

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES  
Of the  
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

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March 9, 2021  
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HELD AT: Remote Hearing (Virtual Room 1)

B E F O R E: Ydanis Rodriguez  
CHAIRPERSON

COUNCIL MEMBERS:  
Selvena Brooks-Powers  
Fernando Cabrera  
Ruben Diaz, Sr.  
Robert Holden  
Peter Koo  
Stephen Levin  
Mark Levine  
Carlos Menchaca  
I. Daneek Miller  
Antonio Reynoso  
Deborah Rose

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

Hank Gutman, Commissioner  
Department of Transportation

Joseph Jarrin, Executive Deputy  
Commissioner  
Department of Transportation

Rebecca Zach, Assistant Commissioner of  
Intergovernmental and Community Affairs  
Department of Transportation

Aloysee Heredia Jarmoszuk, Commissioner  
and Chair  
Taxi and Limousine Commission

Vincent Chen, Assistant Commissioner for  
Finance and Operations  
Taxi and Limousine Commission

Amanda Berman, Director  
Redhook Community Justice Center  
Center for Court Innovation

Ira Macner, Volunteer  
350 Brooklyn

Linda Nguyen, Senior Policy and Research  
Analyst  
Alliance for a Greater New York

Terri Carta, Executive Director  
Brooklyn Greenway Initiative



2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Can we start the  
3 livestream, please? Oh. Thank you. Sergeants, will  
4 you start the recording?

5 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Recording to the  
6 computer all set.

7 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Recording to the cloud  
8 started.

9 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Sergeant Sadowsky, you  
10 may begin with your opening statement.

11 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Thank you. Good morning  
12 and welcome to today's remote New York City Council  
13 hearing of the Committee on Transportation. At this  
14 time, would all Council members and Council staff  
15 please turn on their video? To minimize disruption,  
16 please place electronic devices on vibrate or silent  
17 mode. If you wish to submit testimony, you may do so  
18 at [testimony@Council.NYC.gov](mailto:testimony@Council.NYC.gov). Once again, that is  
19 [testimony@Council.NYC.gov](mailto:testimony@Council.NYC.gov). Thank you, Chair. We are  
20 ready to begin.

21 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you,  
22 Sergeants. And good morning and welcome, everyone,  
23 to the city Council transportation committee hearing  
24 on the fiscal 2022 preliminary budget and fiscal 21  
25 preliminary mayors Management Report. My name is

2 Ydanis Rodriguez and I have the privilege of chairing  
3 this committee. Before I get into the matter that we  
4 will be discussing on this budget today, I would like  
5 to say a few words in regards to the announcement  
6 that Mayor De Blasio made on reference to some  
7 financial support to a taxi medallion owner in the  
8 city of New York. Everyone knows that I-- and I  
9 have been probably one of the few Council members  
10 that have always stated giving all the credit to this  
11 administration and as someone that served with  
12 previous administrations and current administrations  
13 and we have seen the difference of the things that  
14 have happened, the things that we have accomplished  
15 under Mayor de Blasio's leadership. Things that we  
16 had never thought that we would be able to accomplish  
17 before. UPK, computers for all, criminal justice  
18 reform, more supports for the small businesses,  
19 helping tenants and building affordable housing. But  
20 I think that the announcement today should be seen  
21 only as a beginning. To share-- and we will hear  
22 from the TSA commission later on that with the  
23 millions of dollars and \$65 million that will be  
24 invested to help with a yellow taxi medallion, it  
25 will alleviate the crisis. The answer is no. And I

2 hope to continue working with my colleagues,  
3 especially, you know, that Speaker, but most  
4 important, we can also-- with our friend, Bill de  
5 Blasio and his team, to increase that commitment.  
6 \$20,000 will not help someone that has a debt of  
7 \$400,000. I think that there is a plan already  
8 percentage that came out from the yellow taxi  
9 medallion task force that will allow medallion owners  
10 by especially, you know, the individual medallion  
11 owner, 6000 of them to redefine the debt. We need to  
12 do it. We cannot take the employee or from the  
13 lenders or the brokers. We need to take the input  
14 and word especially with the individual medallion  
15 owners. So, again, I hope that we can continue a  
16 conversation with the Mayor's team to look at this  
17 number. This number cannot and will not bring the  
18 solution to the crisis of thousands of medallions  
19 that are parked in the garage and drivers that  
20 they're not making. So, hopefully, we can continue  
21 addressing this matter. Today, we are here to begin  
22 the fiscal 2022 budget process under very different  
23 circumstances and when we met last year. Tragically,  
24 nearly 30,000 New Yorkers have died due to the  
25 coronavirus in the lives of all New Yorkers have been

2 drastically altered by the and everyone we don't want  
3 a single New Yorkers to die, but most people who  
4 died, they were working class New Yorkers that didn't  
5 have the privilege to do in isolation in [inaudible  
6 00:04:45] where they help somebody. Families have  
7 been separated, jobs have been lost, and local  
8 businesses have been forced to shatter and the virus  
9 has laid bare many long-standing social injustice  
10 that have existed for decades. With the developments  
11 of three vaccines, there is a light at the end of the  
12 tunnel, however, as we are able to begin to return to  
13 a sense of normalcy, we must ensure the vaccine  
14 distribution is equitable and that inequality does  
15 not grow and that we also focus on these health  
16 conditions that affect mainly black, Latino, Asian,  
17 and working other poor New Yorkers. I would like to  
18 thank the city's essential workers, many of whom are  
19 from underserved minority communities. Without the  
20 work, our city would not be able to function. Thanks  
21 to their dedication and sacrifice, our trains and  
22 buses have continued to run. Our cops are able to  
23 drive medical staff to hospitals and deliver food to  
24 the needy. Our grocery stores remain stocked and our  
25 nurses and doctors have been able to save lives.

2 However, far too many workers have passed away,  
3 including more than 100 transit workers. I would  
4 like to take a moment of silence to recognize the  
5 honor the sacrifice of all these workers as well as  
6 the many thousands of New Yorkers who have fallen  
7 into the virus. Thank you. Through today's hearing,  
8 we hope the start of the budget process will lead to  
9 the adoption of the budget that is progressive,  
10 responsible, and fair to all New Yorkers, especially  
11 the poorest ones. The ones that gave the victory to  
12 this administration when he got the mandate to close  
13 the gap between the poor and the rich. The budget,  
14 we also hope, will effectively meet the cities need  
15 while helping to lead it through this pandemic. We  
16 will start by hearing testimony from the city  
17 Department of Transportation. Following the DOT, we  
18 will hear from the Taxi Limousine Commission and,  
19 like in the past, we will be conducting our hearing  
20 with the MTA on a different day due to a scheduling  
21 difficulty. Now, of course, this day should be  
22 happening in the next two weeks. The DOT's executive  
23 expense budget for fiscal 2022 is approximately 1.1  
24 billion. In addition, 10.4 billion is budgeted for  
25 the Department's capital program. We look forward to

2 the Commissioner updating the committee on the  
3 Department's effort to maintain and improve  
4 pedestrian safety and the city's [inaudible 00:08:10]  
5 infrastructure during this pandemic. Additionally,  
6 we hope the Department will discuss its four year  
7 capital plan, particularly in terms of its goals and  
8 priorities once we recover from this pandemic and its  
9 strategy to resume many project that has been halted.  
10 Finally, the Mayor has announced that the Open  
11 Restaurants program will become a permanent feature  
12 in New York City. We look forward to hearing how DOT  
13 plans to continue this program and how we will be  
14 carrying out equitable to all community businesses in  
15 need of additional space, especially targeting those  
16 communities that have suffered the most, that have  
17 the high numbers of residents with Covid and dying as  
18 a result of the Covid. Finally, after we hear from  
19 DOT, we will hear from the Taxi Limousine Commission  
20 in their report on the industry that has been  
21 devastated by the Covid 19 pandemic. Tragically,  
22 there was a 66 percent decline in the number of  
23 drivers on the street in December 2020 when compared  
24 to 2019 before the pandemic. DOT's proposed fiscal  
25 2022 preliminary budget is 54.7 million. The

2 committee hopes to hear from the commission on the  
3 effect of Covid 19 on the taxi industry and how the  
4 commission is helping to protect drivers from the  
5 effect of coronavirus and how we plan to help the  
6 industry recover, especially how they will be helping  
7 deliberate taxi bases in local communities that  
8 sometimes doesn't get to get the same connections as  
9 Uber and Lyft. Next, the committee anticipates  
10 hearing about how the commission is following through  
11 with the Council legislation to help provide  
12 struggling taxicab drivers with financial health and  
13 mental services. I will now ask committee counsel to  
14 go over some procedural items and swear in the team  
15 from DOT. And, before that, if it's possible, to  
16 recognize the Council members that have already  
17 joined us.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Chair.

19 I am Elliott later, counsel to the Transportation  
20 Committee of the New York City Council. We have been  
21 joined by Council members Deutsch, Diaz, Menchaca,  
22 Riley, Rose, Miller, Lander, Holden, Cabrera, and  
23 Koo. Before we begin, I want to remind everyone that  
24 you will be on mute until you are called on to  
25 testify when you will then be on muted by the host.

2 Please listen for your name to be called. I will  
3 periodically announce who the next panelists will be.  
4 During the hearing, if Council members would like to  
5 ask questions, please use the zoom raise hand  
6 function and I will call on you in order. Unless  
7 otherwise indicated by the Chair, we will be limiting  
8 Council member questions to five minutes, including  
9 answers. This hearing will be divided into three  
10 sections as the Chair mentioned. First, we will hear  
11 from the Department of Transportation followed by the  
12 TLC around 1 p.m., and, finally, members of the  
13 public around 2 p.m. I will now call on our first  
14 panelists from the Department of Transportation.  
15 Commissioner Hank Gutman, executive Deputy  
16 Commissioner Joseph Jarrin, and assistant  
17 commissioner for intergovernmental and community  
18 affairs, Rebecca Zach. I will now read the  
19 affirmation and then call on each of you to confirm  
20 your response allowed for the record. Please raise  
21 your right hand. Do you affirm to tell the truth,  
22 the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in your  
23 testimony before this committee and to respond  
24 honestly to Council member questions? Commissioner  
25 Gutman?

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2 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Sorry. I do.

3 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Deputy  
4 Commissioner Jarrin?

5 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: I do.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Assistant  
7 Commissioner Zack?

8 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: I do.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. You may  
10 begin your testimony when ready.

11 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Thank you very  
12 much. Good morning, Chair Rodriguez and Chair  
13 Rosenthal and members of the Transportation Committee  
14 and the Subcommittee on Capital Budgets. I Hank  
15 Gutman. I am the Commissioner of the New York City  
16 Department of Transportation. With me today are  
17 Joseph Jarrin, our Executive Deputy Commissioner, and  
18 Rebecca Zach the Assistant Commissioner of  
19 Intergovernmental and Community Affairs. Thank you  
20 for inviting us to testify on behalf of Mayor Bill de  
21 Blasio on the DOT fiscal year 2020 preliminary budget  
22 in the fiscal year 21 to 31 capital plan. I am  
23 honored to have the opportunity to serve as the DOT  
24 Commissioner during this unprecedented moment in our  
25 city's history. The DOT's work, it is no

2 exaggeration to say that the DOT's work touches every  
3 aspect of life in the city and is essential to the  
4 cities recovery from the Covid 19 crisis. In this  
5 final year of the de Blasio administration, we had  
6 DOT well help New Yorkers returned to work safely,  
7 receive our goods sufficiently, and enjoy access to  
8 more open space and to do all of that in an equitable  
9 fashion, as the Chair pointed out. I look forward to  
10 working with you, Chair Rodriguez, and the entire  
11 committee and the entire Council on our urgent work  
12 to build a recovery for all of us, focused on safety,  
13 equity, sustainability, and resilience. Today, I am  
14 testifying on a budget that roof the extraordinary  
15 challenges we face as a city and the countless ways  
16 the Covid 19 crisis has changed our lives since the  
17 agencies preliminary budget hearing one year ago  
18 today. In the years since, the DOT and the rest of  
19 our sister agencies have felt the impact of the virus  
20 directly on both our operations and our budgets and,  
21 of course, on a more important level, all New Yorkers  
22 have experienced the effect of the pandemic on our  
23 health and welfare in our lives. During this  
24 difficult year, DOT employees fell ill, had to  
25 quarantined, and, sadly, Solomon our ranks were lost

2 forever. We mourn the loss of colleagues at the DOT,  
3 along with other our frontline-- all other frontline  
4 city agencies and the MTA and we are grateful to all  
5 the essential workers who put their lives at risk  
6 each and every day. The DOT, in response to the  
7 pandemic, also transitioned many of our staff to the  
8 teleworking, redesigned all of our major operations  
9 for the Covid era, and worked closely with our union  
10 partners to ensure that the workforce remained  
11 socially distanced, well-equipped, and fully  
12 supported. The DOT also faced significant fiscal  
13 challenges due to the pandemic that will continue to  
14 impact our work this year and in the years to come.  
15 As the Mayor has that, the economic fallout caused by  
16 the pandemic hit the city budget hard. The city has  
17 lost 10.5 billion and projected tax revenue from  
18 fiscal year 20 to 22 and we are in the midst of a  
19 hiring freeze. But, despite the many operational and  
20 fiscal challenges posed by the pandemic, the women  
21 and men of DOT have performed remarkably well. As I  
22 said when the Mayor appointed me, the Department of  
23 Transportation just completed one of the most  
24 challenging transformative and productive years and  
25 its history. I made a mistake on that day and

