the next few years. So, with that, I  
17 go back to the Chair.

18 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, thank you and I am  
19 going to ask Council to swear the panel in.

20 COUNCIL CLERK: Do you affirm that your testimony  
21 will be truthful to the best of your knowledge,  
22 information and belief?

23 PANEL: Yes.

24 COUNCIL CLERK: You may proceed.

1  
2 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Good afternoon Chairmen  
3 Rodriguez and Dromm and members of the Transportation  
4 and Finance Committees. I am Polly Trottenberg,  
5 Commissioner of the New York City Department of  
6 Transportation. With me today are Elizabeth  
7 Franklin, Associate Commissioner for Budget and  
8 Capital Program Management and Ben Smith, Director of  
9 City Legislative Affairs.

10 We are pleased to be here on behalf of Mayor Bill  
11 de Blasio to testify on DOT's \$1.1 billion Fiscal  
12 Year 2020 Executive Expense Budget and ten-year \$17.9  
13 billion FY 2019 to FY 2029 Capital Plan.

14 As I said when I testified back in March, this  
15 budget will support DOT in its mission to provide for  
16 the safe, efficient and environmentally sustainable  
17 movement of people and goods in New York City.

18 At that hearing, I reviewed many of our 2018  
19 accomplishments and highlighted some of our top  
20 priorities for 2019. Today, I will provide updates  
21 on a few of those priorities and some key additions  
22 in changes in our Executive Budget.

23 Before I discuss these topics, you can see an  
24 overview of our entire budget in my written  
25 testimony.

1 Starting with Vision Zero, as many of you know,  
2 Northern Boulevard in recent years has seen a high  
3 number of tragic deaths. So, I am glad to say that  
4 within an initial commitment by Mayor de Blasio of  
5 nearly \$80 million in Capital Funds, we will be  
6 adding Northern Boulevard to our Great Streets  
7 program.  
8

9 Great Streets has successfully targeted those  
10 corridors with the highest rates of pedestrian  
11 fatalities and serious injuries per mile. These wide  
12 roads divide our neighborhoods and communities but  
13 with targeted attention in the Vision Zero era have  
14 shown the potential to serve as connectors.

15 Through Great Streets, we think Northern  
16 Boulevard can be redesigned to prevent serious  
17 crashes, enhance mobility, increase accessibility and  
18 enhance neighborhood vitality.

19 We began the Great Streets program in 2015 with  
20 an initial \$250 million investment that has now grown  
21 to nearly \$575 million focused on four corridors,  
22 Queens Boulevard, the Grand Concourse and Fourth  
23 Avenue and Atlantic Avenues in Brooklyn.

24 The crash and injury declines along these four  
25 streets have been dramatic and encouraging. For the

1  
2 next phase of the program, we analyze crash data and  
3 after the recent increase in pedestrian fatalities on  
4 Northern Boulevard, DOT helped three neighborhood  
5 workshops last fall. As a result of what we heard we  
6 will be putting in safety improvement projects in  
7 2019, 2020 and 2021 followed by major capital  
8 project. Using everything in our Vision Zero tool  
9 kit to reverse the trend of fatalities we've seen on  
10 this challenging arterial.

11 With the combination of existing funding and new  
12 funding proposed in this budget, we will also begin  
13 design this year on a number of other exciting Vision  
14 Zero street reconstruction projects or add  
15 enhancement to an existing project. From Broadway in  
16 Manhattan to Astoria Boulevard in Queens, Southern  
17 Boulevard in the Bronx, the intersection at Flatbush  
18 in Atlantic Avenue in Brooklyn and Travis Avenue in  
19 Staten Island as well as several others you can see  
20 in my written testimony.

21 Turning to speed cameras which the chairman has  
22 mentioned, I am glad to say, as we all know, we  
23 succeeded in achieving reauthorization and expansion  
24 of our vital lifesaving program in Albany this year  
25

1  
2 and we are looking forward to the governor signing  
3 this very important legislation.

4 We were able to accomplish this victory with the  
5 Council's strong support and working together with  
6 the brave families of those who have lost loved ones  
7 to traffic crashes, safe streets advocates, and our  
8 state elected partners.

9 New York City is now authorized through 2022 to  
10 operate speed cameras in up to 750 school zones  
11 during the expanded hours of 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. on  
12 weekends and with greater flexibility on camera  
13 placement. In this budget DOT would have the funding  
14 and headcount to install and operate 300 additional  
15 cameras based on what the speeding and crash data  
16 tells us the safety need is greatest. We are  
17 currently working on what the full roll out will look  
18 like and we plan to have more to share soon and will  
19 welcome Council Member input.

20 Finally, when it comes to Vision Zero, we know  
21 fatalities are up about 15 percent compared to this  
22 time last year and recent tragedies underscore the  
23 urgency of our work. Expanding our speed camera  
24 program will be a key piece and will continue our  
25 exponential increased output of safety projects. Up



1 over 5,000 percent for leading pedestrian in  
2 intervals last year compared to pre-Vision Zero  
3 averages. Over 800 percent for corridor re-timings,  
4 more than double for safety improvement projects and  
5 protected bike lanes and nearly double for speed  
6 reducers.  
7

8 We will be guided by our new borough pedestrian  
9 safety action plans in which we use the freshest  
10 available data showing us that just seven percent of  
11 the city streets are responsible for nearly half of  
12 all pedestrian fatalities.

13 Next in this Budget, the Mayor proposes to fund  
14 his commitment to strengthen placard enforcement and  
15 to take the first steps towards a digital parking  
16 management system that replaces physical placards by  
17 2021. As DOT, COO Margaret Forgione testified about  
18 back in March.

19 First, we will use \$850,000 a year proposed in  
20 this budget to hire a new ten person DOT placard  
21 fraud and abuse enforcement team to supplement NYPD's  
22 ongoing efforts.

23 With this new team, we will initially focus on  
24 lower Manhattan given the prevalence of agencies and  
25 placard use in this area and long-standing community

1  
2 complaints. As we undertake this initiative, we will  
3 evaluate its effectiveness and look into potential  
4 next steps including focusing on other placard abuse  
5 hotspots.

6 Second, we will use the funds proposed in this  
7 budget including \$39.7 million in new Capital funding  
8 and \$3.7 million in the Expense Budget to upgrade our  
9 14,500 existing parking meters with pay by license  
10 plate technology. We will implement this conversion  
11 in order to roll out a state-of-the-art parking  
12 management system with NYPD that will allow more  
13 effective enforcement and be less susceptible to  
14 abuse.

15 Through this integrated system we will end  
16 parking meters, Park NYC payments, and placard  
17 information with license plates and make the  
18 information available to NYPD handheld enforcement  
19 devices in real time. Once the system is fully  
20 implemented, enforcement agents will use this  
21 information to automatically verify vehicles as  
22 legally or illegally parked without referring to what  
23 may or may not be displayed on a vehicles dashboard.

1  
2 This can eliminate confusion in enforcement and  
3 forward attempts to falsify or misuse muni meter  
4 receipts and placards.

5 Let me now turn to mobility, starting first with  
6 the biggest news on this front since the last time I  
7 testified. As you know, the state recently  
8 authorized congestion pricing for the Manhattan  
9 central business district. In line with the Mayor  
10 and the governor's ten-point plan to transform and  
11 fund the MTA. DOT is working very closely with MTA  
12 bridges and tunnels which will build and manage the  
13 congestion pricing system. As part of this  
14 partnership, the city is negotiating a memorandum of  
15 understanding with MTA bridges and tunnels that will  
16 govern the use of our streets, bridges and other  
17 infrastructure as well as reimbursement of the city's  
18 costs related to congestion pricing.

19 DOT will review the designs for the system, and  
20 we are asking the MTA to abide by our permit rules.  
21 So, that all the work is done safely and in a  
22 coordinated manner with sensitivity to community  
23 concerns. So far, the collaboration between the city  
24 and the MTA is going very well and I want to thank  
25 MTA Chair and CEO Pat Foy and his team for fully

1  
2 engaging the city in the planning for this historic  
3 project.

4       The City will also have a role in discussions  
5 around towing policy. The Mayor will propose a  
6 member of the six-person traffic mobility review  
7 board. The new entity that will recommend toll rates  
8 and policies in the fall of 2020. To support the  
9 work of this new board, DOT and MTA Bridges and  
10 Tunnels will conduct a joint traffic study to  
11 evaluate the impact of different tolling scenarios.  
12 We also plan to collaborate with the MTA on the  
13 evaluation of congestion pricing. Looking at the  
14 programs impact on congestion, transit use, air  
15 quality and demand for the curb. DOT will also be  
16 evaluating parking impacts in local neighborhoods.

17       Finally, as part of our partnership, the New York  
18 City Transit will be looking at ways to improve  
19 transit options from the boroughs into the central  
20 business district, so that all New Yorkers have  
21 alternatives to driving.

22       Next, as you know, the Mayor recently announced  
23 our Better Buses plan, to improve bus speeds by 25  
24 percent. On 14<sup>th</sup> Street in particular, we were  
25 excited back in January to announce that DOT and New

1  
2 York City Transit would implement select bus service  
3 this year, the 17<sup>th</sup> route to get the service. The  
4 M14 currently carries 27,000 daily riders and  
5 provides a critical connection from the lower east  
6 side to Union Square and the meet packing district.  
7 And last month, the Mayor announced that we would  
8 implement faster, more reliable service for the new  
9 M14 SBS through a transit and truck priority pilot on  
10 this corridor.

11 As the Mayor said, we have an opportunity to try  
12 something new and better serve bus riders on one of  
13 Manhattans busiest cross-town streets. I case you  
14 haven't heard how it will work, a quick primer on how  
15 transit truck priority and what we are calling TTP,  
16 will compliment SBS service. Starting later this  
17 spring, only buses, trucks, and emergency vehicles  
18 will be able to use 14<sup>th</sup> Street between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>  
19 Avenues as a through route.

20 Local traffic will be permitted to make pick ups  
21 and drop offs along the corridor and access garages,  
22 but cars will always need to turn right at the next  
23 possible location and left turns will not be allowed.

24 DOT will implement new curb side regulations that  
25 prioritize short-term loading and passenger pickup

1 activity. We will redesign intersections along 14<sup>th</sup>  
2 street with new turn lanes where appropriate to  
3 ensure that bus lanes will remain clear and we will  
4 also enhance Vision Zero treatments at that  
5 intersections including painted curb extensions that  
6 increase pedestrian safety.  
7

8 Our team had closely studied international best  
9 practices for busy transit corridors and had  
10 discovered that Kings Street in Toronto, a major  
11 streetcar route had faced similar traffic challenges.  
12 Just two years ago, Toronto piloted new regulations  
13 that prioritize transit and pedestrian uses along the  
14 street. The City found that under the pilot, mass  
15 transit travel times were dramatically reduced, and  
16 ridership increased. In just a month ago, Toronto's  
17 City Council voted overwhelmingly, 22 to 3, to make  
18 the ones controversial changes to Kings street  
19 permanent.