2 referred to it as the Department of Transformation  
3 rather than transportation which the mayor picked on.  
4 Having been here for month now, I can say it was no  
5 mistake. This is the Department of Transformation.  
6 Even during the worst days of the crisis, the agency  
7 continued its essential functions, making  
8 infrastructure repairs, running the Staten Island  
9 ferry 24 seven. To combat a national trend in  
10 increased speeding as roadways emptied during the  
11 pandemic, the DOT continued to expand the speed  
12 camera program, and installing more speed cameras in  
13 2020 than in the first six years of the program  
14 combined with now over 1200 speed cameras active  
15 across 750 schools speed zones citywide. The DOT  
16 also responded to the needs of the moment, working  
17 hard to provide reliable and safe alternative modes  
18 of travel for New Yorkers, especially the essential  
19 workers who could not work from home. This agency  
20 installed its highest number ever of new protected  
21 bike lanes, 28.9 miles, to enhance cycle and safety  
22 is more New Yorkers are choosing to bike. And it  
23 installed a record number of new bus lines, 16.3  
24 miles, to shorten commute times for bus riders, many  
25 of whom are essential workers. The working in

2 partnership with Lyft, the DOT expanded the city bike  
3 network into upper Manhattan in the South Bronx with  
4 locations at multiple medical facilities. The system  
5 now has over 20,000 bikes and nearly 1300 stations,  
6 more than double the size of the system at its launch  
7 in 2013 and city bikes critical worker membership  
8 program has provided more than 960,000, almost a  
9 million, free city bike rides to over 19,200 critical  
10 workers to date. Under the Mayor's leadership and in  
11 partnership with the Council and other city agencies,  
12 DOT created multiple new programs to reimagine our  
13 streets in response to the pandemic. Answering the  
14 calls for many of you in the Council and New Yorkers  
15 at large, the DOT created 83 miles of open streets.  
16 83. This program is the largest in the nation and it  
17 gave New Yorkers space to socially distanced and  
18 safely get outside during the pandemic. That DOT  
19 launch to be Open Restaurants program through which  
20 over 11,000 restaurants were able to set up outdoors  
21 on the city's roadways and sidewalks wall indoor  
22 dining was banned are limited. This popular program  
23 supported the city's beloved-- I would say unique--  
24 restaurant industry and saved over 100,000 jobs. The  
25 DOT also established the Open Storefronts program and

2 allowing businesses to use space outside to conduct  
3 business and keep customers safe as they shop. The  
4 agency also allowed schools to use additional outdoor  
5 space to keep our kids safe through the outdoor  
6 learning program and, starting this month, thanks to  
7 the Council's leadership, art and cultural groups  
8 will begin holding events on designated streets  
9 through the Open Culture program. Together, these  
10 programs have brought New Yorkers much-needed joy and  
11 relief in respite during this difficult time and,  
12 again, it is no exaggeration to say that we have been  
13 transforming the streets of the city and how we use  
14 them. So, now we turn to recover. Some of these  
15 historic changes to our streets we intend to make  
16 permanent fixtures in our city. As the Mayor  
17 announced and the Council codified in local law 114  
18 of 2020, we are working to design the legal and  
19 operational structure for a permanent Open  
20 Restaurants program with a goal of having it in place  
21 before the end of this year. That is, before the end  
22 of this year. Before the Mayors term has expired.  
23 And mine. This budget provides critical funding for  
24 the permanent programs environmental review. In the  
25 Mayor's State of the City address set the table for

2 an even more ambitious year to come as the Mayor  
3 announced we are creating a permanent Open Streets  
4 program. This year, many of the Open Streets from  
5 2020 will return and we will open applications for  
6 new streets with a focus on local partner management  
7 and support, as well as equity and inclusion. We  
8 will also continue to prioritize accessibility and  
9 work towards creating a more accessible city for all.  
10 The Mayor believes, and I strongly concur, that if  
11 you give people more and more attractive alternatives  
12 to the car culture, they will use them and we will  
13 continue to support the increased number of New  
14 Yorkers traveling around the city by bike. As the  
15 Mayor announced, we are creating bridges for the  
16 people which will offer expanded cycling  
17 infrastructure on the iconic Brooklyn and Queens  
18 Borough bridges. We will install five new bike  
19 boulevards across the city, streets designed to give  
20 bicycles travel priority and to put cyclist safety  
21 first and, as the Chair knows, on my first day of  
22 Commissioner, the Mayor and I committed to installing  
23 10,000 new bike parking racks by the end of 2022.  
24 10,000 racks providing 20,000 additional bike parking  
25 spaces citywide and it was both an honor and a

2 privilege to have the Chair and join us in the Bronx  
3 last Friday up on Pelham Parkway as we unveiled some  
4 of the first of those newly installed racks and, as I  
5 said at the time, those were six racks, but they were  
6 symbolic of the more than 300 that were installed  
7 simultaneously during the week all over the city. To  
8 build a more equitable recovery, as the Mayor  
9 announced, we will create new public spaces in more  
10 than 30 of the neighborhoods hit hardest by Covid 19.  
11 These spaces will help support small local  
12 businesses, foster community ties, provide space for  
13 arts and culture, and enhance roadway safety. We  
14 will also continue expanding micro mobility options  
15 deeper into the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens,  
16 including some more low income communities and  
17 communities of color. In partnership with Lyft, we  
18 will expand city bike further into the Bronx, a story  
19 a, Sunset Park, and upper Manhattan, covering the  
20 entire borough of Manhattan by the end of the year  
21 and, under the leadership of the Council, we are  
22 launching an E scooter pilot in the Eastern Bronx  
23 neighborhoods from East Chester and Co-Op City to  
24 Throgs Neck and Soundview this spring, bringing this  
25 new mode of transportation, which has been popular

2 and successful in various other cities, two and 18  
3 square-mile area home to over 570,000 residents.  
4 This budget reflects the cost for the pilots  
5 administrative needs, as well as the projected  
6 revenue from the pilot. And while 2020 was a  
7 difficult year for Vision Zero, there were  
8 encouraging signs, including a record low number of  
9 pedestrian deaths on New York City's streets. For  
10 the first time since records began, fewer than 100  
11 pedestrians were killed. Obviously, one is too many,  
12 but this was one relative bright spot in an otherwise  
13 challenging year. Unfortunately, reckless behavior  
14 such as speeding and unlicensed operation led to an  
15 increase in the number of motorcyclists and motor  
16 vehicle occupants killed in 2020. This year we will  
17 double down on our reference to enhance Street safety  
18 and public outreach and we will follow the data to  
19 make the city streets safer. We will continue to  
20 install record numbers of bike lanes and bus lanes  
21 and we will pursue state authorization to keep our  
22 life saving speed cameras on 24 seven, critically  
23 important. Together, this urgent work will help our  
24 great city come back from this terrible crisis better  
25 than ever. We are thankful for the Council's ongoing

2 partnership and I must say, on a personal level, I  
3 look forward to it going forward this year as we work  
4 towards a recovery. As the Mayor said, recovery for  
5 all of us.

6           Now, I will give a brief overview of the  
7 DOT's proposed 1.1 billion expense budget, as well as  
8 our proposed 19.7 billion fiscal year 21 to 31  
9 capital plan and discuss how we found savings to  
10 ensure we can continue meeting our mission and  
11 following through on our urgent work. Starting with  
12 the expense budget, the 1.1 billion expense budget  
13 includes-- and there is a pie chart in my testimony  
14 if you find it easier to follow along there. The 1.1  
15 billion includes 364 million for traffic operations,  
16 including signals, streetlights, and parking. 196  
17 million for roadway maintenance, 108 million for  
18 bridge maintenance and inspection, 119 million for  
19 transportation planning and management, including  
20 installation of street signs and roadway markings.  
21 98 million for ferry operations and maintenance and  
22 247 million for other DOT operations and  
23 administration, including sidewalk management and  
24 inspection. The proposed 19.7 billion fiscal year 21  
25 to 31 capital plan includes 10.2 billion for bridge

2 reconstruction and rehabilitation, 3.6 billion for  
3 Street reconstruction, 1.8 billion for resurfacing,  
4 2.3 billion for sidewalk and pedestrian ramp repair  
5 and reconstruction, 487 million for the Staten Island  
6 ferry, 871 million for streetlights and signals, and  
7 538 million for the facilities and equipment needed  
8 to support the DOT use operations. Context about our  
9 budget and how we were able to identify savings, as  
10 Commissioner Trottenberg testified last year. While  
11 the DOT's operating budget is 1.1 billion, over 50  
12 percent of that comes from state and federal grants.  
13 The capital budget, known as IFA funds, and funds  
14 that support revenue-generating programs-- that is  
15 funds spent to generate funds such as parking meter  
16 operations and automated traffic enforcement. Again,  
17 the pie chart included in my printed testimony gives  
18 you a graphic demonstration of the point. Thus,  
19 making cuts in these points of the budget would  
20 generate expense budget savings. Out of the  
21 approximately 480 million remaining, large portions  
22 are relatively fixed costs such as the electric bill  
23 for streetlights and signals and the leases on DOT  
24 facilities or support the inspection and maintenance  
25 of the essential infrastructure on which all Street

2 users rely and which it is our obligation to keep it  
3 safe. You can find additional information about how  
4 we use our city tax levy funds in the next chart on  
5 page 12 of my printed testimony which, again, shows  
6 the breakdown. To respond to the economic fallout  
7 from the pandemic since the April 20 financial plan,  
8 the DOT has found targeted savings of over 125  
9 million in fiscal years 21 and 22. Many Marquis DOT  
10 programs had to sustain cuts, including, sadly,  
11 Fission Zero where we identified for fiscal year 21  
12 and 22 with items such as reduced spending on roadway  
13 markings due to current contractor capacity, reduced  
14 media spending, and a delay in filling some of the  
15 employment positions. While we do not take the  
16 savings slightly, with a total of 2 billion spent on  
17 Fission Zero thus far, I total investment of 3  
18 billion by this administration, our commitment to  
19 eliminating traffic fatalities and serious injuries  
20 remain steadfast. Safety is our top priority on this  
21 and everything else. We had to take a hard look at  
22 our budget and prioritize, identifying land spending  
23 that, while important, could be delayed. And though  
24 the pandemic added a variety of new operational  
25 costs, it also led to some savings. In the

2 preliminary budget, nearly 12 million of OTPS funding  
3 reductions were taken in fiscal year 21 and 22 for  
4 items such as delays to the drainage study with the  
5 DEP and savings from reduced telephone and printer  
6 usage, as well as 6 million in fiscal year 21 savings  
7 due to hiring delays and attrition. Additionally,  
8 given the success of the city bike program and surges  
9 in ridership, we realized over \$500,000 more than  
10 originally expected in revenue for fiscal year 21.  
11 For DOT's capital budget, we rolled out over 1  
12 billion from the 21 to 24 period to the 25 to 31  
13 period. This is largely comprised of funding for the  
14 streets and bridges programs while keeping funds  
15 available for critical near-term work. Now to the  
16 capital plan. As we work towards recovery, I am  
17 happy to say that the Mayor announced last week that  
18 the city is restarting 17 billion in major capital  
19 projects, including a significant number of DOT  
20 projects. These projects will build the future of  
21 this city and improve the lives of New Yorkers for  
22 generations to come. Again, the Department of  
23 Transformation. We are eager to restart some of our  
24 projects and to continue our work on others. This  
25 year, the DOT has funded for 910 lane miles of

2 roadway resurfacing, continuing our sixth straight  
3 year of record investment in the roads. And we  
4 continue to work with our contractors and partners at  
5 DDC on our most critical capital projects. These  
6 include streetscape improvements by the Rockaway  
7 Ferry and one of the most critical segments of the  
8 Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway, creating a safe,  
9 separated bike path connecting Sunset Park to Red  
10 Hook and Gowanus via Hamilton Avenue. We also expect  
11 to begin construction on the next phase of our  
12 Atlantic Avenue Great Streets project which will  
13 continue important safety improvements along the  
14 corridor and introduce protected bike paths along the  
15 new planet median. We will also begin construction  
16 on the West 79th Street Rotunda complex and 79th  
17 Street bridge over Amtrak in Manhattan this year, a  
18 complex project that includes rehabilitating seven  
19 bridge structures, the landmark rotunda itself, and  
20 more. And we are continuing other essential  
21 bridgework, including upcoming repairs on the BBQ he,  
22 as well as continuing monitoring and planning for  
23 maintaining a state of good repair along that entire  
24 corridor and, by the way, I should add we are also  
25 looking at other bridge structures in need of repair.

2 The BQE is a prominent example, but it is certainly  
3 not the only one in the city.

4 Conclusion. While we face significant  
5 fiscal and operational challenges due to the  
6 pandemic, I am confident that DOT is creative and  
7 resourceful workforce will make the most of our  
8 robust resources. We will continue to maintain and  
9 improve our infrastructure, manage the city streets,  
10 I run the Staten Island ferry and we will continue  
11 implementing transformational, pedestrian, bike, bus,  
12 and safety projects that will support the city's  
13 recovery and improve the quality of life of New  
14 Yorkers for years to come. And if I may be allowed  
15 one personal note, in my month as Commissioner of the  
16 DOT, I want to say that this is the most  
17 extraordinary collection of women and men I have ever  
18 had the privilege to work for. They are smart, they  
19 are dedicated, they are committed to making life  
20 better for all New Yorkers and I am proud to be  
21 associated with this department and being put into a  
22 position where I can work with this extraordinary  
23 group of people. So, I would like to thank the  
24 Council for the opportunity to testify before you  
25 today and I look forward to working with all of you

2 in this final year of the de Blasio administration to  
3 create a recovery for all of us and to help this  
4 great city come back better than ever. I would now  
5 be happy to answer any of your questions.