20 The new TTP pilot design builds on this model as  
21 well as proposals we had made during the original L-  
22 Train planning process but also incorporates key  
23 feedback from local residents and businesses to  
24 ensure that curb access remains available and that  
25

1 through truck traffic will not be diverted to  
2 adjacent streets.  
3

4 In the weeks ahead, DOT will conduct further  
5 outreach to stakeholders including the five different  
6 community boards served by 14<sup>th</sup> Street and  
7 educational campaigns for the people who use the  
8 corridor. As we continue to address congestion  
9 across New York City, we hope this experiment  
10 implemented by June will provide us with another tool  
11 to move buses faster and more reliably.

12 We will also pursue making permanent the nearly  
13 three miles of new protected bike lanes we installed  
14 last year along 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Streets. Since we  
15 installed the lanes last fall, cyclist usage has  
16 grown dramatically. We have made these new lanes  
17 part of our cross-town protected bike lane strategy  
18 in Manhattan along with recently installed lanes on  
19 26<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> Street and a plan parallel on 52<sup>nd</sup> and  
20 55<sup>th</sup> streets. We will also pursue making the bike  
21 lanes along Grand Street and Brooklyn permanent while  
22 making sure that the design works on the industrial  
23 end of the corridor.

24 City bike expansion is underway with 20 new  
25 stations installed in East Williamsburg and Bushwick

1  
2 over the past month and an additional 90 to be  
3 installed along the L-Train corridor in Brooklyn and  
4 Queens this summer. And we hope to have an update  
5 for the Council soon about the contours of Lyft's  
6 further expansion of city bike to ultimately double  
7 the size of the service area and triple the size of  
8 the fleet.

9 On April 22<sup>nd</sup>, we announced a request for  
10 expressions of interest on RFEI that could bring  
11 borough wide dockless bike share to Staten Island  
12 this summer. In the current pilot that launched last  
13 year, we've learned that Staten Islanders love bike  
14 share, but we found that their rides often ended up  
15 outside the pilots north shore boundaries. So, now  
16 riders have voted with their feet and we want the  
17 entire island to be available to them by bike.

18 We hope that multiple vendors will participate,  
19 but I do want to note that the bike share industry  
20 continues to be in a state of flux. The experience  
21 from our initial dockless pilot is instructive. Of  
22 the twelve companies that initially expressed  
23 interest, half could not meet our minimum  
24 requirements to participate. Of the four serious  
25 entrance that made it to launch only to Limon Jump



1 are still operating robust pilot services today.  
2  
3 Companies with multi-billion-dollar evaluations in  
4 late 2017, such as OFO and MO bike withdrew  
5 completely from North America and are struggling to  
6 stay afloat even in their original Chinese markets.

7 As with our current pilot, we would evaluate this  
8 larger demonstration by looking at usage, rider  
9 satisfaction, safety, sidewalk obstruction and  
10 clutter, availability and durability of the bikes and  
11 compliance with data accessibility privacy and user  
12 protections. And while dockless bike share has the  
13 great potential to be a travel option in Staten  
14 Island, we also think it has helped contribute to  
15 Vision Zero. As last year, with hundreds of brightly  
16 colored lime and jump bikes on the streets, it was  
17 the safest year ever in the borough for cyclists and  
18 everyone else.

19 Finally, we will begin continuing our current  
20 dockless pilots in the Rockaways in the Fordham  
21 section of the Bronx at least through Labor Day and I  
22 am happy to say that Lime will be adding about 200  
23 additional bikes in the Rockaways and we are  
24 exploring similar possibilities in he Bronx.

1  
2 Turning to maintaining our vital transportation  
3 infrastructure in the FY 19 to 29 Capital Budget, the  
4 Mayor commits historic investments with the focus on  
5 both Vision Zero and maintaining a state of good  
6 repair. This budget adds an additional \$309 million  
7 for street reconstruction, which includes Northern  
8 Boulevard and other Vision Zero projects I mentioned  
9 earlier as well as South Bronx SBS. An additional  
10 \$191 million for vital bridge repairs and an  
11 additional \$125 million for roadway resurfacing.

12 As I said in my Preliminary Budget testimony, in  
13 FY 2018, DOT committed a record 2.2 billion worth of  
14 bridge street and Ferry Capital projects and with  
15 improved planning and scoping, I am proud to say we  
16 achieved a capital commitment rate of 81 percent, up  
17 from 42 percent at the start of this administration.

18 We remain laser focused on project delivery and  
19 are happy to continue working with the Council to  
20 explore ways that the administration and the city can  
21 improve the Capital process. And of course, when it  
22 comes to the state of good repair and project  
23 delivery, no DOT project is bigger or more complex  
24 than the BQE. Last month the city announced an  
25 expert panel chaired by New York Building Congress

1 President Carlo Scissura that is taking a  
2 comprehensive look at the project including  
3 underlying assumptions and the various proposals put  
4 forward.  
5

6 Further, the panel will look at policy  
7 considerations including governance models and how we  
8 can best ensure all the necessary stakeholders are at  
9 the table for this critical effort.

10 The panel has held five meetings so far beginning  
11 with the deep dive on the project background followed  
12 by a tour of the structure and the surrounding area.  
13 This tour included representatives from a number of  
14 agencies that spoke about their adjacent facilities  
15 including multiple New York City Transit Substation  
16 and Plans that are critical to the four subway lines  
17 that run underneath. DEP's ten-foot sewer main under  
18 Furman Street as well as some of Brooklyn Bridge Park  
19 engineering.

20 The panel will also be taking a significant look  
21 at the economic impacts of the BQE as a freight  
22 corridor and traffic assumptions in modeling.

23 Particularly in light of the progress on congestion  
24 pricing and recent momentum behind reinstating two-  
25 way towing on the Verrazzano Bridge. Community and

1  
2 elected official engagement is also a critical part  
3 of the panel's process. The Chair has met with a  
4 number of elected officials and community  
5 stakeholders and the panel as a whole, recently held  
6 a large meeting with many civic and community  
7 organizations in the project area.

8 We were joined by City Council Land Use Director,  
9 Staff of the Office of Council Member Levin, State  
10 Senator Brian Kavanaugh and Assembly Member Jo Anne  
11 Simon and staff from Borough President Adam's office.

12 We are aware that the Council has issued an RFP  
13 to retain an independent consultant to take a look at  
14 the project as well. We look forward to working with  
15 this consulting team and continuing our work with the  
16 Council.

17 Finally, we heard in the Mayor's Budget address  
18 that the city continues to face tough choices as a  
19 result of state cost shifts for social service,  
20 education and health programs. In addition to  
21 continued Fiscal uncertainty in Washington, while  
22 making the vital investments I've discussed, this  
23 budget also includes savings of \$16.0 million in  
24 Fiscal Year 2019 and \$14.1 million in Fiscal Year  
25 2020. We were able to accomplish this through

1  
2 initiatives that reached our city funded cost and  
3 recognized increased revenues without impacting  
4 important public services. And you can see the  
5 details of some of those in my written testimony.

6 In conclusion, in the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the de Blasio  
7 Administration, I am proud of the world class work  
8 DOT has done on Vision Zero improving our  
9 transportation infrastructure and embracing new  
10 technologies. Looking ahead, we will tackling the  
11 ambitious new executives from 14<sup>th</sup> Street Truck and  
12 Transit Priority Pilot to the expansion of our Speed  
13 Camera program while implementing our Better Buses  
14 plan, dramatically expanding city bike, and  
15 continuing our aggressive pace of bike lane  
16 installation while tackling a new set of Vision Zero  
17 priority locations.

18 And cities all around the country will be looking  
19 to see how we in the MTA together, implement  
20 congestion pricing here in New York City. I want to  
21 thank the Council for its continued partnership, and  
22 I am now happy to answer questions.

23 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much  
24 Commissioner and I appreciate you coming in to give  
25 testimony. We have been joined by Council Member

1  
2 Levine, Cabrera, Miller, Espinal and Cumbo. And we  
3 will have questions from some of them later. But let  
4 me start off and I had to start off on a negative  
5 note, but I am very, very, very upset with the  
6 Department of Transportation.

7       You know, I have been working on a project in my  
8 district for over ten years and that project is the  
9 Travis Park project and the 78<sup>th</sup> Street Play Street.  
10 We permanently closed 78<sup>th</sup> Street. We purchased land  
11 from the private school that is on 78<sup>th</sup> Street. We  
12 provided about \$13 million in funding for this  
13 project, mostly from Council funding, some from the  
14 Borough President and a little bit from the Mayor as  
15 well, previous administration. And about three and a  
16 half months ago, I found out that the plans which we  
17 also had visioning sessions with the community, four  
18 visioning sessions, where people from the community  
19 came in and sat with DOT. Hundreds of people,  
20 probably one of the biggest visioning sessions that  
21 you have had and together as a community with the  
22 Department and with the Department of Parks, decided  
23 what that park renovation, that Plaza renovation  
24 would look like.

1  
2 Now, it has been said that we are going to allow  
3 cars onto that plaza or to that park. And that is  
4 just totally unacceptable and what is really  
5 concerning to me is that I was not informed of this  
6 until after two months when the business who is using  
7 the auto dealership, the Koepfel Auto Dealership  
8 that's using the closed off street for his own  
9 purposes to get into his garage and also for service  
10 work, he is doing service work in the Plaza. And  
11 also, parents from the Neighboring Garden School are  
12 using it and driving through it because they are  
13 picking up kids and dropping off kids and that now,  
14 you and the Department of Parks have agreed to  
15 redesign the plaza.

16 Now, I have never heard of a plaza or even a park  
17 being redesigned when it's in the middle of a  
18 project. And the major point of contention here is  
19 that Koepfel wants to continue to use his curb cut  
20 and what he believes is his own private driveway for  
21 cars to get into his dealership.

22 So, what I want to know is who did Koepfel reach  
23 out to? How did the meeting with Koepfel round about  
24 November or December occur?

1  
2 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Thank you Mr. Chairman and  
3 obviously I want to say up front, we are very sorry  
4 for the situation and understand your frustration and  
5 I can assure you this is something that is being  
6 tried to work out at the highest levels; Law  
7 Department, City Hall, DOT, Parks and Department of  
8 Buildings.

9 I will give you the crinology as best as I  
10 understand it while admitting that I only sort of  
11 became aware of the controversy and the problems that  
12 were occurring sort of later this year, but you know,  
13 my understanding and the history here is the Plaza  
14 was designed with one property owner, that you know,  
15 had made it clear, they had no interest in using that  
16 curb cut, which is a legal curb cut to the building  
17 and then in the middle of last year, unfortunately  
18 the property changed hands. The new owner Howard  
19 Koepel came in and started a process.

20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: It is actually the same  
21 property owner, it's a trust but it's just a  
22 different dealership.

23 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Different sort of person on  
24 the ground in the building and I guess, and again, I  
25 don't know Mr. Koepel, I have never met him, but I



1  
2 guess he started doing sort of rehab of the building  
3 and changing the orientation of how his operations  
4 were going to work. My understanding and I think you  
5 will need Parks Department to confirm this, is  
6 sometimes towards the end of last year, he reached  
7 out to people in parks, I don't know who. I  
8 apologize and I think his plans were not totally  
9 formalized at that time but started to talk to them.

10 They pulled us in at some point and I apologize  
11 if you feel like there was a period of radio silence,  
12 I don't think it was intentional. I think it sounds  
13 like all parties were trying to see if they could  
14 come to a solution that would have a good outcome.

15 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: A good solution without  
16 involving the Council Member or the community.

17 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Well, again -

18 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: After all of that outreach  
19 was done, it's unbelievable.

20 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Again, I think there was  
21 potentially a hope that they could come back with  
22 something that you and the community would like,  
23 obviously, that did not happen.

24 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Without community input.  
25 After we did four visioning sessions and people know

1  
2 how active and involved that community is, how that  
3 community and the Jackson Heights Green Alliance has  
4 worked with the Department of Transportation to do  
5 the street closures in the first place, they were  
6 totally ignored.

7 POLLY TROTTEBERG: I guess, my understanding is  
8 a little different then yours and I am sorry if I  
9 feel that way. I think there was a period where the  
10 city was trying to negotiate with Mr. Koepfel. I  
11 think when the sensed that that wasn't favorable,  
12 they came back to you and to the advocates and we are  
13 keenly aware, believe me of how unhappy the advocates  
14 -

15 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Commissioner, they went to  
16 Koepfel first. Okay, they did not go to the  
17 community, they did not go to me, they did not tell  
18 me until two and a half months after meeting with  
19 Koepfel. It was in fact, Koepfel who first informed  
20 me that the Department of Transportation and the  
21 Parks Department had decided to redesign the Plaza  
22 and the Park.

23 But I can't get to the bottom of this. This is  
24 why I am putting you the record and you are under  
25 oath.

1  
2 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Right, and again, I am giving  
3 you the version as I know it, which is Mr. Koepfel  
4 reached out to the Parks Department first.

5 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Are there any other examples  
6 of businesses that get to redesign parks?

7 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Well, I think this is a  
8 strange case in that, we have a lot of plaza's in  
9 which there are curb cuts.

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Commissioner, are there any  
11 other examples of businesses who get to redesign  
12 parks and or plaza's?

13 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Well, I guess I would say  
14 probably in the case of a lot of parks and plazas,  
15 we've made changes to the designs due to all kinds of  
16 community feedback, public and private.

17 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: After it has been designed?

18 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah, I mean we make changes.

19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Like where?

20 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Someone will have to give me  
21 a list of some of those. This admittedly is a very  
22 unique case. I have worked on dozens of plaza's. I  
23 have never known of one that's had exactly this  
24 circumstance. We do have plaza's that have curb  
25 cuts. This is an unusual one and I think we all

1  
2 thought the curb cut was dormant and obviously when a  
3 new building manager came in, they brought the curb  
4 cut back to life. That is a situation I have never  
5 seen before, usually if they're live curb cuts, we  
6 design the plaza's to accommodate them. So, this is  
7 one, at least, it's unique in my experience.

8 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well, it's very interesting  
9 because the Garden School's curb cuts were taken away  
10 and the Koepfel was originally taken away in the  
11 design, and now all of a sudden, he is being given  
12 access to curb cuts after the design has been  
13 completed. I don't for the life of me understand it.

14 Do you know Commissioner, that on Northern  
15 Boulevard, over the last three years, I have had six  
16 children killed within the vicinity of this plaza and  
17 park?

18 POLLY TROTTEBERG: I mean look, I am obviously  
19 very aware of all the fatalities on Northern  
20 Boulevard.

21 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Kids, okay, and you are  
22 talking about putting cars into a park. Is that part  
23 of Vision Zero?

24 POLLY TROTTEBERG: It is not part of Vision  
25 Zero, but again, I think we have just a legal matter.

3 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Do cars and kids mix?

4 POLLY TROTTEBERG: It's a legal matter to  
5 wrangle with here. Mr. Koepfel has chosen to  
6 exercise his legal right to use that curb cut as I  
7 have said.

8 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And you have complied with  
9 him.

10 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Well, not yet, as I said, I  
11 think every part of city government -

12 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: No, right now that is a  
13 closed street and you are allowing him to use the  
14 closed street for his own purposes and you have  
15 accommodated him at his request without even  
16 informing the Council Member. I mean how much worse  
17 can this get?

18 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Well, I guess I sort of have  
19 a different understanding of it. I am sorry if you  
20 view it that way.

21 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well, personally, if you  
22 haven't even been informed by the Queens Borough  
23 Commissioner about what this situation is, that's  
24 speaks volumes to what's going on in the Queens  
25 Office. I would suggest that you look into it.  
Okay, I really would.

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POLLY TROTTEBERG: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I mean, I am not going to give up on this and what the city should do here is go forward with the original plans and let him sue.

Okay, let him sue, okay, because this involves childrens lives and I am tired of hearing the nonsense that took us years to fight to get the money for Northern Boulevard to get the re-design in Northern Boulevard.

I haven't even been fully informed about what that design in Northern Boulevard is going to look like. I understand some islands are going to be put in. Maybe some LPI's are going to be put in, but I haven't been informed of that. And this is after I have tried to work with you agency.

Let me go on. On April 6, 2019, the New York City wireless network or NYCWin, a \$500 million network malfunctioned and shut down for ten days due to a long anticipated and forewarned Y2K like bug. The shutdown interrupted DOT's ability to program traffic lights, including 12,389 traffic signal controllers that went down on the first day. According to the New York Times, a city official who asked not to be named said that there was concern

1  
2 that the traffic signals remain disconnected and the  
3 timing of the individual signals could drift, and  
4 they would eventually come out of sync with each  
5 other. NYCWin is currently be phased out by DOITT in  
6 DOT and has hired a private vendor to install and  
7 administer a replacement system, TRANSNET at a cost  
8 of \$75 million. Due to a delay in ongoing  
9 negotiations with potential vendors, the Preliminary  
10 Budget included a savings of \$8.7 million in Fiscal  
11 2019 and Executive Budget included an additional  
12 savings of \$1 million in 2019.

13 Can you please update the Council on the effect  
14 of the NYCWin shut down on DOT?

15 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Now, I am happy to say that  
16 the effects on our traffic signal were very minimal.  
17 The DOT traffic signal is very robust and has a lot  
18 of redundancy built into it. So, when the NYCWin  
19 system went down, the NYCWin sort of controls some of  
20 the higher level algorithms that we use for things  
21 like midtown in motion and I am happy to say that  
22 during the course of the week, as we got NYCWin up  
23 and running again, we did not see any significant  
24 impacts and no reports from the public that they saw

1  
2 anything happening on the ground with the traffic  
3 signals.

4 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: When does DOT expect to  
5 select the carrier for TRANSNET, so that the agency  
6 is not relying upon NYCWin?

7 POLLY TROTTEBERG: I believe that selection is  
8 happening within this month, even perhaps within this  
9 week and then I think a bunch of the city agencies  
10 will be phasing out of NYCWin by the end of the year.  
11 It is going to take longer for DOT because we are the  
12 biggest NYCWin customer and we want to make sure we  
13 have a good transition. Our full transition out of  
14 NYCWin will probably be sometime into the third  
15 quarter of 2020.

16 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Do you think this is a  
17 problem that could have been avoided?

18 POLLY TROTTEBERG: I mean I think it's a problem  
19 that could be avoided. I would also say it was a bit  
20 of a strange one-off circumstance. It was kind of an  
21 obscure technical matter that the NYCWin system was  
22 using GPS for its clock purposes as far as I  
23 understand and that the NYCWin system is a very old  
24 one. It was put together right after 911. Again, I  
25 am happy to say I think the impacts on the ground at



1 least particularly from DOT's point of view were  
2 imperceptible.  
3

4 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. During Speaking  
5 Johnson's State of the City Speech, the Speaker  
6 pointed out that the Lexington Avenue subway line  
7 carries more passengers than the BQE in a morning  
8 rush hour and that the city should study alternatives  
9 including the removal of the BQE in its entirety.

10 Currently, over \$1.5 billion dollars has been  
11 committed to rehabilitation of the BQE. The current  
12 plan that is funded in the budget is for a six-lane  
13 highway to replace the promenade for a six-year  
14 period. However, during the Preliminary Budget  
15 hearing DOT said that they were evaluating  
16 alternatives and looking to bring in a broader set of  
17 experts to look at the project.

18 Has DOT studied the alternatives including the  
19 possibility of removing the BQE in its entirety and  
20 if so, what would removing the BQE mean?

21 POLLY TROTTEBERG: And look, I think it's safe  
22 to say it is one of the biggest and most high profile  
23 and challenging projects. And as I said in my  
24 testimony, I think we at DOT decided we needed a  
25 broader set of experts to look through the different

1  
2 proposals. There are many on the table including the  
3 Speakers and the Comptroller's and a number of other  
4 proposals put forward.

5 So, the Mayor has created what we are calling a  
6 panel of experts, independent people from all  
7 different disciplines, engineers, planners, parks  
8 experts Chaired by Carlo Scissura who runs the New  
9 York Building Congress. The panel is immersing  
10 itself in the details and complexities of the site of  
11 the project needs and is doing an evaluation of each  
12 of the different options that are on the table. It  
13 is going to take a look at the sort of complete  
14 removal of the BQE just to toss out, there are a  
15 couple of challenges with that option.

16 The BQE is the major North, South highway in New  
17 York City. It carries 140 thousand vehicles a day.  
18 It is the major freight route for the entire city  
19 connecting the airports and the ports with a bunch of  
20 freight distributions centers and you know, one  
21 challenge is, it is a six-lane highway running  
22 throughout from the Verrazzano Bridge all through  
23 Brooklyn and Queens. If you remove one section of  
24 it, obviously the traffic is going to filter out into  
25 the other parts of the city. But again, the panel

1 has been tasked with looking at all possible  
2 proposals and keeping an open mind on anything that  
3 might be viable.  
4

5 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, thank you. Over the  
6 last three years, DOT has met or exceeded its goal of  
7 repaving 1,300 lane miles of streets annually.  
8 However, the Fiscal 2020 Preliminary Budget included  
9 only \$135 million in Fiscal 2020 compared to \$298  
10 million in the current Fiscal Year for in house  
11 baseline funding for street resurfacing. Excuse me,  
12 in street repaving and resurfacing. The Council  
13 called on the Administration to increase the baseline  
14 funding for street resurfacing by \$163 million in the  
15 Fiscal 2020 Executive Budget.