6 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you,  
7 Commissioner. It has been also a great honor to  
8 connect with you, I want to be able to share a lot of  
9 good ideas that we all have to make the city the most  
10 pedestrian and cycle is friendly and the whole nation  
11 and I know that, you know, having a great  
12 conversation with you and being, as you said in the  
13 press conference in the Bronx, I know that we have a  
14 lot of work to do ahead of us in the next couple of  
15 months. But, also, thank you for your service in  
16 your previous job that you had and, you know,  
17 welcome, again, this hearing. I opened to continue  
18 to work with you and, as you say, with [inaudible  
19 00:35:37]. So, I have a few questions.

20 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Yes.

21 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: But the first one  
22 is related to [inaudible 00:35:48] during Covid 19  
23 recovery. Can you speak on how the [inaudible  
24 00:35:55] by the state governor in the Mayor impact  
25 the DOT project?

2                   COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Sure. We had a  
3 number of projects that we had to put on hold. I  
4 mean, the effort was not to put on hold things that  
5 were time sensitive and critical, but there were a  
6 lot of projects where planning was delayed, execution  
7 was delayed and, as I said in my testimony, this is  
8 something that we are looking forward to coming back  
9 to full force now. The Mayor has given the word to  
10 put on our track shoes. We got in aggressive list of  
11 commitments to meet by the end of the year and now  
12 that the pause is over, we are determined to get  
13 there.

14                   CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: How does DOT been  
15 able to mobilize to ensure that it keeps the  
16 construction project in the important Council  
17 initiatives [inaudible 00:36:53] plan get completed?

18                   COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Absolutely. Well,  
19 with respect to the master plan, the agenda for this  
20 year is to come up with a plan to get that done and  
21 we have the team working on that and we are ready to  
22 be and we will meet that commitment. That is  
23 something that we take very seriously and we will get  
24 it done.

2 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. And as you  
3 say that DOT has been able to start taking back  
4 [inaudible 00:37:27] that they were closed as a  
5 result of the Covid 19 and you addressed your  
6 commitment or the agency commitment also to work on  
7 [inaudible 00:37:41] the bridge that we have, the  
8 three bridges that you can say that they are in worse  
9 condition [inaudible 00:37:50] and the one that needs  
10 more attention?

11 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Chair Rodriguez,  
12 you are breaking up some in the transmission, but I  
13 think you asked what bridges-- I mean--

14 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Bridges in worse  
15 condition and that we have today in New York City.  
16 The bridges being able to give it the attention of  
17 the investment [inaudible 00:38:18].

18 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: So, we are in the  
19 process. I have asked our bridges group to come up  
20 with bridges other than the BQE, which is a series of  
21 bridges in relevant parts that we know about and that  
22 we are working on, but I have asked our bridges group  
23 to come up with an identification of other bridge is  
24 that require attention and I am awaiting the  
25 response, but we will certainly keep you informed

2 and, again, this is a priority. We need to identify  
3 the bridges that require our attention. And we will  
4 certainly keep you, as Chair, and the Committee  
5 advised on that.

6 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. And, if it's  
7 possible, so I would like for you to get your team to  
8 look at the 207 bridge in my district up town. And  
9 not necessarily-- I don't know, again, what is the  
10 condition of the bridge, but I know that with major  
11 rezoning, that things got-- the state law gave the  
12 okay to go ahead and many projects that are ahead of  
13 us including a big one in one [inaudible 00:39:38]  
14 bridge and that bridge-- again, I don't know about  
15 the condition, but I know that the bridge is  
16 [inaudible 00:39:45] for the numbers of units that we  
17 have been having in the Manhattan side--

18 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Yep.

19 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Band the 207 bridge  
20 connecting Manhattan and the Bronx [inaudible  
21 00:39:56] the condition and if it is possible to  
22 include that bridge and a

23 where we need to build a new one that  
24 will be much wider than the narrow one that we have  
25 today.

1 COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

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2 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACH: I took  
3 note.

4 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Yeah. Chair  
5 Rodriguez, we will make sure that that is on the list  
6 that we look at and we will be in touch.

7 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Now, on  
8 Vision Zero in the public awareness campaign funding  
9 that we have been together and the Council, again,  
10 was able to persuade the administration to invest in  
11 put like \$5 million for the Vision Zero. [Inaudible  
12 00:40:39] include a reduction of 2 million for Vision  
13 Zero outreach campaign in fiscal 2022. What is the  
14 current level of Vision Zero public awareness funding  
15 and the outreach?

16 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Yeah. Let me find  
17 those numbers for you. It is interesting that you  
18 raise that issue. We are having active conversations  
19 within the agency as recently as this morning about  
20 what we might be able to do. Mr. Jarrin is shaking  
21 his head because he and I had the conversation. What  
22 we might be able to do to find a savings somewhere  
23 else that we can restore that funding. The current  
24 media public awareness funding for fiscal year 2022  
25 is 3 million and, starting in fiscal year 2023, the

2 baseline will be 5 million, but if the Chairs point  
3 is that this is critically important in terms of  
4 safety and an important component of anything we are  
5 doing in that regard, I personally agree completely  
6 and we are going to see what we can do to try and  
7 restore some of that funding. Again, it was the  
8 challenge of Covid and trying to come up with the  
9 savings that were required, but this is clearly an  
10 important item.

11 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: I don't think  
12 that-- the other thing is because of the Covid, it's  
13 like we will assume that the city should be leading  
14 the effort to invest in that in the outreach  
15 initiative every year and we, at the Council have  
16 been the ones that have been fighting to restore this  
17 funding. So, this is like the budget dancing cycle.  
18 Here we are hoping that we can negotiate and we have  
19 to celebrate that we got something. So, we  
20 understand that piece and that is the culture of New  
21 York City, but I just know that in Vision Zero, one  
22 of the most important policies of this  
23 administration, the week cannot be waiting for the  
24 next hearing on this budget for the [inaudible  
25 00:43:10] keep pushing that they should immediately.

2 And now, that is my suggestion. [Inaudible 00:43:17]  
3 complete the budget at least is equal as it was for  
4 the one that we will be finished doing.  
5 Commissioner, can you-- and, again, I don't know if  
6 you have that information with you, but if you don't  
7 have it, your team can show it later on, can you  
8 provide us with a breakdown of the outreach funding  
9 and specifically for media [inaudible 00:43:46] and  
10 how that media has included ethnic media.

11 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Sure. I can  
12 certainly get you that breakdown. I have a partial  
13 breakdown here, but let me get you more complete  
14 numbers on that.

15 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: I can  
16 follow up.

17 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Yeah.

18 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: But if you  
19 something that you can start sharing, whatever you  
20 right now, then we can add the additional and that  
21 would be good.

22 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Sure. Let me see.  
23 I have got, in terms of fiscal year 21-- this would  
24 be from the fall of 2020, and estimated amounts from  
25 the spring of 2020, we have got contract labor,

2 production and research was 367,000. Outdoor media  
3 was 658,000, radio media was 803,000, print media was  
4 143,000, digital and social media was 30,000, and the  
5 breakdown in terms of the outdoor media, the outdoor  
6 advertising, I have got a borough breakdown. It was  
7 13 percent in Brooklyn, 20 percent in the Bronx, 29  
8 percent in Manhattan, 18 percent in Queens, and 19  
9 percent in Staten Island. But, again, if there are  
10 other details you are interested in, Rebecca can get  
11 you whatever further information you're looking for.

12 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: You are  
13 looking for an ethnic media breakdown and we will  
14 follow up.

15 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Oh. I'm sorry. I  
16 didn't hear ethnic. Oh. So you want to know--  
17 Yeah. We can certainly get you that.

18 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: There is a big  
19 problem that we inherited in New York City,  
20 Commissioner. Again, it's not on you. It's not on  
21 me, but we need to break the ceiling, break the wall  
22 and address that.

23 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Absolutely.

24 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: It is-- And,  
25 again, the I think that with the executive order that

2 the Mayor put in place which is one of the first  
3 times we have had in New York City that mandates this  
4 agency to invest, I think, 30 percent on advertising  
5 and ethnic media, it's a [inaudible 00:45:57] right  
6 now because sometimes agencies think that they have  
7 covered [inaudible 00:46:02] on the Latino piece. If  
8 they put it on Univision, Telemundo, [inaudible  
9 00:46:07] and two other ones is covered and we have a  
10 big entity that is getting most of the advertisement  
11 and for the 11 years, that personal one is winning  
12 all of the RFPs, [inaudible 00:46:25] and when you  
13 look about any media people who read those local  
14 newspapers or see those local-- watch TV, zero,  
15 Commissioner, and my district.

16 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Wow. Okay. So,  
17 we--

18 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: And many times,  
19 over and over, I had talked to your team and the  
20 [inaudible 00:46:43], but they had to come back to  
21 say, let's put a conversation. We [inaudible  
22 00:46:47] the local one so that we can connect it  
23 with that opportunity. So, with the [inaudible  
24 00:46:53] and the team, whatever we can look at it, I

2 can tell you the answer would be that in most of the  
3 ethnic media is zero investment.

4 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: Okay.

5 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Yeah. We will  
6 absolutely make that a priority, Chair Rodriguez.  
7 And I appreciate you bringing that to our attention  
8 in making sure we do.

9 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: And, again, that's  
10 Vision Zero. We have a big issue right now and,  
11 again, the only Mayor that has made an executive  
12 order mandating that is Mayor de Blasio. I give a  
13 lot of credit, but from his decision and where that  
14 money is going, there's a big gap and there's some  
15 people taking advantage and it's really easy to make  
16 those numbers. So, let's hopefully we can--

17 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Absolutely. We  
18 will figure out why-- Yeah. I mean, the numbers I  
19 was shown show an investment, but if it's not  
20 reaching your district and people aren't aware of it,  
21 then it is something we need to pay attention to, so  
22 we will.

23 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: And my district, as  
24 we live in the 21 century and--

25 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Yeah.

2 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: You know, 35  
3 percent of New Yorkers-- more than 35 percent of New  
4 Yorkers has been born and raised in another country.  
5 And [inaudible 00:48:13] Ecuadorian, they're  
6 Colombian, they're Dominican, they're Puerto Rican--  
7 that they watch that in their media. There's people  
8 that are doing TV from before I [inaudible 00:48:25].  
9 No one is approaching those local ethnic medias to  
10 say how can we also connect, you know, with those  
11 individuals who follow and pay taxes also to have  
12 that opportunity to be connected with it. But,  
13 again, thank you for, you know, being open and I will  
14 definitely welcome to be following up with your team.

15 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Absolutely. Thank  
16 you.

17 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Pothole repairs,  
18 how can we look at that actually with the pandemic?  
19 The average time to close a pothole work order  
20 improved from 2.5 [inaudible 00:49:06] of fiscal 2021  
21 compared to the same period last year, according to  
22 the MMR, DOT repaired 27,920 potholes in the first  
23 four months of fiscal 2021. How much funding does  
24 DOT allocate for pothole repair? How many potholes  
25

2 does the department plan to fix this year and how  
3 many were done last year?

4                   COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Okay. We have  
5 allocated over 25 million for this fiscal year. You  
6 know, we respond to pothole demand, so the number is  
7 not fixed. It's a response to the demand when it is  
8 driven by various factors. Obviously, the weather,  
9 freeze thaw cycles, wherein crack on the pavement,  
10 and the state of the roadway to begin with, whether  
11 there was long term capital investment. We are also  
12 working to minimize the response to potholes and  
13 potholes. We have a program underway to try and do  
14 that. And as the spring, I hope, may be approaching,  
15 we are gearing up for pothole season and, again, we  
16 are happy to-- we do keep track of the pothole  
17 repairs. We do have the numbers on an ongoing basis  
18 and we prioritize roadways with chronic potholes for  
19 resurfacing and, again, we are happy to provide a  
20 report and to provide data in whatever form you would  
21 find useful as we make our progress through the  
22 spring.

23                   CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. I do you  
24 have any, as you look for \$25 million for 2022, do

2 you have also the numbers of how many potholes were  
3 repaired in 2021?

4 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: The first four  
5 months of fiscal 21 I do have a number. It was  
6 27,920 potholes.

7 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. So, let's  
8 continue sharing, again, what every month because, as  
9 you know, the even those [inaudible 00:51:27] people,  
10 this is one of the things that all New Yorkers are  
11 looking. You know, potholes, there are repeat  
12 offenders and where do we have to focus more and the  
13 type of materials that are used in order to be, you  
14 know, those potholes don't come back every month,  
15 even though we know that many of them is impacted by  
16 the--

17 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Absolutely.

18 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: the MWBE  
19 percentage. Can you provide the committee with a  
20 minority and women opportunity percentage for DOT  
21 contracts for fiscal 2020 and for fiscal 2021?

22 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Yes. Let me find--  
23 They are in my notes. Let me find them. Sorry.  
24 Give me one moment. I know I saw it. Yeah. Thanks.  
25 Okay. So, for fiscal year 20, contracts by

2 ethnicity, a total of 331 MWBE contracts of which 27  
3 were awarded to black-owned businesses, 65 Hispanic,  
4 165 Caucasian female, and 74 Asian. I also have the  
5 dollar amounts. And then, in fiscal year 21, we have  
6 got 152 contracts. 10 to black-owned businesses, 26  
7 to Hispanic, 33 to Caucasian female, and 83 to Asian.  
8 And I have the dollar amounts, as well. If you'd  
9 like, we could provide that to your office.

10 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. And again--

11 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Yeah.

12 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: As one area that  
13 also we're looking to see how we can make improvement  
14 and--

15 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Absolutely.