16 Overall, the DOT's Capital Budget for street  
17 resurfacing increased by just \$127.8 million in the  
18 Executive Budget for a total of \$262.8 million.  
19 Enough to repave only 1,100 lane miles. How will DOT  
20 meet its goal of repaving 1,300 lane miles annually  
21 if it is not adequately funded?

22 POLLY TROTTEBERG: So, I think some of you are  
23 aware when this administration came in, the City had  
24 been I think underinvesting in street resurfacing and  
25 for a period of about ten years prior had typically

1 not even resurfaced up to a 1,000 lane miles. So,  
2 when we came in, we felt the streets were in poor  
3 conditions and the Mayor working with the Council  
4 really increased DOT's funding and we started paving  
5 1,300 lane miles. We did that for three years and  
6 almost a fourth.  
7

8 I think at this point, we've seen an improvement  
9 in roadway conditions, and we've asked the question,  
10 whats the sustainable level? What should the city be  
11 doing every year? And there is sort of one new  
12 challenge to our resurfacing. As part of the  
13 settlement, the city has entered into with the  
14 disability groups, on making sure our sidewalks and  
15 curbs are accessible.

16 Any time the city does resurfacing now, it has to  
17 upgrade all the curbs and make them fully ADA  
18 accessible. So, I think the city thinks the 1,100  
19 miles is now the number we want to hit every year.  
20 It will enable us to hold onto the gains we've made  
21 in resurfacing and keep a pace with the  
22 reconstruction of the curbs.

23 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And I think the reason you  
24 are doing those resurfacing of those curbs is because  
25 originally there was a mistake made on that, right?

3 POLLY TROTTEBERG: I mean, it's been sort of a  
4 matter of some dispute between the cities and the  
5 federal requirements, but I think it has been  
6 clarified legally and certainly in this settlement.

7 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: But ultimately, that's why  
8 you have to replace it.

9 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Right, right, resurfacing  
10 which used to be considered just a modification, now  
11 is considered work that requires all the curb cuts  
12 adjoining it to be fully ADA compliant.

13 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Do you have any information  
14 about personal injury, lawsuits, or the cost to the  
15 city for not taking care of some of those streets in  
16 bad shape, curbs?

17 POLLY TROTTEBERG: You know, I mean the Law  
18 Department and the Comptroller are typically the ones  
19 who sort of handle those settlements and keep those  
20 numbers. I think my understanding is and I will  
21 double check this number, I think the city overall in  
22 lawsuits involving streets, I think maybe it's around  
23 \$30 million but I want the team to double check. I  
24 don't want to stand by that number until we check it.

25 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, alright, now, just to  
go back to Northern Boulevard. I said I have not

1  
2 really been fully informed about whats going to  
3 happen there. So, can you give me an update on what  
4 that's going to look like?

5 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah, and I am very sorry to  
6 hear you feel like you don't have a full update. I  
7 want to make sure actually we get more details to  
8 your staff. I mean, we are planning three years of  
9 work and I will see if I can pull out some of the  
10 schematics. Some of the things you know, pedestrian  
11 islands, signal timing, better crossings. And then  
12 we are going to be in that process working to come up  
13 with what is ultimately going to be the design for  
14 the capital work.

15 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Commissioner, what I am  
16 interested in is also is where those islands and  
17 LPI's will be. Will it be from, my district runs  
18 from 69<sup>th</sup> Street to Junction Boulevard. Will it be  
19 every corner? Will it be what do they call it, barn  
20 storming?

21 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Barn dance. I think we are  
22 going to do more LPI's instead of barns dances. I  
23 have a bunch of details here, but it might be - we  
24 are doing actually a lot of work over the next few  
25 years, so it might be worth - you know, sorry, if you

1 don't feel like you have had a full briefing on it.  
2  
3 Sit down with the maps and walk you through it.

4 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, will this be from Long  
5 Island City right through Corona?

6 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Lets check the -

7 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. Alright, thank you  
8 very much. I am going to turn it over to Co-Chair  
9 Rodriguez.

10 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Thank you Chair.

11 Commissioner, when we look at the Executive Budget  
12 Response, definitely the Council is not happy with  
13 what we got. We hope that from here to the  
14 handshake. City Hall will look at all those areas  
15 and as you can see in the Executive Budget response  
16 where it has been partially funded in increased plaza  
17 program. Install additional pedestrian signal at Fox  
18 Lane, resurfacing streets, areas that are very  
19 important for Vision Zero and to make the city more  
20 walkable.

21 But worse than that, in the Executive Budget, we  
22 also completely unfunded when it comes to install  
23 transit signal priority systems, repair NYCHA  
24 sidewalks, quadruples the number of shared streets,  
25 replace failing street signs and pedestrians and

1  
2 cyclists, all those things are Vision Zero. So, what  
3 is the plan to get to the finish line with more  
4 resources to DOT, so that those programs are funded?

5 POLLY TROTTEBERG: So, I mean I want to say  
6 overall Mr. Chairman and thank you and the Council  
7 and the Mayor for this. I mean DOT is receiving, I  
8 am going to double check, I think over a ten-year  
9 period \$2.8 billion to invest in Vision Zero. So,  
10 look, there is always more we can do, and I do want  
11 to say though I think our department is grateful. We  
12 have gotten a very robust amount of resources. You  
13 know, in many of the items that you have listed  
14 there, we have doubled or tripled our output. With  
15 that said, I understand the Council wants to see more  
16 happen there and I assume that will be part of the  
17 ongoing negotiation between the Administration and  
18 the Council.

19 I would just say; I think we feel grateful for  
20 the resources we have gotten, and we have tried to  
21 make the best use of them that we could.

22 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: But what can we say about  
23 you know like, install transit signal priority system  
24 is underfunded in the Budget Executive Response.  
25 Repair NYCHA sidewalks, is unfunded in the Executive



1  
2 Budget Response. The number of shared street is  
3 unfunded in the Executive Budget Response. Replace  
4 fading street signs are unfunded, pedestrian and  
5 cyclists are unfunded to.

6 POLLY TROTTEBERG: So, I mean I think some of  
7 those items, I will start with you mentioned TSP I  
8 mean, we have gotten another \$2.7 million I think,  
9 and we have now basically I think it's quadrupled the  
10 pace in which we are installing TSP. I think we  
11 found new methodologies and gotten a lot better at  
12 what we are doing. I think a number of the items you  
13 are talking about; we have a lot of resources and you  
14 know, it's in part up to the agency to continue to  
15 find ways to move faster and smarter on some of these  
16 items which we are trying to do.

17 And for sidewalks, just to mention, when I came  
18 into this agency, you know, we were investing a  
19 pretty small amount only about a million dollars a  
20 year on NYCHA sidewalks. Now, we are spending  
21 upwards of \$4 million and DOT and NYCHA are working  
22 together coordinating on you know, where we see the  
23 most need for sidewalk work.

24 So, I think in a lot of the categories you are  
25 mentioning, the Administration, working with the

1 Council has put in a lot bigger investments but I  
2 understand there is certainly more to negotiate on  
3 and talk about.  
4

5 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Okay, are you still about  
6 advocating for the same goal which is about we need  
7 to put more resources to the agency in order to see  
8 this project and other project really funded. Not  
9 only for the present but also for the future  
10 generation.

11 With protected bike lane, what happened at the  
12 end of last year we get less protected bike lane than  
13 the previous one?

14 POLLY TROTTEBERG: I think last year we had  
15 around 20 miles and the year before - I'm wondering  
16 if someone could remember. You know, one thing I  
17 have often said about bike lane miles is the mileage  
18 is important but the quality is also important and  
19 some stretches take more work and more engineering  
20 than others and you know, the one I like to cite  
21 because it's one of my favorite stretches is we added  
22 a very small piece of bike lane, two way bike lane  
23 from the Brooklyn Bridge along park row in front of  
24 City Hall and then connecting to all of lower  
25 Manhattan. It's like a quarter of a mile. But

1  
2 getting the engineering right, dealing with the  
3 traffic being in front of City Hall, working with  
4 Council Members with NYPD, with the press, it's  
5 proved an incredibly vital connector. But it took  
6 some time to get it right.

7 So, I think it's a balance. I agree with you, we  
8 want to continue to try and up the mileage, but I  
9 also want to try and make sure that we are doing key  
10 connectors that can really be transformative in the  
11 bike network.

12 Actually, this year it was 20.3 protected lane  
13 miles, last year was 20.4. 2017 was a big year for  
14 us, it was 25. The previous year though it was 18  
15 and you know, prior to the de Blasio Administration,  
16 the city was averaging about six protected lane miles  
17 per year.

18 So, you know, we are averaging now over 20. I  
19 think we are making good progress. Agree always more  
20 to do, but we have really upped that pace.

21 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: I mean the plan for last  
22 year was supposed to be 24, so we did not get to the  
23 24. So, we just got those 20 and I think that and I  
24 agree with you that the quality is important but you  
25 know, I don't see as a contradiction the quality and

1  
2 the quantity because even though there is a lot that  
3 we have to celebrate on how working together, the  
4 Mayor and the Council being able to accomplish but  
5 also getting to the bike 20 years was more of  
6 something that was more the middle class. That's why  
7 with a city bike, as it was created from the  
8 beginning was only thinking about the central  
9 Manhattan. And for me it was about the Vision mainly  
10 for the middle class and what we have seen is about  
11 the expansion of cyclists in the last 15 years.  
12 Therefore, we also need to be more aggressive when it  
13 comes to expanding the number of protected bike  
14 lanes.

15 POLLY TROTTEBERG: So, I think Mr. Chairman at  
16 least checking, sort of looking back. We pledge to  
17 do 10 miles protected lanes. We have done 20 the  
18 past two years, 25 the year before. We do want to do  
19 more but you know again, one thing I would ask  
20 particularly you know, as you and the Speaker have  
21 been talking about doing 50 or 100 protected bike  
22 lane miles, that is something I really, really would  
23 need some Council partnership and Council Members to  
24 sort of bring me their thoughts of you know, where  
25 are places in their districts where they would really

1  
2 be ready to enthusiastically help us sort of produce  
3 protected bike lanes at that pace. Because, you  
4 know, as I like to say, one mile of protected bike  
5 lane in Manhattan, it would be 20 North South blocks  
6 and if you picture going from 14<sup>th</sup> to 34<sup>th</sup> street. We  
7 want to make sure that kind of a distance, we are  
8 getting it right. We are getting the street design  
9 right, so that it is safe for both the cyclist, the  
10 pedestrians, the motorists, that we are working with  
11 local businesses.

12 So, you know, just want to make sure as we do  
13 protected bike lanes, we do them and they are safe,  
14 and they are high quality.

15 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: And we understand you know.  
16 So, with that direction, when will we get the  
17 Northside protected bike lane?

18 POLLY TROTTEBERG: That is a very good question  
19 Mr. Chairman. I am sorry, I do not have an answer  
20 for you on that yet today. I certainly know, we both  
21 know what a challenging issue that has been to  
22 resolve.

23 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: But that was included in the  
24 rezoning and it is something that we sign in the  
25 whole process. Something so small, something that we

1  
2 are not able to really follow and honor that  
3 agreement. Why should I have any confidence that the  
4 other project will also be honored?

5 So, this was not something that you know, was  
6 only conversation on the bike lane. This was one of  
7 the areas agreement on the rezoning, was to build the  
8 Northside as a protected bike lane and I feel that it  
9 is for me, very uncomfortable that still today as we  
10 are getting into you know, the spaying in the summer,  
11 we, not you, we are playing games.

12 If I can not trust that the protected bike lane,  
13 should happen, I should not have any trust that the  
14 other thing that is putting the letter of the Mayor  
15 will also be honored. And as that process is going  
16 right now through a lawsuit, I have really doubts in  
17 that I can have confidence in the whole rezoning. And  
18 I hope to get answer from City Hall in the next few  
19 days.

20 Commissioner, how is DOT looking at resiliency  
21 challenges as you and your team do you redesign  
22 plans?

23 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Well, I think obviously the  
24 biggest resiliency project that's under consideration  
25 right now starting with East Side Coastal resiliency,

1  
2 one that obviously is a joint effort between DOT and  
3 parks and DDC and the Mayor's Office of Resiliency.  
4 You know, that may potentially be a template for more  
5 projects we are going to do around the city in areas  
6 that are vulnerable to flooding. Looking at ways we  
7 can use parks and roadways as potential buffers. As  
8 we do now our new bridge designs, we clearly look  
9 very much to, how can we protect operational  
10 infrastructure involved in our bridges if they are  
11 movable bridges? You know, typically that  
12 infrastructure has been low lying. We are now moving  
13 it higher in new bridge designs.

14 We are looking at new materials and methods for  
15 making our roadways less susceptible to flooding.  
16 It's an enormous challenge and one that I think all  
17 the various infrastructure agencies around the city,  
18 we meet a lot and talk about and think about best  
19 practices and how we can harden our infrastructure.  
20 For what unfortunately is clearly a changing climate.

21 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: I just again, I just hope  
22 that we continue looking at you know, climate change  
23 as we - all of us understand that this is real. That  
24 is taking to consideration as any redesign takes  
25 place.

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POLLY TROTTEBERG: We absolutely are Mr. Chairman and I will add obviously; you know, the Mayor made some recent announcements about some of the other steps the city is taking to continue. You know, there is the infrastructure side but then there is the also how is the city reducing its own carbon footprint, so that we can have less of an impact on the climate and obviously he talked a lot about what is happening in the building sector. But on the DOT side and citywide, we are looking at ways to continue to reduce the city fleet to rely more on electric vehicles to do everything we can to try and reduce our own carbon footprint.

CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Okay, so on our buses, I think it's good to discuss our plan on how to make buss service more efficient and safer, but I also feel that for the meantime, we should get more enforcement if we want to see our buses moving faster than what they are moving today. Like when should we expect to see more enforcement happen so that no one, no drivers are blocking our buses in our city?

POLLY TROTTEBERG: So, the Mayor has announced, and they are up and running NYPD, seven new bus lane enforcement teams, which are out ticketing and



1 towing. So, that is already underway, and we are  
2 working with New York City Transit at NYPD to figure  
3 out where are the bus lanes where we are seeing the  
4 most obstructions and targeting our efforts there.  
5

6 The MTA is also in the process of doing something  
7 that I also think is going to be very helpful. We  
8 have the ability to install bus lane cameras that are  
9 attached to our poles and are looking at the lanes.

10 The MTA is going to be installing bus cameras on  
11 their buses. And they will be able to look out at  
12 the roadway in front of the bus and take a picture  
13 and issue tickets. So, I think that and a lot of  
14 other cities in Europe and other places also use  
15 those bus cameras to keep their lanes clear and I  
16 think that's going to be a big help here in New York  
17 when the MTA has that underway.

18 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Any data, any information  
19 about you know, cars that have towed or getting  
20 tickets or what should we expect in the next few days  
21 or week when it comes to you know, that plan?

22 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah, I need to double check  
23 with the NYPD on that, but we can find you some data  
24 on that. I do know this, they have been greatly  
25 increasing their enforcement in bus lanes and have

1  
2 some numbers to share, but sorry, I don't have those  
3 handy.

4 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Okay, and as you know, I  
5 think that your team and our team here Transportation  
6 Staff being in conversation on the Vision Zero  
7 redesign an intersection that hopefully we can be in  
8 the same place in voting on it in the next stated  
9 meeting. What is your approach or point of view on  
10 how much additional funding we should also be looking  
11 at in order to have the money to be able to have a  
12 plan to redesign all the intersections that we have  
13 following the Vision Zero policy?

14 POLLY TROTTEBERG: So, I want to make sure. Are  
15 you referring first to Intro. 322? Let me speak  
16 about that and then we will come to the financial  
17 question. And look, we certainly share the goals of  
18 the legislation and appreciate that the Council is  
19 ready to engage with the city.

20 You know, I think what we've stated as our  
21 concerns, we feel like when we do our street redesign  
22 projects, we do a lot of the things that the  
23 legislation seeks us to do. We look for all the  
24 possible safety and mobility elements we can include,  
25 bus lanes, bike lanes, pedestrian islands, you name

1  
2 it. I think we have you know, some concerns. What I  
3 have found in my work on Vision Zero projects, the  
4 process is often iterative. And it can be a back and  
5 forth between community, business leaders, and DOT  
6 and sometimes a project can turn out much better in  
7 the long run. It can also be sometimes when we put a  
8 project in the ground, we have the opportunity to go  
9 back and revisit it and improve it and I think we  
10 felt some anxiety about at a particular moment and  
11 time having to declare yes or no on a particular  
12 element stated in black and white.

13 I understand from the advocacy point of view;  
14 they think that is going to help them make the case.  
15 I think we had some anxiety that may help opponents  
16 of these projects and have some legal ramifications.  
17 But again, happy to continue to work with you all and  
18 see if we can find language, we all agree on. We  
19 certainly share the goals of the legislation.

20 On the sort of the larger funding question, I  
21 mean I think again, as I stated the number, DOT is  
22 getting a ten-year period \$2.8 billion for Vision  
23 Zero work and a big proportion of that funding is for  
24 street redesigns and again, I am appreciative for the  
25 Council and the Mayor. I think we have gotten you

2 know, very robust resources to do that work. I  
3 understand the Council is interested in seeing more  
4 and I presume that is a discussion that will be had  
5 with the Administration and obviously we will be  
6 happy to participate in that.

7 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Okay, has the DOT identified  
8 all dangerous intersection?

9 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Well, and I think I point up  
10 there to you know, what we called our borough  
11 pedestrian safety action plans and as you know, we  
12 recently released an update and identified you know  
13 within the city, that approximately 7 percent of the  
14 roadways and intersections are responsible for nearly  
15 50 percent of the pedestrian fatalities and serious  
16 injuries.

17 So, as we always said in work, those are the  
18 areas where we target resources and as I reported  
19 when we did that first series, we put a lot of effort  
20 into those areas and we saw dramatic declines in  
21 fatalities. Better declines than we saw in other  
22 parts of the city. So, you know, and we got to in  
23 the first four years of those borough pedestrian  
24 safety action plans, 90 percent of the priority  
25 corridors are intersections. We did some treatment

1  
2 there. In some cases, it was big redesigns, and, in  
3 some cases, it was simpler things like signal  
4 retiming's and LPI's. So, our goal ongoing is to  
5 continue to hit at those key quarter and again, 7 to  
6 8 percent that are responsible for such a big amount  
7 of fatalities.

8 The big-ticket part of this work is always the  
9 major capital projects and as I mentioned in this  
10 testimony, we are adding \$80 million for Northern  
11 Boulevard. You know, to do big capital work, you get  
12 into the tens and the hundreds of millions and again,  
13 I think a discussion the Administration is happy to  
14 have with the Council, but it starts to become  
15 something that involves a lot of resources.

16 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: What does that process mean  
17 that DOT identify like, come out with a conclusion  
18 with the 7 percent. Is it bases on data?

19 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah, it's looking at crash  
20 data and where we see fatalities and serious injuries  
21 and you know, I think the results - well, this is a  
22 different map that sort of shows some areas where we  
23 want to make the bike network more robust, but I  
24 think the result and you all have looked at the maps.  
25 I mean they tend to be on big arteries that carry a

1 lot of traffic, that are very wide. They are not  
2 pedestrian and cyclist friendly or busy complicated  
3 intersections. Those are the places where we tend to  
4 see a lot of fatalities and where we think our  
5 interventions are most needed.  
6

7 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: So, this is one of those  
8 areas that hopefully you know, we will continue  
9 conversation and see how we can work together.

10 With Vision Zero outreach funding, can you please  
11 describe Vision Zero outreach effort and how much  
12 funding was invested by DOT in 2017, 2018?

13 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah, I will have Elizabeth -  
14 I think you mean our media work and I will have  
15 Elizabeth pull up those numbers. I think it was  
16 around \$ 4 million, oh, here I will let you read it.

17 ELIZABETH FRANKLIN: This year, we have only been  
18 able to repurpose \$2.2 million in our budget. Last  
19 year was \$4.5 million, previously about \$5 million  
20 when we were getting resources from both - additional  
21 resources from the Administration and from the  
22 Council.

23 POLLY TROTTEBERG: And I know Mr. Chairman and  
24 certainly the topic of the Public Education Campaign  
25 says come up this year within the administration as

1  
2 we have seen unfortunately an increase in fatalities,  
3 and I think it's something where the Administration  
4 certainly wants to talk to you about it. And you  
5 have been a terrific champion for us on that and we  
6 are very grateful.

7 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Okay, so hopefully, my  
8 colleague here also is someone that we have been  
9 working together and we will continue working  
10 together with this and many in his also local issue  
11 with the plaza. Hopefully, you know, lets look at  
12 how you know, throughout the negotiation, there is an  
13 increase of funding for the Vision Zero Outreach  
14 funding because I, as just walking or driving in the  
15 street, there is no doubt that there hasn't been the  
16 same numbers of adds that we have seen. Billboards  
17 that we have seen in the back of the bus, that we  
18 have seen on the TV. So, and I always say that one  
19 of the reasons why the anti-smoking campaign for me  
20 works, is because people were able to see the images  
21 or the result of someone that was smoking.

22 And I think throughout the work that we have been  
23 doing led by you and your team, I think that we were  
24 able to see more educational business industry. So,  
25 hopefully you know, in this budget there is an

1  
2 increase of funding for the Vision Zero outreach  
3 funding.