16 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Do you, by any  
17 chance, have those numbers for those who got the  
18 contracts also by their address? So like you can  
19 also share with us where are those entity location  
20 [inaudible 00:54:09] and community board and Council  
21 District?

22 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Yeah. I don't have  
23 that data handy, but we can certainly look into it.  
24 And as to the priority, Chair Rodriguez-- and I  
25 think you and I may have discussed this as we were

2 out in the cold in the Bronx, this, for us, is a very  
3 high priority. This is something-- I will be been  
4 here a few weeks. We've already had a number of  
5 meetings on this subject exploring what we're doing  
6 and what we can do better. And this is certainly a  
7 priority, obviously, for the Mayor and for this  
8 department, as well. So, we will get you the data  
9 and it is something that we realize we need to do  
10 better on.

11 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. I take your  
12 word and to dig your commitment. We are against the  
13 clock and [inaudible 00:54:59]. I don't have one  
14 person, as you know-- I can say that from a teacher,  
15 as a grassroots organizer, I know a lot of people in  
16 my community. I haven't [inaudible 00:55:10] that  
17 has said I-- and I have many who are women and  
18 minority certified. I haven't met anyone from my  
19 community that has I've been able. I've applied. I  
20 went to the workshop and I was selected as one of  
21 those that did [inaudible 00:55:30] and many city  
22 agencies. So, hopefully-- I'm more than happy to  
23 work with you and your team.

24 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Yeah. We have a  
25 good group working on it and I know that they are

2 trying lots of innovative things, but, again, if you  
3 have got suggestions, we are ready to hear them.

4 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: So, how do you  
5 feel-- I have two or three questions before I give  
6 it to my colleagues. [Inaudible 00:55:57] how are we  
7 doing us today when it comes to crashes, [inaudible  
8 00:56:04] and at this moment with DOT, the agency  
9 that is [inaudible 00:56:12] Vision Zero. How are we  
10 doing today compared in these months this year  
11 compared by [inaudible 00:56:22] 2021?

12 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Okay. Again, you  
13 were breaking up a bit. Were you asking about the  
14 results? I've got the numbers. I've got the numbers  
15 as of yesterday. Year to date, I mean, again, all of  
16 these numbers are too high because they are zero.  
17 The point of Vision Zero is zero. 19 pedestrians,  
18 one cyclist, no motorcyclists, 10 motor vehicle  
19 occupants, and while another motorized person for a  
20 total of 31. Compared to this time in 2020, it is  
21 five fewer pedestrians, the same on bicycles, and  
22 overall eight fewer. So, those are the numbers.  
23 Compared to 2013 when the program started, it is 18  
24 fewer pedestrians, one for your cyclist, and 24 fewer  
25 people overall. So, obviously, the program has been

2 a success and, I mean, it is a success so far.  
3 Still, we need to make it better-- zero zero. But  
4 the program is but a success and we have made great  
5 progress since 2013. 2020 was a challenging year,  
6 but we are committed to getting back on track and  
7 moving in a positive direction for 2021.

8 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay.

9 Commissioner, as you know, the Council is working  
10 with a bill that I am the lead prime together with  
11 Speaker Johnson and Council member Lander that is  
12 working very hard and committed to the transfer the  
13 correlation investigation and the SWAT unit from the  
14 NYPD to DOT. And even I got a call, you know, from a  
15 reporter saying that, in conversation with the  
16 Speaker, he said that the Council will use the power  
17 to override, if it is needed. I don't think that we  
18 need to go there. I feel that this is something that  
19 I hope that we can work together, the Council and  
20 that is the administration. I feel the thing with  
21 that is that to at this moment with us about, this is  
22 speaking about putting DOT to do criminal  
23 investigations. That is not DOT's expertise. That  
24 is not what we expect. So, the at the moment, the  
25 bill is making those changes. While the bill is

2 speaking is the correlation investigation squad unit  
3 should be coordinated or co-coordinated by DOT since  
4 the agency in this particular case, as you are the  
5 Commissioner, will be the ones that have or we have  
6 all the expectation that will be leading all the work  
7 related to Vision zero. If and when we pass this  
8 bill, again, it will not have an impact on the  
9 criminal investigation because that would be under  
10 the NYPD. We are not speaking for DOT to a hire a  
11 DOT staff now added to that unit. My weight, the  
12 same men and women in that unit, they should be  
13 transferred and they should be coordinated with  
14 police officers that will be conducting all the  
15 investigations. If we pass that unit to DOT, how do  
16 you think that it will have an impact in the budget  
17 of the agency?

18 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Well, again, I look  
19 forward to working with the Council on the details of  
20 the bill and it sounds like it has changed since the  
21 last exposure. As to the impact on the budget, that  
22 would depend on what we were asked to do and I don't  
23 have those numbers I can say we have a shared  
24 objective of making sure that the crashes are  
25 thoroughly investigated and that whatever safety

2 measures are taken and, obviously, the police are the  
3 people to do the criminal investigation, as the DAs  
4 letter said because they are the people who know how  
5 to do that. We don't have that expertise in the  
6 agency. But, in the agency, in terms of our agency  
7 working closely with the police to make sure that we  
8 learn from whatever their investigation uncovers and  
9 we make use of that in improving Vision Zero and  
10 changing streets if they are unsafe at all of that,  
11 absolutely. As to the mechanics of how that works,  
12 you know, as I said, we are happy to work with,  
13 obviously, our partners in the Police Department and  
14 with the Council on coming up with what is best. And  
15 as to the budgetary impact, I think that would depend  
16 on what the legislation ultimately looks like.

17 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Thank you,  
18 Commissioner.

19 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Okay.

20 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: And let's go back  
21 to my colleagues that have questions and Elliott will  
22 give the direction and I know that we have Council  
23 member Lander and Miller, but I will turn it back to  
24 Elliott to give direction on who will be now asking  
25 questions.

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Chair.

3 We will now call on Council members in the order that  
4 they have used the zoom raise hand function. Council  
5 members, please keep your questions to five minutes.  
6 The sergeant-at-arms will let you know when your time  
7 is up. Council member Miller will be first followed  
8 by Council member Lander. Council member Miller?

9 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time starts now.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Thank you so very  
11 much. And, Mr. Chair, thank you for your leadership.  
12 Thank you for certainly acknowledging our essential  
13 and frontline workers, particularly those in the  
14 transportation industry that keep us moving and  
15 having an opportunity to memorialize them. Good  
16 morning, Commissioner, and welcome to your first  
17 budget hearing.

18 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Good morning.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: While we know that  
20 DOT, as an agency, has grown by 10 percent since  
21 fiscal year 2019. Are you able to provide us with  
22 the breakdown of where we can find the largest impact  
23 in this enhancement in your budget and the programs?  
24 Similarly, the departments headcount has grown by 500  
25 since 2019. Could you provide a breakdown as to

2 where they are, as well? And then-- I kind of want  
3 to get through the questions. The agency plans to  
4 install 720 speed cameras by this year, funded \$81  
5 million capital budget. Are you able to provide a  
6 breakdown by community boards where these cameras are  
7 installed. We have had a great deal of concern in  
8 the outer borough, but not just the outer borough but  
9 in communities of color on how DOT investments are  
10 made, particularly around Vision Zero. It is our  
11 contention that we often get speed cameras while  
12 other communities get major investment in sidewalk  
13 and other infrastructure that supports safety. You  
14 have had a difficult time in terms of transparency  
15 identifying where this work is being done and where  
16 the investment is being done. We have seen  
17 throughout the years that budget hearings and the  
18 outer borough communities that curbs contract  
19 programs has fallen woefully short. For homeowners,  
20 this is a big deal and you talked about how lives are  
21 touched throughout the city. We have homeowners that  
22 are defined by the DOT and forced to repair sidewalks  
23 and, meanwhile, the city is responsible for the curbs  
24 and they have no curbs. The curb at program, we have  
25 been writing. We have been asking over the past few

2 years and have constituents that call the office, you  
3 know, all of the time because of the [inaudible  
4 01:05:05] that occurs because they have no curbs. Or  
5 do we anticipate that there will be an investment, a  
6 large investment in the curb at program? And then,  
7 finally, the Head way program, when do we anticipate  
8 that that will and and that workforce transition over  
9 to be able to do some of the sidewalk and curb that  
10 is needed in the outer boroughs? And I will also  
11 say-- I would be remiss because I know that the  
12 Cheers talked about MWBE participation and the lack  
13 thereof. I think that it starts at the top and we  
14 need more diversity in senior leadership, certainly,  
15 and you know that, you know, when you walked in the  
16 room there. We have been having this conversation  
17 for the past eight years and I think the leadership  
18 really reflects the values of the community that they  
19 deserve. So, I will just fall back and allow you to  
20 answer those questions. Thank you.

21 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Sure. And thank  
22 you for the questions, Council member Miller. In  
23 terms of diversity within the agency and including at  
24 the top, absolutely, absolutely we agree and that is  
25 something that we are working on. And, again, we've

2 got a good group of people working on it. But,  
3 obviously, we have more work to do and UNI, I  
4 believe, are scheduled to get together later this  
5 month and I am hoping that we can have a good  
6 conversation in which you can ask specific questions  
7 that you would like us to address and I will  
8 represent you that we will. As to some of the  
9 specific questions you asked concerning numbers,  
10 etc., and now, I would like to ask Executive Deputy  
11 Jarrin to respond to those because I believe he's got  
12 the numbers. I could tell you how many cameras we  
13 have. I couldn't tell you the details that you're  
14 asking for now. So--

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Okay.

16 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Let me throw it to  
17 him.

18 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: Can  
19 somebody take Joe off mute? You're still on mute,  
20 Joe.

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: Can you all  
22 hear me?

23 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: Yes.

24 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: Okay. Sorry  
25 about that. Okay. Council member Miller, I wanted

2 to start with your first question, if that's okay,  
3 and the growth in our budget. As you mentioned, our  
4 budget has grown quite a bit and I can tell you that  
5 the major components of that have been definitely,  
6 you know, when the Mayor started with Vision Zero  
7 being a priority. \$58 million overall has been added  
8 to our annual operating budget, so that is a big  
9 piece of what you have seen as the increase for DOT  
10 over these last many years. Another big part of  
11 Vision Zero has been-- and that is Vision Zero for  
12 street work and other components to Vision Zero.  
13 Just looking at the camera portion of Vision Zero,  
14 camera expansion, that has been \$80 million of growth  
15 in our annual operating budget going directly to the  
16 camera program. For our bus initiatives, it's close  
17 to \$10 million per year that our budget has grown  
18 under the de Blasio administration for the bus  
19 initiatives and, you know, I think you may know our  
20 accessibility program has expanded quite a bit. We  
21 now have a substantial size of cruise performing  
22 pedestrian ramp upgrades on the sidewalks and on the  
23 curbs and the corners. That's about \$45 million of  
24 annual growth in our budget for that. So, those  
25 items really make up the chunk of what you have seen

2 in our growth and headcount. We have had over, you  
3 know, as you have noted, hundreds of positions added  
4 to our headcount. So much of that is for those that  
5 initiatives I just mentioned. We can give you a  
6 detailed breakdown if you would like on that.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Could you do it  
8 also in terms of investment by community board and  
9 what those investments look like?

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: We have,  
11 absolutely, been evaluating that it and we can  
12 provide certainly for the Vision Zero programs that  
13 are geographic in nature. That is something we can  
14 certainly provide--

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Transparency is a  
16 bit of an issue. You know, we've actually had to  
17 foil some of this information, as well. We would  
18 hope to have it available on real time on a website,  
19 but to see where the investment actually is going, it  
20 is believed that in communities of color, it is more  
21 punitive and that we get red light cameras and not  
22 the type of investment that really keeps people safe.  
23 And so, we want to be able to disaggregate that by  
24 real data. And I hope that we are wrong and the lack  
25 of investment, but we just, you know, if you could

2 tell us that. And then, finally, like my  
3 constituency homeowners are really interested in  
4 curbs and sidewalks and street ponding and stuff like  
5 that, but we are not-- like that program is almost  
6 nonexistent.

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: Understood.

8 And I believe, Commissioner, in our meeting coming up  
9 with the Council member, we can certainly provide  
10 some of the particular pieces of info that you are  
11 looking for there and we will follow up separately,  
12 as well.

13 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Absolutely.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: And how could we  
15 helpful, right? And, obviously, you know, 75 percent  
16 of the city rents, they don't talk about homeowners  
17 and curbs. How can we be supportive and helpful in  
18 bringing that? So, we just don't want-- you know,  
19 we want to be allies and partners.

20 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: And,  
21 Council member Miller, I think you have been doing  
22 that with the conversation that you had with Deputy  
23 Commissioner Hayward and Associate Commissioner  
24 Howard recently and you prioritized locations and we  
25 have been quipping through them and I think that has

2 been a tremendously helpful dialogue between us and  
3 the sidewalk division. So, I just want to thank you  
4 for that.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Thank you.

6 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Thank you.

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Council  
8 member Miller. Next, we will hear from Council  
9 member Lander who will be followed by Council member  
10 Deutsch. Council member Lander?