4 In March 2019, the State approved a recent  
5 renewal and expansion of the speed camera program  
6 which has been operating in the city since 2014. As  
7 a result, DOT plans only installing 300 speed cameras  
8 in Fiscal 2020. And you also mentioned in your  
9 opening, in your presentation, but has a location  
10 been selected for this addition of cameras and if so,  
11 how were they selected?

12 POLLY TROTTEBERG: So, you are right, as I  
13 mentioned in my testimony and again, I want to thank  
14 the Council, because the work here that the Speaker  
15 and the Council did with the Mayor and the Governor  
16 to kind of rescue the program last summer when the  
17 state failed to reauthorize it was absolutely crucial  
18 and it has enabled us to keep on track to procure  
19 these next 300 cameras.

20 The expansion that we just got for the program up  
21 in Albany I have to say is very unprecedented. We  
22 will now have far and away the largest speed camera  
23 program in the United States and probably one of a  
24 handful of the largest in the world.



1  
2 We have always been careful to and the  
3 legislation requires us to install the cameras where  
4 we see the most crashes and speeding around schools.  
5 And we have had a very careful methodology there and  
6 tried to be very fair and thoughtful in where we have  
7 placed the cameras.

8 You know, we are putting together some scenarios  
9 of where we would install those next set of cameras,  
10 but I will also say we obviously are happy to hear  
11 from Council Members. If there are places where you  
12 think you know a school area could benefit from a  
13 camera, we want to hear about that.

14 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Okay, on pedestrian bollards  
15 on 42<sup>nd</sup> Street or the area, of course, we worked  
16 together as you know, with the 43<sup>rd</sup> I believe when  
17 the pedestrian bollards will installed, but still  
18 when I pass by through all those movie theaters at  
19 42<sup>nd</sup> Street to see that those movie theaters are not  
20 protected and vehicles continue to use as a weapon of  
21 mass destruction. First of all, where are we with  
22 the funding that we allocated for the pedestrian  
23 bollards and when will we expect you know, an  
24 increase of those pedestrian bollards to be installed  
25 in areas such as 42<sup>nd</sup> Street?

1  
2 POLLY TROTTEBERG: And I think, well, it was a  
3 \$100 million, was what we invested Elizabeth? And I  
4 think that work is now DDC contracts because  
5 particularly in areas like Times Square, you know,  
6 there is some complexities to installing that  
7 infrastructure. There is a lot of infrastructure  
8 underneath. I know we are starting to see bollards,  
9 for example I think they are going up at Saint  
10 Patrick's. Let me see if we have a 42<sup>nd</sup> Street. Oh,  
11 here we go, yeah Saint Patrick's is in construction,  
12 Rockefeller Center is, Time Square is in  
13 construction, but I don't think you will start to  
14 actually see the bollards until a couple of months  
15 from now, but that work is underway, as is the Flat  
16 Iron Plaza.

17 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Okay, that is one area that  
18 probably - well, lets see how we can also get a  
19 briefing.

20 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah, okay, yes, I think  
21 probably a separate briefing where we can go through  
22 all the locations with you would be helpful.

23 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: So, my last one is on  
24 opportunity for women in minority. How is DOT doing?  
25

1  
2 How can we do better on disseminating opportunity for  
3 women in minority to take advantage of DOT?

4 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah, I am going to talk a  
5 bit about that generally and then Elizabeth will pull  
6 out the more granular numbers and I am happy to say  
7 we were at least this year in the top five of city  
8 agencies and MWBE contract awards. It is one area  
9 where the Mayor and the Council have really  
10 challenged us to do better. And you know, we have  
11 particularly on the DOT - one challenge that all the  
12 big city capital agencies have is for better or for  
13 work, a lot of the large capital contracts go to the  
14 big construction firms in the city and there are very  
15 few of them that are women and minority owned.

16 We are doing a lot of work to try and bring and  
17 those firms together with subcontractors and to also  
18 help the subcontractors get in to understand how we  
19 operate to see what kind of opportunities there are  
20 for us. We are setting, you know, as I testified  
21 before, obviously, we are doing a very big expansion  
22 of our PED Ramp program and working with DDC; we are  
23 setting some very aggressive MWBE goals there. We  
24 think that's an area, PED Ramp work where we can  
25 bring in a lot of smaller women and minority owned

1 firms and give them some very big opportunities  
2 potentially as prime subcontractors and I think  
3 Elizabeth can give the full numbers here.  
4

5 ELIZABETH FRANKLIN: Sure. In FY 2019 so far for  
6 micro-purchases, our goal is 45 percent and currently  
7 we are at 60 percent.

8 For small purchases, our goal is 50 and we are  
9 currently at 52. And for our formal contracts we  
10 projected a goal of 23 percent and we are at 13  
11 percent so far.

12 Yeah, the micro-purchases is under \$20,000.

13 POLLY TROTTEBERG: No, no, these are our dollar  
14 amounts.

15 ELIZABETH FRANKLIN: \$33 million is the committed  
16 MWBE amount in the formal contract so far.

17 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: I would like to see how we  
18 can partner with some initiative where we can  
19 probably think about doing like an information  
20 section where we can you know, bring us let's say,  
21 the biggest one and the smallest one for whoever  
22 would like to hear on how to establish you know, some  
23 network. Because I feel that even though the city  
24 you know, we have that approach, there is still a lot  
25 more that has to be done.

1  
2 POLLY TROTTEBERG: We agree, there is more that  
3 needs to be done. We do a lot of informational  
4 sessions and one thing we have done for some of your  
5 colleagues, both Council colleagues and state elected  
6 colleagues, we can come to your districts  
7 particularly if you have local MWBE's who want to do  
8 business with the city, want to do business with DOT,  
9 want to figure out how to get their foot in the door.  
10 We are happy to come and bring our experts and sit  
11 down and help strategize and talk to them about ways  
12 that they can you know, get in on some city  
13 contracts.

14 We would welcome your help there because we do  
15 think we agree; we want to have better outreach to  
16 firms all over the city.

17 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Okay, will you play any role  
18 with a new law that will be mandated for the school  
19 bus?

20 POLLY TROTTEBERG: You know, we understand there  
21 is an agreement up in Albany. I am looking over  
22 this, I don't think we have seen the final bill  
23 language yet, so I am not sure. I think it is going  
24 to be largely a DOE program, but obviously, since we  
25 have experience with cameras, we will be ready to

1  
2 assist them in any way that they might need if they  
3 want that for sure.

4 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Okay, thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, now we have questions  
6 from Council Member Menchaca followed by Council  
7 Member Miller.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Thank you to the Chairs  
9 and I want to start; I only have three minutes here,  
10 so I want to start with any update you have on the  
11 LPI? The LPI program extending the ability for bikes  
12 to be able to use the leading pedestrian intervals.  
13 And there was a study that was done and if you can  
14 kind of speak to that, that would be great.

15 POLLY TROTTEBERG: We conducted a study; I think  
16 we looked at 50 intersections where we specifically  
17 signed and allowed cyclists to travel with the walk  
18 signal as opposed to the green signal for vehicles.  
19 One I am very familiar with in Brooklyn, which is  
20 right at Smith's Street and Atlantic, where a lot of  
21 cyclists gather, and we have not released the results  
22 yet. We are still working with NYPD and sort of  
23 putting out that final report, but I will just say  
24 this, I think I will characterize the result as  
25 encouraging.

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COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: That's great.

POLLY TROTTEBERG: I think you know, we felt good about what we saw there in there in terms of safety and you know, hopefully, we will have permission to put that report out soon.

COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Wonderful and I am looking forward that and I want to join you in that effort to get that data out. I will say this to the Chair and actually both Chair's today talked a little bit about LPI's and how those things that are coming into our communities make our intersections safer. This study allows us to kind of see bikes also utilizing that to make things safer for our riders and I'll be pushing for the piece of legislation to move forward out of committee and to pass it. And hopefully, that can help pressure the holistic administration coalition to release that information.

I think the other thing I want to talk a little bit about are the kind of mentions or lack of mentions on the BQX and if you can kind of give us a sense about what is happening in terms of DOT kind of preparing for anything. Most of the budget has been at EDC, but with the Deputy Mayor Alicia Glen

1  
2 leaving, kind of curious to see what's happened since  
3 then.

4 We are going to have a bigger public hearing  
5 later in the month and we are looking forward to  
6 having you and others talk a little bit about it.  
7 But if there is anything that you can kind of talk  
8 about in terms of budget.

9 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Right, no, and I think  
10 obviously we have a new Deputy Mayor Vicki Been, who  
11 has come in and I am scheduled to speak to her and  
12 sort of get up to speed. I think we will, you know,  
13 certainly the Administration will have more to say at  
14 the hearing that you are conducting later in the  
15 month.

16 I think the most recent milestone you sort of saw  
17 in BQX was a decision to go forward with an  
18 environmental impact statement and we have an expert  
19 on board at DOT, Chris Rones[SP?], who I think you  
20 know from his work.

21 He has come back to the agency and he is  
22 obviously someone well known in Brooklyn who worked  
23 on all the downtown Brooklyn efforts. So, Chris is  
24 spearheading this for us, and we look forward to  
25



1  
2 coming back in a couple of weeks I think with a lot  
3 more to say.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Wonderful, and the last  
5 thing I want to say are things I want to kind of  
6 point to are the Ferry's and thinking about Ferry's.  
7 Not just as the spots for connection to Ferry's but  
8 the infrastructure around it. Is there a sense of  
9 budget that you are thinking about that will help  
10 pedestrians get to Ferry's? I am thinking about Red  
11 Hook and Sunset Park, of course, I get the privilege  
12 of having two of these beautiful pieces of  
13 infrastructure. But if there is anything that you  
14 can kind of point to that looks at the connection and  
15 your connection with — you are working with DDC to  
16 think about a DOT component to connecting people to  
17 Ferry's.

18 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah, I mean and all the  
19 different Ferry landing's we go in with our bike and  
20 pedestrian teams and sometimes also our sort of  
21 transit teams, if there can be bus connections. And  
22 you know, try and see what we can do to sort of  
23 improve the landside connection piece. If there are  
24 particular things that Red Hook or Sunset Park you  
25 know, improvements you think we should be looking at,

1  
2 happy to come do that. You know, one area for  
3 example, we spend a lot of time improving the area  
4 out in the Rockaways where it was not safe and  
5 inviting for pedestrians to get to the Ferry but you  
6 know, if there is more work that you think we need to  
7 do in your district, happy to come take a look.

8 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, thank you. Council  
9 Member Miller.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Thank you to the Chairs.  
11 Good afternoon Commissioner. I was really all set to  
12 ask questions about congested pricing and bus  
13 redesign and so forth and then we get hit with BQX  
14 and Ferry's and I want to say that the theme of this  
15 years budget response from the Black Latino and Asian  
16 Caucus is equity.

17 And I just don't see the equity there that we are  
18 willing to spend exorbitant amount of monies and ten-  
19 dollar subsidies to duplicate services to communities  
20 that quite frankly don't need the subsidies and we  
21 fight for fair fares and we fight for equity in other  
22 areas there. This is just not what I was expecting  
23 to hear from you or the admin but let me divest him.