11 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time starts now.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thank you so much,  
13 Chair. Commissioner Gutman, welcome. It's really  
14 wonderful to see you. You and I have a long history  
15 of working together and I look forward to working I  
16 look forward to working with you in this new role and  
17 I really appreciate what you said about your  
18 misstatement becoming a true statement about the  
19 Department of Transformation. This is a moment to  
20 transform our city in ways that make it safer and  
21 more livable and get past what I think have been some  
22 of the kind of-- I don't know-- culture war  
23 versions of these critical safety and livable city--

24 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Right.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: So, I appreciate  
3 that energy you're bringing to it. This is an  
4 important moment to move forward. I want to start my  
5 questions with the dangerous vehicle abatement  
6 program. As you said in your testimony, you know, we  
7 have just seen the growing number of deaths on our  
8 streets as tragic. We had one right here in my  
9 district last week, you know, and we are on a path to  
10 have the most deadly year and a long time. So, we  
11 need to keep ramping up the work for safety and one  
12 of those things is implementing the program to combat  
13 reckless driving by identifying the very most  
14 reckless drivers. I know the program is not in the  
15 preliminary budget, but I appreciated the  
16 announcement that you and City Hall made last week or  
17 the week before that there is a plan to, you know,  
18 move forward with it. So I wonder, you know, can you  
19 confirm that it's your understanding, as well, that  
20 City Hall is going to put in the executive budget and  
21 what's the timeline for moving forward with the  
22 program?

23 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: So, again, I'm  
24 happy-- well, thank you for the welcome and I, too,  
25 look forward to working with you in this new capacity

2 and the answer is that I can confirm that we are  
3 proceeding with this and I believe the Mayor has  
4 announced and the DOT is absolutely on board with the  
5 proposition that we'll have the classes for those who  
6 require them under the program up and running by the  
7 fall. So, we are all in. This is on our list of  
8 things to get done this year and, you know, we are on  
9 exactly the same page there.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thank you. I mean,  
11 when it was cancelled for the pandemic, of course, I  
12 understood, but I worries that it wouldn't get done  
13 during this administration. And so, moving forward  
14 to get it done this year and rolled out during this  
15 administration, I think, is a really significant step  
16 forward. Another question about the budget. I've  
17 been seeing more bike racks go up around the city,  
18 but some advocates told me that you are running out  
19 of bike racks and that there is no new money in the  
20 budget to buy more. That you've got maybe 3000 on  
21 hand, but the Mayor pledged to put 10,000 more in.  
22 Is there money in the budget to meet the Mayors bike  
23 rack commitments or is that something that we need to  
24 get added in exec?

2                   COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Well, let's put it  
3 this way. We have ongoing-- We have every intention  
4 in the Mayor had expressed his commitment to honoring  
5 the commitments that he made in the State of the City  
6 and that additional one which we made together the  
7 day that my appointment was announced and we are in  
8 an ongoing process with City Hall and OMB to make  
9 sure that we've got funding for all of them. Your  
10 support is, obviously, helpful, but we are working on  
11 all of those issues with City Hall and OMB and we're  
12 op--

13                   COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: [inaudible  
14 01:14:40] commitments and that's great. Green Wave  
15 made a lot of new commitments. You've made a lot.  
16 And, you know, that's not only things like bike  
17 racks, that's getting the inspectors out on bicycles  
18 to monitor the bike lanes and doing traffic calming  
19 at the intersections and on buses, as well, more  
20 enforcement of bus lanes. So I want to make sure  
21 that you have the resources you need to do all those  
22 things.

23                   COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: And we all  
24 appreciate the sentiment and we are working on that,  
25 as I said, with City Hall and OMB and are optimistic

2 that we will have the money available to satisfy our  
3 commitments.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Okay. But, you  
5 know, underline, like optimistic that we will get it  
6 added in the executive budget? Like that sounds like  
7 you are saying, you know, I am being a good new  
8 Commissioner, but I need some more in the executive  
9 budget if I am going to meet all the commitments that  
10 the Mayor has made. And you are a brand-new  
11 Commissioner, so I don't want to get you in trouble  
12 in your first month, but I do want to make sure that  
13 you have the resources. It's a big agency. I want  
14 to make sure that you have the resources to meet  
15 them.

16 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: No. And we  
17 certainly appreciate that sentiment and that support.  
18 As you can imagine, at this point, there are a lot of  
19 moving pieces and that's the reason that my answer is  
20 as it is. I mean, we're confident--

21 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: I appreciate that,  
22 but--

23 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: We're confident  
24 that we'll figure this out and--

2 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Okay. I am glad  
3 for your confidence, but we are going to push hard to  
4 make sure that more resources are put in the DOT  
5 budget. You know, the fact that we are getting 6  
6 billion instead of 4 billion in American Rescue Plan  
7 funds, we have got to make hard choices, but they  
8 can't be choices that put people at risk on our  
9 streets. I have a couple--

10 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Agreed.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: more questions and  
12 I see my time is almost up. Mr. Chair, I'm happy to  
13 come back in a second round or can I have one more  
14 minute?

15 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: You can. You can.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Okay. Great.  
17 Thank you so much. All right. Two more questions,  
18 then. One more citywide question is about the  
19 pedestrianized streets program. The Open Streets  
20 programs. You know, I have been such a big fan.  
21 Open Restaurants has been tremendous. I fought hard  
22 for it. I am grateful that DOT did the work for Open  
23 Streets for schools, Open Culture is going to make a  
24 big difference. On the basic Open Streets program, I  
25 do want to as a little what we are learning about how

2 to win equity in that program. It is my perception  
3 and-- and DOT was right about this at the  
4 beginning-- that stewardship is just critical. But  
5 if you don't have a group to help take care of it,  
6 then the odds that the barrier gets hit by a car and  
7 starts to collapse and then the whole thing kind of--  
8 we have seen that on a lot of streets. So, what are  
9 we learning in terms of implementing that program in  
10 a way that kind of learns some of the lessons for  
11 this spring and invests in thoughtful approaches to  
12 maintenance partners with a special eye towards  
13 having, as that program becomes longer-term, that it  
14 is really equitable in neighborhoods across the city?

15 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: I mean, that is a  
16 very good question and the answer is that, as you  
17 have observed, in situations where you don't have  
18 local sponsors-- for example, a local BID that can  
19 assume the maintenance responsibilities, we need to  
20 find some alternatives and we are working hard at  
21 doing that. I think part of the inquiry he is  
22 getting a sense of where the streets are popular.  
23 Where they are successful. I mean, some have been  
24 more successful than others. Some have been more  
25 popular in the local communities. So, part of the

2 equity initiative is not assuming that one size fits  
3 all, but figuring out what works because, I mean,  
4 that is what it is all about. That is what equity  
5 requires. And to the extent that one needs help in  
6 providing this stewardship, we are looking for  
7 creative ways to do that. But, again, all of that is  
8 easier if there is community support and there is  
9 popular support for doing whatever it is in a  
10 particular location. That just makes all of this  
11 easier.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Absolutely. I  
13 would urge you to look back at the Neighborhood Plaza  
14 program which invested resources in nonprofit and  
15 partnered stewardship of plazas and made a big  
16 difference in making it possible for communities that  
17 would not have otherwise had a BID or volunteer  
18 resource partner as one way of may be building on  
19 that. All right. My final question is the district  
20 issue. DOT is planning on installing a two way  
21 protected bike lane on Parkside Avenue, but a segment  
22 of the land near Park Circle is deleted only to be 6  
23 feet wide, contained by the barrier and that curb and  
24 it's like that is half the width of what NACTO says  
25 we need for two-way bikeways it just doesn't feel

2 sufficiently safe. It's got to be at least 8 feet.  
3 The rest of the space-- what can we do to make sure  
4 that we get a lane that's not too narrow for genuine  
5 two-way bike traffic there?

6 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Well, I think  
7 you've done it by raising the issue. We will talk  
8 to-- I will raise this. This is now on my to do  
9 list and I will raise this with the appropriate  
10 people who are designing it and we do our best to  
11 address the issue. And, again, as with all these  
12 issues-- and this is an invitation to all the  
13 Council members on the call-- we count on you to be  
14 eyes and ears in your districts and to report  
15 situations that we need to know about and--

16 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: That's great. And  
17 I feel that, you know, this was not like a timed to  
18 get you gotcha' question. I just heard about it over  
19 the weekend, so to ask, but I will look forward to  
20 following up off-line and I really appreciate your  
21 willingness to look into it and we will keep raising  
22 our voices to make sure that what is in the executive  
23 budget provides the resources for the ambitious  
24 transformation that you have planned.

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2 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Thank you. Thank  
3 you.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Council  
5 member Lander. I would like to acknowledge that we  
6 are joined by Council members Levine and Yeger. Our  
7 next Council member we will hear from is Council  
8 member Deutsch. Council member Deutsch?

9 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time starts now.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Thank you.  
11 Good afternoon, Commissioner.

12 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Good afternoon.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: I would like  
14 to know how the city is responding to ponding  
15 conditions based on the budget. Is that something  
16 that you are keeping up with? I'm talking about  
17 major pond-- we all know that, for the city to say,  
18 you know, for the city to come back to say, okay.  
19 This is a serious ponding issue, water has to like  
20 literally sit there for, I think, seven days. So,  
21 how is the city responding to like these major  
22 ponding conditions and if the budget has an effect on  
23 it?

24 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: We certainly have  
25 money in the budget to address these kinds of street

2 and sidewalk maintenance issues. If you have  
3 specific examples where you would like us to look, I  
4 would be happy to pass that on to the team.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Yes. I have  
6 in my district, I have three major ponding conditions  
7 that has been ongoing for probably now-- I called  
8 them like two and a half years ago and I have been  
9 trying to be the eyes and ears for DOT and I am not  
10 getting any results on all three conditions and two  
11 of them are crosswalks. When we talk about Vision  
12 Zero when people need to cross the streets. And I'd  
13 like to know if I can get a commitment for someone to  
14 come out there like as soon as possible and see if we  
15 can correct that. I believe DOT has those three  
16 locations already and I could read email them as soon  
17 as we get off, but I want to make sure that, when the  
18 city does come back and a ponding condition that must  
19 be corrected, there shouldn't be any excuses not to  
20 repair those conditions no matter how difficult it  
21 may be. Yeah. Go ahead, Rebecca.

22 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: Hi,  
23 Council member. It's been a long time. It's nice to  
24 see you. I'm assuming that the Brooklyn office has  
25 it and if they have been long-standing issues, I am

2 guessing that one of the things that we have said in  
3 the past is that capital reconstruction is something  
4 that would be needed. But, can you let me follow up  
5 with Keith and see what the latest is that he has on  
6 those and then our offices can follow up with yours.  
7 Or TOPA [sp?].

8 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Okay. I  
9 appreciate it because I just want to mention one more  
10 thing and, for the last several hearings, I have been  
11 bringing this up and I was told that it is in the  
12 Brooklyn office and they're going to follow up--

13 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: I'm  
14 sorry. I wasn't aware of that. Apologies.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Yeah. If it  
16 is in your office, Rebecca, I know you will follow  
17 up, but I want to make sure that it gets followed up  
18 and that it gets taken care of. This is why I don't  
19 have to come to the next hearing--

20 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: I will  
21 follow up with Keith today. But my apologies. I  
22 didn't recall you bringing it up been passed  
23 hearings, but I will follow up with Keith and  
24 Claudette today.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Okay. Great.  
3 Thank you so much.

4 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: You're  
5 welcome.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Thank you,  
7 Commissioner.

8 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Thank you.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Council  
10 member. At this time, are there any other Council  
11 members that would like to ask a question of the DOT?  
12 Okay. Oh. Council member Holden would like to ask a  
13 question. Council member Holden?

14 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time starts now.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Thank you,  
16 Commissioner. Thank you for your testimony and  
17 welcome to the first budget hearing. I just--

18 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Thank you.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: have a few  
20 questions. Not too much. I had trouble this past  
21 actually two years. For instance, the bus lanes,  
22 when they were put in non-Woodhaven Boulevard, there  
23 were several errors that were made, especially on  
24 corners where there was no turning for the cars. The  
25 dotted lines were there to indicate where they could

2 start to turn. And, as a result, it caused a lot of  
3 problems. Not only dangerous conditions, but  
4 accident happened at these corners because people  
5 were cutting in at different times. And there were a  
6 host of other things. Like when DOT made a mistake  
7 in turning lanes, we couldn't get them corrected for  
8 sometimes six months to a year and I am wondering if,  
9 in the budget, or could there be a special unit to  
10 correct errors that are made in markings? Because it  
11 actually lingers so long and causes so much not only  
12 congestion, but pollution over, you know, a period of  
13 up to 10 months, I have seen. And my second part of  
14 my question is that I have had a number-- you know,  
15 I would just like to know the cost of the traffic--  
16 installation of a traffic light because, for some  
17 reason, we are getting a lot of traffic lights  
18 installed very quickly and many of them-- in fact, I  
19 notified the previous Commissioner about the mistakes  
20 they make in determining where the traffic light  
21 should go. Many times they are put on the wrong  
22 corner. Can you address the cost of installing a  
23 traffic light in New York City?

24

25

2 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Sadly, that is a  
3 number that I don't have at my fingertips, but I  
4 suspect that Mr. Jarrin might. So, if I could--

5 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Okay.

6 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: ask him. If not,  
7 we can certainly get it for you. Jeff?

8 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: He's on  
9 mute.

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: Commissioner,  
11 I want to get you that number. It will depend on  
12 whether it is a full capital installation or own more  
13 minor type of installation. There is a range of what  
14 the cost might be, but--

15 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Got it.

16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: If we can get  
17 back to you.

18 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Why don't--

19 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: I heard-- and you  
20 can correct me if I'm wrong. I heard it was between  
21 a quarter of a million and half a million dollars per  
22 installation. Is that like reasonable?