24 Talk a little bit about bus redesign, which I am  
25 very happy to hear about and just excited and want to

1 see what the city's efforts are in that part and  
2 particularly what role DOT will be playing in that.  
3

4 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah, and look we were very  
5 excited. We joined with the MTA, with Path away and  
6 Andy Byford I guess now is about two months ago the  
7 kickoff in Borough Presidents Katz's office and this  
8 is an area where DOT and New York City Transit are  
9 working together very, very closely. Looking at  
10 ridership, traffic patterns, roadway design, safety  
11 considerations. You know the New York City Transit  
12 is taking rightly a very deep dive now in all the bus  
13 routes. Which many of which as we all know haven't  
14 been changed in many cases since the 40's and 50's  
15 and the era where we did away with trolley cars in  
16 New York City and now we have a chance together to  
17 look at ridership patterns, look at growth patterns  
18 where we are seeing new development, new businesses  
19 and figure out you know particularly from the DOT  
20 point of view looking at roadway design. How we can  
21 in some cases straighten roots, make them faster,  
22 make them safer, and we are very, very excited about  
23 the Queens work.

24 And you did mention Council Member, congestion  
25 pricing and equity. I did just want to say, I think

1  
2 at least one good thing that came out of the  
3 congestion pricing negotiations up in Albany, my  
4 understanding is in agreement with the state on some  
5 more robust funding for fair fares and a number of  
6 new bus services.

7 So, at least there will some I think some good,  
8 for your district will help create some more  
9 affordable and faster journeys into the central  
10 business district.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: So, the good thing is and  
12 hopefully by virtue of the working group that we put  
13 together that we certainly invited you to be part of,  
14 but also, there is some expert advocates and others  
15 including myself who thought that in advance of  
16 congested pricing that there needs to be an  
17 independent commission or authority or agency that  
18 would oversee and a little disappointed to see in arm  
19 or a number of the MTA having oversight of the  
20 resources there and being a bridge and tunnel.  
21 Although they generate the majority of the revenue.

22 Is the City concerned or do you believe that the  
23 city from a plan and policy and accountability  
24 standpoint that we are equal partners in congested  
25

1  
2 pricing, considering the chain of command and who is  
3 at the top.

4 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Right, I don't know that I  
5 would say that we were equal partners. I don't think  
6 that's how the legislation got passed up in Albany.  
7 But I would say this, I do feel like we are partners  
8 and as I said in my testimony, the city and the MTA  
9 have been working well together. You know, Chairman  
10 Pat Foye I think has been very open and communicative  
11 and interested in city priorities. But I think  
12 Council Member that you are right, that as the  
13 congestion pricing policies get formed, the toll  
14 policies, the exemptions, I think all the questions  
15 that are going to be on the table. The city should  
16 band together and have a powerful voice and I know  
17 the leaders here on the Council will want to be a  
18 part of that as will the Mayor.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: So, you are talking about  
20 some of the curb side programs. There are a number  
21 of areas in outer boroughs that have obviously the  
22 responsibility of the curbs belong to the city.  
23 Sidewalks, homeowners, we have different programs  
24 that address that but there has not been a robust  
25

1 curbside program that kept up. So, homeowners are  
2 forced to do work on sidewalks and don't have curbs.  
3

4 I know in Queens; we have been waiting a number  
5 of years. I was told that it was done by community  
6 boards, but in South East Queens, we've been waiting  
7 a number of years and there has not been an equitable  
8 investment to service those homeowners considering  
9 that homeowners is a taxpayers steady revenue and  
10 very little in this budget reflects homeownership.  
11 And we are hoping that we could expedite and move  
12 that along and make that a more robust program around  
13 that area.

14 What I understand last year the contract  
15 defaulted or something and that kind of pushed back.  
16 I am hoping that we can them to Queens sometime in  
17 the near future. And I am sorry, just in the  
18 interest of time, I know we had also in the past had  
19 really good conversations and began some good  
20 conversation and brought in some I think, some really  
21 reputable MWBE contractors. General contractors  
22 wanted to know where that was going and I appreciate  
23 a lot of the entry level talk that we were talking  
24 about, but there are national firms that could  
25

1  
2 certainly do the work at these levels. I am hoping  
3 that we can continue, that is absolutely important.

4 And then finally, have a really realistic  
5 conversation about the viability of something like  
6 BQX and Ferry service and in terms of investment.

7 And it was a question I asked, and I continue to ask  
8 about the actual equitable distribution of how much  
9 real investment is going into bus lanes and  
10 technology around that. Synchronizing license and so  
11 forth and once again, I appreciate you being here.

12 That's my questions.

13 POLLY TROTTEBERG: I will try and get to as many  
14 of them as I can, and I think you started with curbs.  
15 And I hear you, it has been an area of frustration  
16 and it's interesting. I have gotten to go with the  
17 Mayor to Town Halls and almost all of Council  
18 districts now and it is something we hear time and  
19 again and it is a weird quirk of the way the laws of  
20 the sidewalks of the city. The owners own the  
21 sidewalks, the city owns the curbs, and it is not an  
22 area the city has made a lot of investments in in  
23 recent years. I take your point there.

24 I think it is something that is definitely ripe  
25 for further discussion in this budget process. You

1  
2 know, just one challenge I think we are facing. The  
3 city has such big capital needs right now and you  
4 know, I think as the Mayor said in his own budget  
5 statement, very much prioritizing NYCHA repairs,  
6 affordable housing, the borough-based jails. Those  
7 are some big items and trying to fit everything else  
8 in on top of that has you know, I think obviously is  
9 a source of discussion.

10 I do that the number here, Elizabeth just handed  
11 me the number. So, the City's Capital Investments on  
12 the Bus side, have been nearly half a billion  
13 dollars.

14 So, we are putting a lot of resources into this.  
15 I take your point though; I think there is more to be  
16 done. Certainly, more to be done in your district  
17 and one other piece of the sort of the congestion  
18 pricing partnership with the MTA. We formed a bunch  
19 of working groups on the infrastructure and tolling  
20 policy and you know, the legal things, I think all  
21 the things you expect. We have also created a  
22 working a working group called, Day One. Which is  
23 asking the question on day one, that congestion  
24 pricing comes into effect.



1  
2 You know, how will we be prepared, we in the MTA?  
3 What kind of bus service and other things what we  
4 have on the ground. So, there is an aggressive  
5 effort there to look at that question and obviously a  
6 district like yours is one where I think we will  
7 certainly want to make sure we have got some things  
8 on the ground.

9 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Council Member  
10 Koo. We were joined by Council Member Gibson and of  
11 course Council Member Koo.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Thank you. Thank you Chair  
13 Dromm and Chair Rodriguez. Especially with Chair  
14 Dromm, every day you are here. It depends on what  
15 time and thank you for Commissioner Trottenberg  
16 coming. I always admire your work. If you could  
17 rate your agency, your agency would receive a high  
18 rating from me.

19 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Thank you.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: So, I have two questions for  
21 you. Before I ask them, I have to give you some  
22 background first.

23 So, in my office, we always receive multiple  
24 complaints regarding a broken bus pad in our  
25 district. When we report these issues to DOT, we

1  
2 received the same response, there is no capital  
3 funding for bus repairs. Broken bus pads pose an  
4 imminent danger to the safety of the vehicles,  
5 pedestrians, and bicycles. Just as a pothole imposes  
6 safety hazards. These bus pads should be repaired  
7 with the same urgency as other broken infrastructure.

8       So, the question is, will the \$20.3 million  
9 increase in funding for roadway repair, maintenance  
10 and inspection, cover the repair costs for the bus  
11 pads in the city?

12       POLLY TROTTEMBERG: I think the roadway budget is  
13 typically done, that's in-house resurfacing. My  
14 understanding on the bus pads, I am just going to  
15 double check with the staff here, that we have  
16 traditionally done as a separate contract because it  
17 is concrete work. And I think you are right Council  
18 Member; I think we have not had a contract the past  
19 couple of years if memory serves.

20       And I think you are right; it is a good topic for  
21 this budget discussion because we agree. We think  
22 they are incredibly important for bus service for the  
23 safety of the roadways. I am just double checking.  
24 Right, maybe someone has some better news than what I  
25 just said.

1  
2       Alright, well, if you want to ask your next  
3 question. They are double checking on the bus pads.

4       COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Okay, so you will get back  
5 to me, right?

6       So, the second question I want to ask is about  
7 TSP. The Transit Signal Priority. You know,  
8 Downtown Flushing we have multiple bus lines, 20  
9 something lines and there is an undeniable need for a  
10 system to alleviate the traffic.

11       So, if TSP is working for us, it would be very  
12 nice, but somehow the city's roll out is at a very  
13 slow pace and places like Downtown Flushing, more  
14 than 20 buses are still suffering from severe traffic  
15 congestion.

16       So, the Council's request for TSP was not  
17 addressed in the Mayor's Executive Budget. But items  
18 such as upgrades in parking meters, parking meter  
19 features. Even though it is convenient, there is  
20 also an active measure on immediate issues, such as  
21 traffic congestion. So, why are we putting a total  
22 of \$7.5 million on parking meter upgrades when there  
23 are more pressing transportation priorities such as  
24 [INAUDIBLE 4:05:55]?

1  
2 POLLY TROTTEBERG: So, it a balance and I do  
3 want to say and you know, I take the Council's  
4 criticism that I think if you go back about five or  
5 six years, DOT was still learning how to do TSP and I  
6 think it was taking us a long time and it was costing  
7 us too much money.

8 We are now I think going at about four times the  
9 pace that we used to, and we found a lot of ways to  
10 streamline the engineering and I think be a lot  
11 smarter about it. And my understanding is that  
12 Flushing is one of the areas that we are  
13 prioritizing, given all the traffic challenges you  
14 have there.

15 In terms of the meter upgrades, I think just to  
16 sort of reiterate in my testimony. One of the  
17 reasons we think that is important, is in the long  
18 run, the system that I think will particularly get,  
19 an issue that we hear a lot about which is placard  
20 abuse and fair parking policy, is to have a fully  
21 automated electronic parking system. Where license  
22 plates are entered in. Where all our meters can read  
23 the plates and that will sort of take away, I think  
24 what has sometimes been kind of a discretionary  
25 element in terms of placard enforcement.

1  
2 You are right, it's going to cost some money to  
3 do that work, but I think it will actually pay big  
4 dividends in the long run in terms of congestion  
5 reduction in the city. But obviously something where  
6 you know, open to negotiation with the Council, if  
7 you all think we need to shift those priorities.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, thank you. I am sorry.  
10 Chair Rodriguez.