23 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: That is a  
24 reasonable expectation, particularly when there are  
25 obstructions when we have to move other

2 infrastructure on the sidewalk to install it. So,  
3 that can make it very expensive.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: And there seems to  
5 be no rhyme or reason because I just had a couple  
6 installed that didn't quite make sense. I had,  
7 actually, three lights installed which is good enough  
8 for block area in Europe parking and it didn't-- you  
9 know, I understand one of them, but the other two  
10 didn't make any sense and I never got an explanation.  
11 Each time I asked what was the criteria for  
12 installing this, well, we got a request and it went  
13 through. I checked at the precinct about the  
14 accident reports. There were really no accidents.  
15 So, I'm just concerned that we are throwing money  
16 away sometimes on unnecessary traffic lights which I  
17 have observed on residential streets cars seem to  
18 speed up when the lights turn yellow. Everybody  
19 knows that in New York City that is happening. I  
20 mean, everybody can admit to that. When the light  
21 starts to change, a motor vehicle will speed up and  
22 that is kind of very dangerous on a residential  
23 street. So--

24 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: You know,  
25 I could talk to the Queens office because they should

2 be able to provide you with some volume and crash  
3 data that we use. Because we use an incredibly--  
4 you know, it is a federally mandated data-driven  
5 approach to where signals go. So, you know, if you  
6 need more details on some specific recent  
7 installations, I can talk to the Queens office about  
8 getting you kind of clearer data on that.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Great. So,  
10 Commissioner, if you could just reply to the question  
11 about when mistakes are made in Street markings, why  
12 does it take so long to correct it?

13 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Having been here  
14 for just a month, I can't speak to the history but I  
15 can tell you that when we conclude this hearing, I  
16 will ask appropriate questions. And, again, you  
17 know, if you bring things to our attention, I can't  
18 speak to the past, but I can say that we will respond  
19 and we will try and find out an answer and if, in  
20 fact, it is a mistake, we will deal with it promptly.  
21 I mean, I certainly--

22 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: [inaudible  
23 01:29:30]

24 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: I understand the  
25 concern for sure.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Yeah. When, you  
3 know, you have the bus lanes put in, there should  
4 be-- I mean it's not rocket science, right? It's--

5 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: I agree.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: You know, at the  
7 corner you have the dotted lines where the cars can  
8 break into the lane and I still have mistakes that  
9 haven't been corrected and I shouldn't have to  
10 pointed out. There should be a team that goes out,  
11 inspects that, says, okay. Here is a mistake. I had  
12 to document it in video. I had to show the accidents  
13 that happened there and still DOT Queens did not  
14 correct it and I was ready to go out with some black  
15 paint and paint the dotted lines. I was joking, but  
16 I said, what does it take? I made a video about it.  
17 It just seems-- and when they make step a turning  
18 lane, they made it opposite, again, it wasn't  
19 corrected for probably almost a year traffic jams and  
20 so, I think we need a budget set aside for mistakes  
21 where they can correct it so they don't make it  
22 worse. In just another thing. Three years waiting  
23 for speed bumps is totally, totally ridiculous and I  
24 did, on 76 Street and Woodhaven, I complained a long  
25 time. It was finally installed a few months ago.

2 But I put the speed bumps in in November 2017. The  
3 community board approved it, I guess, and that  
4 following spring of 2018 and we just got them  
5 installed now on a street that had a lot of  
6 accidents. Sideswiped because it was very near row  
7 and I just think we need to, you know, put safety on  
8 the fast track and not back it up to years and years  
9 of people waiting. Thanks, Commissioner.

10 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: Thank  
11 you. I agree.

12 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Yeah. And thank  
13 you for raising the point. We will certainly pursue  
14 it.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Thank you, Chair.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Council  
17 member Holden. Our next Council member will be  
18 Council member Rose. Council member Rose?

19 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time starts now.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you. Hi,  
21 Commissioner, and welcome.

22 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Thank you.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: I look forward to  
24 having a meeting with you specifically about Staten  
25 Island issues, but--

2 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Absolutely.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: I noticed in the  
4 budget that there is a reduction in fairy  
5 administration and surface transit. What and where  
6 are these reductions? What is the impact and just  
7 what are these reductions?

8 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Again, if I--

9 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: Do you  
10 mean MTA reductions in bus service?

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: No. It says--  
12 Under this budget, it says DOT fairy administration  
13 and surface--

14 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK:

15 Apologies.

16 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Oh.

17 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: I can answer  
18 that.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Yes.

20 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Yeah. Mr. Jarrin  
21 has the details.

22 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: We had savings  
23 from grant fundings that were then not following  
24 through in the following year. So, in the document

2 you're looking at, Council member, this is from the  
3 January plan that you're looking--

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Yes.

5 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: We reflected  
6 some savings that we were able to reduce our  
7 expenditures for February administration from one  
8 year to the next. So, the state funding that comes  
9 in that helps pay for our Staten Island ferry program  
10 is, as you have probably seen in the state budget,  
11 the changes from year to year. So, our city budget  
12 is continually reacting to that and where state funds  
13 come in, we are able to reduce city funds  
14 accordingly.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay. So, there is  
16 not going to be any reduction in service or impact  
17 or--

18 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: From that  
19 initiative, no.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Or headcount? No.

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: No.  
22 Absolutely not. Service is handled completely  
23 separately.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay. I'm sorry?  
25

2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JARRIN: There's no  
3 planned service reduction, just to be clear, relating  
4 to that.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Yeah. I'm glad to  
6 hear that. You'd have a problem if there was. But I  
7 wanted to also ask you about the status of the two  
8 arles class ferries that, you know, were being built  
9 and almost completed, but because of the hurricane,  
10 they were damaged. You know, what is the status of  
11 that and when can we look forward to them being, you  
12 know, put into service?

13 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: We are back on  
14 track with that. I mean, one problem we had was  
15 Covid travel restrictions slowed up our ability to  
16 send people down to do the inspections, but both  
17 boats are on track to be delivered this year. We  
18 will keep you posted and you are invited to the  
19 launch or whatever the ceremony is when we put a new  
20 ferry into service. We will make sure that you have  
21 advanced notice and we look forward to welcoming you  
22 for that event this year. It is on our list. Before  
23 the administration leaves, this is going to happen.

24 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZACK: It is so  
25 exciting.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you. I was  
3 trying to unmute and say thank you very much. Thank  
4 you.

5 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Happy to be able to  
6 deliver good news.

7 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you,  
8 Commissioner. Link you to the whole team. With  
9 this, were coming to the end of the section of DOT.  
10 We are going to be taking a break and then we are  
11 coming back at 1 p.m. with the TLC Commissioner.  
12 Thank you, Commissioner.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you very  
14 much, Chair Rodriguez and thank you to the whole  
15 committee. Look forward to working together.

16 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Goodbye.

17 COMMISSIONER GUTMAN: Goodbye.

18 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Commissioner Aloysee,  
19 we'd like to check your audio. Still can't hear  
20 you.

21 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: Can you  
22 hear me now?

23 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Yes. Yes. Thank you.

24 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK:  
25 Wonderful.

2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: While we are here, can  
3 we do the Assistant Commissioner Vincent Chen's  
4 audio, as well?

5 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER CHEN: Hello.  
6 Check.

7 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Yes.

8 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER CHEN: One.  
9 Two.

10 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Thank you.

11 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER CHEN: Thank  
12 you.

13 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Chair, whenever you are  
14 ready.

15 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Give me one minute,  
16 okay?

17 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Okay, sir.

18 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. Okay.  
19 I'm ready.

20 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: You may begin, sir.

21 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Welcome back  
22 to the hearing on the Committee on Transportation.  
23 After listening to the DOT Commissioner and his team  
24 and now we will hear from the Taxi Limousine  
25 Commission as they report on an industry that has

2 been devastated by the Covid 19 pandemic.

3 Tragically, there was a 66 percent decline in the  
4 number of drivers on the street in December 2020 when  
5 compared to 2019 before the pandemic. Taxiing  
6 Limousine Commission's proposed fiscal 2022  
7 preliminary budget totals 54.7 million. The  
8 committee hopes to hear from the Commission on the  
9 effect of Covid 19 on the taxi industry and how the  
10 Commission is helping to protect drivers from the  
11 effect of coronavirus and how it plans to help the  
12 industry recover. I think that, you know, the  
13 committee anticipates that we will be hearing about  
14 how the Commission is following through with the  
15 Council's legislation to help provide struggling  
16 financial help and mental health services. Before we  
17 ask the committee counsel to go over some and  
18 recognizing other Council members who are here now  
19 and to administer the oath to the Commissioner, I  
20 would like to say that today we are from Mayor de  
21 Blasio about his plan to help those medallion owners.  
22 And it's a struggle and how they can be supported.  
23 However, we do have a lot of concern about the  
24 minimum contribution that is in place based on those  
25 \$65 million. I will have questions to the

2 Commissioner. But, as I said before, I recognize the  
3 leadership with Mayor de Blasio and all the city of  
4 New York by [inaudible 02:18:01]. Someone that I had  
5 the honor to be working with him and his  
6 administration for so many years and that I recognize  
7 the many contributions that he is made to our city  
8 and state. But, definitely we have some concern. We  
9 have questions we are not happy with the average  
10 \$20,000 that will be helping those medallion owners  
11 indefinitely, Commissioner, we will have major  
12 questions about it. [Speaking foreign language] when  
13 I want to recognize, also, and give thanks to the  
14 Commissioner for always being accessible when we had  
15 have any meeting [inaudible 02:18:58] and our team.  
16 And also we saw the stakeholders of the industry,  
17 including some owners and presidents and leaders of  
18 different sectors, including the taxi delivering  
19 industry. So, with that, give it back to Elliott.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Chair.

21 At this time, we been joined by Council members  
22 Miller, Diaz, Riley, and Yeger. I will now call on  
23 our panelists from the Taxi in Limousine Commission  
24 to testify. Commissioner and Chair, Aloysee Heredia  
25 Jarmoszuk, and Assistant Commissioner for finance and

2 operations, Vincent Chen. I will now read the  
3 affirmation and then I will call on each of you to  
4 confirm your response allowed for the record. Please  
5 raise your right hand. Do you affirm to tell the  
6 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in  
7 your testimony before this committee and to respond  
8 honestly to Council member questions? Commissioner  
9 Heredia Jarmoszuk?

10 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: I do.  
11 Yes.

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Assistant  
13 Commissioner Chen?

14 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER CHEN: I do.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. You may  
16 begin your testimony when ready.

17 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: Hi. Good  
18 afternoon, Chair Rodriguez and members of the  
19 Transportation and Finance Committee. I am Aloysee  
20 Heredia Jarmoszuk, Commissioner and Chair of the New  
21 York City Taxi and Limousine Commission. Thank you  
22 for inviting me to attend today's hearing and preview  
23 the TLC fiscal year 2022 preliminary budget. With me  
24 today is TLC Assistant Commissioner for finance and  
25 operations, Vincent Chen. One year ago today, TLC is

2 preliminary budget. Was the last time I was able to  
3 meet in person with members of this committee before  
4 many New Yorkers started working from home as a  
5 public safety measure. Covid 19 affected TLC  
6 licensed drivers, vehicle owners, and businesses in  
7 many ways and these impacts will continue to be felt  
8 in 2021. We have been terribly saddened to learn of  
9 many licensees who lost their lives or who have lost  
10 family and friends during the pandemic. Many TLC  
11 staff understand this pain all too well, having also  
12 lost family and friends, including our colleagues,  
13 David Lui and Muka Shulka [sp?] From the licensing  
14 division. Since then, the TLC has been focused, like  
15 all other city agencies, on our response to Covid 19,  
16 supporting our licensees by keeping agency operations  
17 running, and connecting them with opportunities for  
18 income and relief while supporting the city's relief  
19 efforts. In the spring of 2020, the TLC adapted to  
20 the crisis with remote work, flexible scheduling, and  
21 social distancing to remain fully operational and  
22 maintain critical agency services such as licensing  
23 and inspections. Staff from the TLC licensed saying  
24 and vehicle inspection facilities continued to serve  
25 licensees throughout the worst of the pandemic with

2 over 100,000 vehicles inspected and over 105,000  
3 license applications processed since March 1 of 2020.  
4 TLC has worked hard to keep operations running  
5 smoothly, not only as a matter of public safety, but  
6 also to support our licensees as they have tried to  
7 continue operations during this unprecedented  
8 economic downturn which has significantly reduced  
9 passenger demand. As a part of this support, TLC has  
10 focused on providing emergency work opportunities for  
11 our licensees, including Get Food NYC that enabled  
12 TLC licensed drivers to deliver millions of meals to  
13 homebound and immunocompromised New Yorkers. The  
14 program was a vital part of the city's effort to  
15 address food insecurity that was made worse by Covid  
16 19 as not only income, but also traditional food  
17 distribution networks were disrupted. Through  
18 October 2020, nearly 10,000 TLC licensed drivers  
19 earned a total of \$40 million delivering millions of  
20 meals to homebound New Yorkers. This program  
21 involved redeployment of TLC staff from every  
22 division who staffed food sites, loaded meals into  
23 vehicles, signed up licensees, and coordinated  
24 payment. Our enforcement officers were a key part of  
25 this effort as they continue to serve the city in new

2 ways, not only working at food distribution sites,  
3 but also delivering meals themselves to homebound New  
4 Yorkers and assisting the Sheriff's office with  
5 business inspections and staffing checkpoints. Our  
6 outreach and communications to licensees and the  
7 public have been robust and we shared key information  
8 with licensees about local, state, and federal  
9 programs and resources, as well as health information  
10 out about Covid 19 and public health updates related  
11 to the masks, Covid testing, and now vaccines. We  
12 have posted Covid testing events in four boroughs  
13 with our Manhattan events scheduled for later this  
14 month. I am eternally grateful that TLC licensees  
15 are now eligible for Covid vaccination and have been  
16 to for several weeks now, since February 12. TLC  
17 licensed staff are working hard to connect licensees  
18 with vaccine appointments and I encourage any  
19 licensee who is interested to sign up for a vaccine.  
20 Covid 19 is still very real and we remain focused on  
21 health and safety. We plan to remain focused on our  
22 Covid response for as long as it is needed. During  
23 the pandemic, the TLC also launched its Driver  
24 Resource Center remotely which has served over 800  
25 drivers and 500 medallion owners. At the resource