11 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Just a few more questions  
12 Commissioner. This one is related to the potholes.  
13 How are you doing today this year compared to last  
14 year and what challenges have DOT faced because of  
15 this past winter and how many more have to be done in  
16 the next few weeks or more in order to deal with the  
17 pothole that you know, we don't control climate  
18 changes and the tough winter created in our streets?

19 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah, and I think one of the  
20 - just to contextualize a bit, I think one of the  
21 things we are proud of and one of the success stories  
22 again, from the City and the Council is, a lot of  
23 that resurfacing work that we have done over the past  
24 five years has meant that overall we have seen a drop  
25 in potholes that need filling. Because I mean,

1 potholes, obviously are a symptom of roadways often  
2 that need major repair. So, I am looking at our  
3 numbers here for calendar year 2019. So far  
4 citywide, as of the 6<sup>th</sup>, we are up to 111,000 pothole  
5 fillings and you are correct, we are having a tough  
6 pothole season. When the weather turns cold and then  
7 warm and then cold, and you get a lot of rain, it  
8 definitely creates potholes.  
9

10 This is our season where we fill them  
11 aggressively, but it is also the season where going  
12 to the roads, I think one of the questions the  
13 Council is interested in is sort of repeat offender  
14 potholes. When we see a place where we come back  
15 year after year and we are seeing a lot of potholes  
16 in the same spot, that tells us that it is a roadway  
17 that needs resurfacing or in some cases  
18 reconstruction.

19 We try and look at those roads where we are  
20 seeing the repeat offenders as roads that generally  
21 probably need a more intensive level of  
22 reconstruction.

23 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Has DOT been looking at also  
24 the materials? The type of materials used for  
25 resurfacing again so that when the streets or the

1  
2 avenue are resurfaced that it doesn't have to be  
3 resurfaces let's say a year or two from there, but  
4 that it stay longer?

5 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah, this is a question I  
6 have had in the past. I mean, I think we feel like  
7 we, New York City, we use some of the very highest  
8 quality asphalt and as you know, we have our own  
9 asphalt plant which is actually a tremendous  
10 advantage for the city because we are not totally at  
11 the mercy of the marketplace.

12 In places where I think we see repeated failures  
13 again, I think it often has less to do with asphalt  
14 quality and more to do with that the underlying  
15 roadway conditions are poor and you know, one of the  
16 places I think we see those repeat offenders most  
17 often in places where there have been street cuts.

18 You know often when there has been DDC work or  
19 utility work and the roadway is cut into, it can be  
20 very hard to fully restore the integrity of the road  
21 and those are places where we are particularly often  
22 trying to focus our resurfacing work.

23 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: I'm going to bring some of  
24 those avenue and streets that I have in my district  
25 you know, to your team.

3 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Well, of course, as I would  
4 say this to you and all the Council Members. Of  
5 course, if you see places where you need us to get to  
6 work, bring them to us, bring them to the borough  
7 commissioners and we will put them on our rotation.

8 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Great, the 207 Bridge, I  
9 would like to see how you can look and talk to the  
10 Administration because again, with the rezoning of  
11 Inwood, 1,000 new units will be built in the next few  
12 years. I know that Councilman Cabrera also is  
13 helping engage with some developers in the other side  
14 to the Bronx but that bridge at 207 is old, it's to  
15 narrow, it's tough for drivers or buses when they  
16 pass by in the avenue to 207, so can you look and see  
17 if there is any assessment that can be done?

18 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah and let me see when it's  
19 potentially on the schedule for reconstruction and we  
20 are aware on both the northern Manhattan side and the  
21 Bronx side, lots more development coming, So, you  
22 are right to sort of point out that's a bridge we  
23 should take a look at.

24 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Sidewalk; who is responsible  
25 for sidewalks in the City of New York?



3 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Generally, it is the building  
4 owner. Sometimes the building owners is the City of  
5 New York but if it is a private owners, then the  
6 private owner is responsible for the sidewalk.

7 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: You think that the private  
8 owner or the business owner, they are responsible for  
9 the first three feet?

10 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Right, as I was saying with  
11 Council Member Miller, the city is responsible just  
12 for the strip of the curb because we like to do  
13 things in a complicated way. But the rest of the  
14 sidewalk is the responsibility of the building owner.

15 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: But the largest area is the  
16 responsibility of the City, right?

17 POLLY TROTTEBERG: No, the small area is the  
18 responsibility of the city. The large area is  
19 typically the responsibility of the building owner.

20 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: So, who is responsible for  
21 the sidewalk to be safe and basically used by  
22 pedestrians.

23 POLLY TROTTEBERG: I mean, again, it is the  
24 responsibility of whoever owned the building. The  
25 City I think, has an overall responsibility to try  
and facilitate safe sidewalks and now particularly to

1  
2 focus on making sure that sidewalks and pedestrian  
3 ramps are ADA compliant. But I think in a city this  
4 large, we need that participation from building  
5 owners as well because it is a multi, multi, billion-  
6 dollar job to keep all our sidewalks in the state of  
7 good repair.

8 I know the question has been asked from time to  
9 time, should the city just take over all the  
10 sidewalks and you know, that's something that could  
11 be legislated but the financial implications of that  
12 are just very profound.

13 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: My feeling is that there is  
14 to many agencies. It's like one agency throws it to  
15 the other one. Let's say when and again, probably if  
16 you stopped, they would know here it comes again one  
17 particular sample, 1 Sunglass Avenue 180 to 181<sup>st</sup>  
18 basically people are taking most of the sidewalk to  
19 put like goods in the streets to sell.

20 They also are using a space in the street. So,  
21 if we want to make the City more walkable, which is  
22 our agenda, you know, who is responsible to make  
23 those business owners accountable to be sure that  
24 most areas of the sidewalk are used for pedestrians.

1  
2 POLLY TROTTEBERG: That is actually Department  
3 of Consumer Affairs, has the jurisdiction over  
4 businesses when they encroach on the sidewalk how  
5 much they are allowed in terms of putting their goods  
6 out on the sidewalk. But we can be a part of that  
7 discussion to. We sometime work with them on this,  
8 but they have primary jurisdiction.

9 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Okay, Link NYC; even though  
10 it is the Department of Technology, because they also  
11 use sidewalk, does DOT play some role or coordination  
12 with the Department of Technology?

13 POLLY TROTTEBERG: I mean we certainly have  
14 worked and coordinated with them, particularly on the  
15 installation and the electrical work that needed to  
16 be done and worked with them in some cases on siting.  
17 But you know, a lot of those linked kiosks were  
18 installed in places that originally had been you  
19 know, from booths.

20 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: But Department of Technology  
21 is the one?

22 POLLY TROTTEBERG: I think its link is DoITT.  
23 DoITT is the ones who chiefly manage that franchise.

24 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: And the bus shelters?  
25

1  
2 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Bus shelters is city run  
3 through DOT and that's another one you know where we  
4 have a franchise contract.

5 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, and that franchise,  
6 like, are they replacing all those? Has a complete  
7 assessment been done in those cases?

8 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Oh, that's right, where we  
9 are having problem with the roofs. Can someone  
10 answer that one? Do we know the answer?

11 Sorry, we will have to get back to you on that  
12 Mr. Chairman. I know they were inspecting them all  
13 and I think they were pledging to do it pretty  
14 quickly but let's double check that they have done it  
15 all.

16 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, I think it's important  
17 because as you know after those cases that make it to  
18 the media, then we got to see other **[inaudible**  
19 **4:21:01]** that they were basically closed because  
20 there was some danger in the structure. So, whatever  
21 assessment -

22 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Right, I think it was in  
23 Staten Island where part of it had collapsed.

24 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: No, I saw mine at 168.  
25

3 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Right, and so they had taped  
4 a bunch of them up until they could make sure they  
5 were safe.

6 CO-CHAIR RODRIGUEZ: Okay, thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, we just have a follow  
8 up question from Council Member Miller.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Commissioner, when we  
10 were speaking here, I just received an email from  
11 some of my colleagues in South East Queens and  
12 Stateside, as well as in the Council and they were  
13 looking to facilitate a meeting to have a  
14 conversation about the Belmont Racetrack  
15 redevelopment and I don't know, there has been some  
16 conversation in the past. So, number one, the  
17 willingness to meet and secondly, what work has been  
18 done in the planning and design as it pertains to  
19 this impact on Eastern Queens?

20 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Happy to do that and we had  
21 obviously received correspondence. That's a state  
22 project, but we had received the request that the  
23 city be looking at some of the local traffic impacts  
24 in the city and we have agreed to do that and happy  
25 to come and update you all on that work.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Has anything begun just  
3 this far?

4 POLLY TROTTEBERG: I think they are still in the  
5 planning stages and we are again, looking at what  
6 potential impacts would be. Again, happy to come  
7 have the team talk to you all about it.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Okay, so, I just signed  
9 on and I guess you could expect it soon.

10 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Yeah, okay.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Thank you very much.

12 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, Commissioner, so just  
13 to go back to the Northern Boulevard issue, my Chief  
14 of Staff informs me that LPI's was supposed to be  
15 installed in the budget year 2018 by May of 2018. Is  
16 that part of this \$78 million in funding for Vision  
17 Zero?

18 POLLY TROTTEBERG: No, I mean the \$78 million is  
19 going to be for a capital project that we are going  
20 to be doing a few years from now. That's capital  
21 dollars, so we will now be starting the planning  
22 process for what will be the permanent capital  
23 changes. The LPI's is just signal work that we do as  
24 expense work.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, is the Capital project  
3 the ten islands that you are putting in?

4 POLLY TROTTEBERG: No, the ten islands we are  
5 putting in with our in-house sources. We haven't  
6 done the full design of the capital project yet.  
7 That is going to take a couple of years.

8 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I see, I see, okay. Alright,  
9 and then if I can also ask you one last question.

10 News stand kiosks; who is responsible to remove  
11 them? I have two or three of that either never  
12 opened or opened and then closed pretty quickly  
13 because it's outdated. Do you know how we get rid of  
14 them?

15 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Let us come talk to you about  
16 it. That is another one as you know that is sort of  
17 thorny and cross jurisdictional and involves DCA and  
18 sometimes also frankly City Hall, but certainly  
19 something. Lets come and see if we can figure out  
20 the solution on them.

21 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, because they have been  
22 vacant for maybe three or four years now.

23 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Okay.

24 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay thank you and I thank  
25 you for coming in. I look forward to continuing to

1  
2 work with you. Hopefully we can fix this situation  
3 at Travers Park and what can I say.

4 POLLY TROTTEBERG: We hear you Mr. Chairman. I  
5 think you have a commitment here on the city side, we  
6 will do everything we can to try and figure out  
7 Travers Park.

8 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, thank you Commissioner.  
9 Thank you to your team as well.

10 POLLY TROTTEBERG: Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Right, but the public will  
12 not give testimony until May 23<sup>rd</sup>. Yeah, okay, good.  
13 And so, with that, this meeting is adjourned at 3:12  
14 in the afternoon. Thank you. [GAVEL]

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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 1, 2018