2 center, TLC licensees can receive financial  
3 counseling, legal assistance, public benefit  
4 assistance, and answer some questions about their  
5 license for TLC rules. The resource center has  
6 helped over 800 licensees apply for payroll  
7 protection programs and economic injury disaster  
8 loans, unemployment, cash assistance, emergency rent  
9 relief, SNAP benefits, and Medicaid. Over 500  
10 licensees have received help to restructure medallion  
11 loans and the resource center has helped 45 licensees  
12 successfully apply for PPP loans. In total, TLC  
13 helped guide our licensees to potentially \$1.4  
14 billion in support through federal, state, and local  
15 assistance programs. I strongly encourage all  
16 licensees to schedule an appointment with the  
17 resource Center through the TLC website or by calling  
18 311 and asking for that TLC driver resource Center.  
19 We are excited about this important resource and I  
20 welcome any Council members here to join me for a  
21 vital tour-- a virtual tour, excuse me-- of our  
22 offerings at the resource center. We look forward to  
23 opening the resource Center in person as soon as it  
24 is safe to do so. We have continued to innovate new  
25 programs for licensees. In December, we launched a

2 new program called Drive NYC New York. Or Drive NYC  
3 taxi which connects yellow and green taxi owners with  
4 drivers interested in leasing their vehicles. This  
5 program is one component of our larger work to  
6 modernize and spur innovation in the yellow and green  
7 taxi industry and we look forward to marketing the  
8 service to our drivers and owners extensively in  
9 2021. As our city has begun to reopen, it is  
10 important to stress that TLC licensed drivers have  
11 adhered to Covid 19 protections, including mask  
12 wearing, social distancing, cleaning of high touch  
13 areas in vehicles, and opening windows or otherwise  
14 ventilation of vehicles in use. To educate the  
15 public about these efforts, that TLC launched a  
16 public service announcement campaign on Link NYC  
17 kiosks and social medias and inside of our taxicabs.  
18 We hope that the campaign is helping to educate the  
19 riding public about safety measures and TLC licensed  
20 vehicles, but also remind them of the hard work and  
21 efforts of our TLC licensed drivers. Moreover, TLC  
22 has continued a key source of income for owners and  
23 drivers of accessible vehicles. In 2020, over \$20  
24 million in taxi improvement funds were provided to  
25 homeowners and drivers of wheelchair accessible

2 taxi. We look forward to continuing the success of  
3 this program, serving TLC licensees as well as the  
4 community of passengers that use wheelchairs. Our  
5 accessible dispatch program offers trips in yellow  
6 and green wheelchair accessible taxis and we are  
7 grateful for the drivers who have offered this  
8 crucial service throughout the pandemic without  
9 disruption. Now, I would like to preview TLC's  
10 preliminary budget for fiscal year 2022 which is 54.6  
11 million broken down into 41.6 million in personnel  
12 service, PS, and 13 million in other than personnel  
13 service, OTPS. This budget reflects the ongoing  
14 challenge we face as we set our sites on recovering  
15 from the Covid 19 pandemic. TLC will, of course,  
16 maintain its daily operations as we have throughout  
17 the entire pandemic without disruption , but some  
18 crucial or critical goals set forth in prior years,  
19 such as recruiting new enforcement cadettes will be  
20 delayed. Citywide limitations on hiring will also  
21 delay our ability to backfill positions that have  
22 become vacant. Last year, I explained that TLC's  
23 budget had remained flat since the arrival of the  
24 apps, while at the same time, the number of vehicles  
25 on the road more than doubled. Currently, the TLC's

2 authorized headcount is 578 which is lower than it  
3 was in 2014 when the apps began operating at scale.  
4 As the industry moves forward toward recovery, TLC  
5 will need more headcount and funding to address the  
6 struggles of our drivers and to deliver on the city's  
7 commitment to help stabilize the industry. On the  
8 revenue side, TLC's budget is projected to be 56.5  
9 million in fiscal year 2022. During the pandemic, we  
10 have seen revenue collection remain stable for  
11 licensing and TLC worked hard to ensure licensees  
12 could stay on the road were returned to work as  
13 quickly as possible if they took a break. Revenue  
14 from inspections and enforcement has been lower than  
15 normal as a direct result of the pandemic. Many  
16 vehicles were not active during the various points of  
17 the pandemic, leading to less inspection revenue and  
18 TLC enforcement efforts were significantly adjusted  
19 to assist in several Covid 19 related emergency  
20 response operations as reported in the Mayors  
21 Management Report for fiscal year 2021. In fiscal  
22 year 2022, we will continue to monitor revenue  
23 collections and work with OMB to make adjustments as  
24 needed. Looking forward, I would also like to touch  
25 on some of our priorities for the future. This was

2 my first years Commissioner and Chair of the TLC and  
3 despite unprecedented economic disruption, I am proud  
4 of what the agency was able to accomplish for its  
5 licensees and how, throughout this time, that TLC has  
6 critically examined the future of the industry and  
7 begun to better align agencies services and structure  
8 with the realities of the marketplace. In 2021, TLC  
9 is actively planning to transition into a post-Covid  
10 world and while we remain dedicated to public health  
11 outreach and support. We also remain engaged with  
12 drivers, owners, and businesses that we license. I  
13 had been impressed and hardened to see the industry  
14 and our staff work together to convene-- to overcome  
15 many challenges and I know this resilient industry  
16 and team of passionate civil servants will accomplish  
17 great things in the coming year. I have been  
18 speaking with licensees daily for the past year and I  
19 am very excited that TLC has developed new forums for  
20 its licensees to interact with our staff. One of  
21 these new forums is a base Roundtable. A virtual  
22 roundtable discussion with car services spaces, forum  
23 where TLC enforcement, prosecution, and licensing  
24 divisions can interact with bases in an approachable  
25 way to solve the issues and problems that they face.

2 Our first roundtable discussion took place last week  
3 and was focused on bases in Brooklyn and we are  
4 scheduling more events for all of the other boroughs.  
5 I have also convened a taxi working group which has  
6 begun developing a strategic plan for the yellow and  
7 green industry. This group is focusing on several  
8 issues including improving the passenger and driver  
9 experience, supporting innovation and technology,  
10 and, critically reviewing TLC regulations and  
11 policies to ensure innovation can thrive. I look  
12 forward to continued engagement with licensees,  
13 including with the upcoming delivery in black car  
14 task force which we hope will produce effective  
15 recommendations for these two sectors vital to the  
16 many communities throughout New York City. Our goal  
17 is to make sure that no one is left behind and that  
18 everybody who currently exists in our industry has a  
19 place to thrive. All of you know that the  
20 complicated issues of medallion debt have been  
21 compounded by Covid 19. This has been an issue of  
22 extreme importance for the Mayor and for TLC and I  
23 know it has been deeply personal for city Council.  
24 This is why I am excited to stand with the Mayor to  
25 announce the creation of a new taxi owner relief fund

2 and, while some details are still being developed,  
3 the new fund will offer real relief to medallion  
4 owners who have been most impacted by unsound lending  
5 practices, increased competition, and the economic  
6 pressures of the pandemic. The fund will offer a  
7 long-term zero interest loan of \$20,000.00 to  
8 eligible-- to two medallion owners to use as a down  
9 payment on paying down and restructuring their  
10 medallion debt. This restructuring will have a  
11 multiplier effect in the hundreds of millions of  
12 dollars in debt write-downs, debt forgiveness.  
13 Additionally, the fund will make available up to  
14 \$1500 per month to make medallion loans payments for  
15 as many as six months. I have heard too often from  
16 medallion owners that, during Covid, they have had to  
17 choose between paying down medallion debt and paid  
18 for the basic necessities for themselves and their  
19 families. We want to provide relief as soon and  
20 possible not only to help with their expenses and  
21 also to restructure and reduce the amount of debt  
22 they face. We will couple this with intensified work  
23 that the Driver Resource Center and I encourage all  
24 owners to contact the resource center as soon as  
25 possible to learn about available benefits, including

2 the federal PPP loans. The application. For the PPP  
3 loans will close on March 31, so it is urgent to  
4 apply. These low-interest loans are another way to  
5 help manage immediate expenses and restructure debt.  
6 We have formulated the relief plan with three guiding  
7 principles. One, it must provide financial relief  
8 the actual owners. It must have the participation of  
9 the lenders to succeed and it must not undermine the  
10 value of the medallion or the industry at large. For  
11 this reason, we didn't think it was the right course  
12 to support a plan that requires loan reduction in  
13 down to a fixed amount. As public officials, we have  
14 to be very careful about unintended negative impacts  
15 on the industry. We already have experiences with  
16 that and we need a plan that is both effective and  
17 sustainable and that can be implemented immediately.  
18 Over the last year, I have heard time and time again  
19 that time is of the assets from our medallion owner  
20 community. I am excited about the new fund which  
21 represents a new day for so many medallion owners who  
22 struggle with the burden of debt. It is especially  
23 important now as we begin to envision a reopened city  
24 that we support the industry so that it can be in a  
25 place and operating as the economy reopens and

2 passenger demand continues to increase. Again, we  
3 don't want anyone to be left behind. As you can see,  
4 while it has been a challenging year, there is no  
5 doubt that all participants in this industry have  
6 stepped up to the challenge by feeding New Yorkers,  
7 transporting essential workers, and innovating in a  
8 variety of ways. Thank you for the opportunity to  
9 speak about TLC's work over the past year. I am  
10 happy to take any of your questions. Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: So, was you and TLC  
12 involved in coming up with the Mayor's relief plan?

13 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: Yes.  
14 absolutely.

15 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. So the  
16 relief plan was conceived with-- will be based about  
17 providing a \$20,000 as one option and then the second  
18 one is a few thousand dollars that will be based on  
19 some helping to [inaudible 02:38:10] monthly payments  
20 for six months, right?

21 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: If the  
22 medallion owner is having some liquidity issues after  
23 the restructurings occur, they will have access to up  
24 to \$9000 to help make ends meet if they are unable to  
25 meet their new lower monthly payment.

2 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Based on the  
3 review, that's the plan that will not fly to those  
4 special 6000 individual medallion owners. Were they  
5 consulted in this process?

6 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: I have  
7 consulted-- Sorry.

8 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Not brokers. Not  
9 lenders.

10 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: Yeah. I,  
11 personally, have been speaking with medallion owners  
12 for the last year. I speak with medallion owners  
13 pretty much on a daily basis and what I have heard  
14 time and time again is that they don't have enough  
15 money to put down to restructure the loans and we're  
16 talking about a significant investment. \$65 million  
17 is a lot of money and if you consider that we are  
18 restructuring and it's not 6000-- but if we are  
19 restructuring around 3200 or 4000 medallions and each  
20 loan has achieved something in the ballpark of  
21 \$250,000 in debt forgiveness. So, erasing a quarter  
22 of a million of debt, that creates a pathway for  
23 hundreds of millions of dollars collectively in debt  
24 forgiveness. And that is what we are trying to  
25 achieve. That is the goal. I've heard that from

2 every single stakeholder and from the advocates in  
3 this industry and we have to move forward. I think  
4 this is the smart way to leverage limited city  
5 resources. We already have seen thousands of loans  
6 restructured and now we want to make sure that those  
7 that don't have the ability to come up with \$20,000  
8 to be able to-- to facilitate that restructuring so  
9 that they can cut their debt, so that they can cut  
10 their monthly payments, and so that we can focus on  
11 the business of providing for higher transportation  
12 to our passengers, to New York City residents, and to  
13 our visitors.

14 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Commissioner, I  
15 don't know who City Hall heard from when it comes to  
16 individual medallion owners. All I can tell you is  
17 that I've been getting email through email, call from  
18 call of individual medallion owners about this plan  
19 and how they were not consulted. So, which leader  
20 from the individual medallion owners did City Hall  
21 consult and specifically around this plan?

22 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: We have  
23 been speaking with medallion owners. Individual  
24 owners. I have personally been speaking with  
25 medallion owners on this. I do it through my working

2 group. I do it having one-on-one conversations with  
3 our licensees and, time and time again, our owners  
4 are telling us that they are straddled with too much  
5 debt, that they need their principal to be reduced,  
6 that they need lower monthly payments, and that they  
7 need better loan options and this plan that is funded  
8 with a significant amount of money at \$65 million  
9 will help achieve that.

10 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Again,  
11 Commissioner, this plan that these taxi owner relief  
12 fund announced by the Mayor consisted of \$65 million.  
13 We provide help that goes up to \$20,000 and then the  
14 second piece is to help them with their monthly  
15 payment for six months. I have talked to many  
16 individual owners that were not consulted based on  
17 what I heard and I feel that this doesn't make any  
18 connection with the recommendation that came out from  
19 the yellow taxi medallion task force. And the fact  
20 that City Hall made that announcement without any  
21 consultation with the Council when we have been  
22 working together. I don't think that it shows any  
23 good intention of addressing the crisis, both sides,  
24 City Hall and the Council together. How many  
25 medallion-- and, again, I know that's my approach.

2 Very honest with this. I don't think that, again,  
3 this plan is even close to the recommendation that  
4 came out from the plan that we presented when we had  
5 the hearing and when we had our working group. Where  
6 is the money coming from?

7 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: This will  
8 be from city expense dollars.

9 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Where,  
10 specifically? Where is this money coming from?

11 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: It will  
12 come from the city's-- the Mayor's budget expense  
13 dollars that will be facilitated from the city as a  
14 result of stimulus monies.

15 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Can you  
16 mention some of the players that represented  
17 individual medallion owners that City Hall had a  
18 conversation around this particular plan?

19 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: I have  
20 personally spoken with over 100 medallion owners  
21 since my time here and all the owners that I have  
22 spoken to-- and I am not comfortable giving your  
23 individual names at a public hearing without having  
24 first gotten permission from these individual owners  
25 to discuss their personal business on the record, but

2 I can assure you that I have personally spoken with  
3 medallion owners and all the medallion owners but I  
4 have spoken to have consistently expressed to me that  
5 their loans are too high, that they need lower  
6 monthly payments, and that they need to reduce the  
7 principal amounts that is owed in this plan that we  
8 put forth today will help achieve those three things.  
9 If you would like to have a conversation off-line, I  
10 would be delighted to bring all the people that I  
11 have spoken to personally over the last year into a  
12 conversation with you so that you can have the proof  
13 that you are requesting.

14 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Oh, no. This is  
15 not towards you. I expressed it to City Hall this  
16 morning when [inaudible 02:44:26] to share with me  
17 that they will be making the announcement. I think  
18 that this-- the [inaudible 02:44:33] respect so the  
19 Council, as a partner, doesn't show respect to the  
20 key player that we have working with us for many  
21 months in the medallion task force and I don't think  
22 that this announcement by this Mayor, the \$65  
23 million, has anything to do to be close to the  
24 recommendation to come out from the yellow taxi  
25 medallion task force. So this is not toward you and

2 I think that we do have leaders that represent and  
3 speak out on behalf of the independent medallion  
4 owners. And I'm not asking for anything that is  
5 confidential between City Hall or any individual. I  
6 feel that this plan reflects more conversation  
7 between City Hall and lender more than conversation  
8 between City Hall and individual medallion owners in  
9 the city Council.

10 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: If I may  
11 just clarify. I would like to clarify on the record  
12 that this plan is a city led plan and that it is not  
13 a plan that was developed in consult or consort with  
14 any lenders.

15 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: By no means did I  
16 say it was developed by that. But let me be honest  
17 with you. Mayor de Blasio should not be [inaudible  
18 02:45:56], neither his team. Approaching things in a  
19 different way, as we have been doing for many years.  
20 We are in the middle of a crisis. We have not been  
21 able to rescue any medallions. While we have seen a  
22 lot of people losing the medallion, what we have seen  
23 before, during, and after the pandemic, more  
24 medallion started being in the garage. So, unless  
25 City All is ready to have a conversation one-on-one

2 with all of us, all the stakeholders, I feel that  
3 this taxi owner relief fund reflects for me a  
4 consultation more with lenders than individual  
5 medallion owners.

6 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: And I  
7 understand your position and I respect to you and  
8 your opinions and all I can do is continue to  
9 reassure you that this plan was not developed in  
10 consultation with any lenders. This is a driver  
11 owner plan. We want to put money into the pockets of  
12 our driver owners. We want to write down their debt.  
13 We want to ensure that they allow less and that they  
14 have more manageable monthly payments. This is a  
15 solid plan. It will create a pathway to the debt  
16 forgiveness that a lot of proposals and other  
17 individuals have been requiring and I am happy to  
18 facilitate any continued conversation and we need  
19 your collaboration and your partnership for the  
20 health of the industry. And so, we would be very  
21 happy to set these one-on-one meetings.

22 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: So, this---

23 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: This is  
24 the time for us to work together. This is good.

2 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: I have 11 years at  
3 the Council. That is what I have been doing my whole  
4 life as a member of this committee since last elected  
5 in 2009 and as the Chairman of this committee for the  
6 last seven years. So, however the [inaudible  
7 02:47:54] this announcement came out, this doesn't  
8 reflect the level of cooperation that we have had  
9 with City Hall addressing this crisis. So, you just  
10 said that this plan came out, you know, from you  
11 guys, so you didn't have consultations with lenders?

12 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: This plan  
13 was not done in consultation with any lenders.

14 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: So, how do you--  
15 How do you know that this plan can work when lenders  
16 were not able to share the input on individual  
17 medallion owners that this can work?

18 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: So, first  
19 of all, you know, that restructurings have been--  
20 you have learned through the medallion task force  
21 that restructurings are a vital path to debt  
22 forgiveness and, over the last, you know, years and  
23 always, restructurings always assist medallion owners  
24 and we know that many lenders over the last year that  
25 have written down hundreds of millions of dollars in

2 loans through restructurings. What we have heard  
3 time and time again and what I have heard personally  
4 from our medallion owners is that, because of Covid  
5 19, because of the low ridership, they are not  
6 generating any income and, therefore, they cannot  
7 afford to the down payment that is necessary to  
8 restructure the loan. And so, this \$65 million plan  
9 will facilitate that so that the medallion owners  
10 don't have to worry about stringing \$20,000 together  
11 so that they don't have to borrow money from their  
12 friends and families or pick into the little bit that  
13 they have left in savings. This is a city standing  
14 by the yellow taxi industry and investing a material  
15 amount and saying, we will help you restructure your  
16 loans with the zero percent interest down payment  
17 loans. I am confident that this will work.

18 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: I'm going to pause  
19 on this question. Definitely, we have different  
20 interpretations and, of course, we have never been  
21 consulted. You don't have-- [inaudible 02:50:03]  
22 City Hall to consult us, but neither expect that  
23 something can [inaudible 02:50:06] that we got in the  
24 hearing where we didn't have any level of engagement  
25 in this conversation is something that neither we had

2 to have any role as-- and sure based on the input  
3 that I've been getting. But a lot of people are not  
4 happy with this. What people expect that the City  
5 Hall should be working with some other recommendation  
6 that came out from the yellow taxi medallion task  
7 force. Something that City Hall had not done.  
8 Commissioner, why did the TLC-- how is the TLC  
9 dealing with those medallion owners who are  
10 underwater on their payments besides this plan that  
11 you are announcing today?

12 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: So, over  
13 the last year, we have worked very closely with the  
14 majority of the lenders to halt the monthly payments.  
15 They are called holiday reprieves. And so, for the  
16 last year, at least since April 2020, most individual  
17 medallion owners who have outstanding debt had not  
18 had to pay their monthly bill because there isn't any  
19 business and the lenders recognize that. In addition  
20 to a halt and facilitating the halt in some  
21 instances, we have worked very closely with our  
22 medallion owners through the Resource Center to  
23 provide them access to PPP loans, to benefits, to  
24 unemployment benefits, as well as rental assistance.  
25 And, as you know, we had our Get Food program which

2 helped put \$40 million into the pockets of our  
3 drivers. So, the effort has been significant over  
4 the last year.

5 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: And how many are  
6 these medallions returned to TLC or any agency  
7 entity?

8 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: What do  
9 you mean by return?

10 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Those medallions  
11 that individual owners can now maintain. How many of  
12 those individual medallions have returned to TLC to  
13 lend [inaudible 02:52:33]?

14 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: So,  
15 they're not returned. For anybody that is not  
16 operating their medallion, they are able-- and  
17 anytime, not just during covid, be able to put their  
18 license in vehicle storage. So they don't have to  
19 give it up. They don't lose it. They don't have to  
20 operate it and they can save costs and insurance and  
21 we do have medallion owners who put their medallions  
22 into storage and that has been a lifeline for many of  
23 our owners over the last year, but I am very pleased  
24 to share that over the last couple weeks--  
25 particularly in the last two weeks-- we have seen

2 more medallions out on the road which is indicative  
3 of recovery and that our medallion owners, many of  
4 them are in a better position to start working again.

5 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: how many medallions  
6 are in storage?

7 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: I don't  
8 have that number in front of me, but there are  
9 probably about four or 5000 medallions in storage  
10 presently.

11 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Were those  
12 medallions most owned by a corporation or individual  
13 owners?

14 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: Most of  
15 the medallions that are in storage are by  
16 corporations. Most of the individual medallions are  
17 being operated on the road and, as I said a few  
18 minutes ago, we have seen nearly a 300 percent  
19 increase over the last couple of weeks and so we have  
20 more medallions on the road every day providing  
21 service to our riders.

22 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay.

23 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: The  
24 recovery is underway.

2 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: I don't know if we  
3 will have time to help them. I think that we have  
4 been losing months or years and, in other words, I  
5 feel that we have failed to the individual medallion  
6 owners and there has been specific proposal plan to  
7 rescue them and we have decided not to do it. And  
8 then, Commissioner, going back to the taxi owner  
9 relief funds, you said that the money was coming from  
10 budget that we have in the city. Is that the source  
11 or it is, as I believe it was this is the \$5 million  
12 dollars that the stimulus paid. So, is paying--  
13 what is the source of those monies?

14 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: So, those  
15 monies--

16 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: And why is--

17 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK:

18 [inaudible 02:54:56]

19 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: the stimulus money.

20 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: The  
21 stimulus monies, this fund was announced because, as  
22 the Mayor has said over time, that relief would come  
23 as soon as stimulus monies come and you heard the  
24 Mayor make the commitment today that \$65 million  
25 dollars in debt relief and to facilitate debt

2 forgiveness would be set up in the next coming weeks.  
3 So this program is proceeding and we're going to set  
4 it up as soon as possible so that we can ensure that  
5 drivers and owners who are either insolvent or on the  
6 path to insolvency have access to money as  
7 immediately as possible.

8 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Commissioner,  
9 before you take this role leading this agency and  
10 that's what I said to the record, it's not toward  
11 you, but whatever I say is towards we, as a city, and  
12 the agency as TLC, for many years, we told to the  
13 medallion owners, especially my major concerns about  
14 the individual ones, that they were the ones that had  
15 exclusive rights by buying these medallions,  
16 advertised by TLC to do [inaudible 02:56:16]  
17 everywhere. We, the city, has changed it-- those  
18 rules and regulations. How do you pretend that we  
19 can bring back the opportunity to the yellow taxi  
20 medallion owners to get the numbers of passengers  
21 that they need in order to-- not only to pay their  
22 monthly payment, but also to make a living. Many of  
23 them, they use the medallion, as you know, to get a  
24 loan to buy their house, to send their kids to  
25 college. And something that has a value of \$700,000

2 or a million dollars, went down to \$100,000. So,  
3 what is the future because [inaudible 02:57:09]  
4 saying that help is coming. Where is the plan right  
5 now to at least get from the stimulus money, 200--  
6 20-- \$50 million? \$55 million would not bring a  
7 solution to that industry.

8 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: \$65  
9 million will yield over \$400 to \$800 million in debt  
10 relief. That is exactly what is needed to be written  
11 down for these medallions. So you asked me a two  
12 part question. What are we doing? So, we have  
13 established this fund, which is significant. It's  
14 not an insignificant amount of money. \$65 million is  
15 a lot of money and that money will be used to  
16 facilitate--

17 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: We know about the  
18 money. We know about the money. The Council--

19 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: You asked  
20 me a two part question.

21 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: I know, but I want  
22 to interject. I'm letting you know. The Council--

23 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: I'm still  
24 speaking.

2 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: The Council is the  
3 one who approved the budget. So we work with City  
4 Hall.

5 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: I'm--

6 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: So, we do the  
7 executive budget and by the end of the day, we know  
8 about numbers.

9 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: Great.  
10 And I am not doubting that you know or your knowledge  
11 or your experience. And you know that I am a huge  
12 collaborator and I've enjoyed working with you and  
13 I've enjoyed working with the Council and I look  
14 forward to working together to ensure a vital  
15 industry across all segments. And if I may respond  
16 to your question, I'd like to take the moment now to  
17 give you a thorough answer, if you would like to hear  
18 it.

19 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Yeah.

20 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: So, as I  
21 shared, you asked me a question about the debt relief  
22 program and you asked me a question about what are we  
23 doing to be supportive of the industry. Again, the  
24 \$65 million is going to facilitate hundreds of  
25 millions of dollars in debt forgiveness and debt

2 write offs. That's important and significant and  
3 it's something that we can move pretty immediately.  
4 Secondly, we have to couple that with better or  
5 different enforcement. We have to make sure that we  
6 are incubating an ecosystem that is inclusive of all  
7 sectors of the for-hire industry. For-hire  
8 transportation industry. We need to regulate in a  
9 way that acknowledges our rules and the yellow taxi  
10 segment and that is also recognizing that the black  
11 cars and deliveries provide vital service across New  
12 York City. So, we cannot be one dimensional. We  
13 have to create a system or we have to improve the  
14 system where not only are our passengers receiving  
15 the rise that they need, but the men and women who  
16 work in this industry, who have been working in this  
17 industry for decades, can work and we will do that  
18 together with you through more effective regulation,  
19 through better enforcement, and we have to level the  
20 playing field and we have the power to do that  
21 together.

22 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: City Hall has  
23 refused to work around the recommendation that came  
24 out from the yellow taxi medallion task force before  
25 you took over this, as the Commissioner. So, again,

2 it's not about one individual. This is about there  
3 is a specific recommendation that came out from the  
4 medallion task force that would require much more  
5 funding than the \$65 million dollars. And, of  
6 course, yes, we will continue conversation with you,  
7 with City Hall and the rest of the team because what  
8 we need is a more aggressive plan putting more  
9 dollars to rescue this industry that will fortunately  
10 grow the value medallion for the 100,00 or close to a  
11 million to \$100,000 to people that today are  
12 struggling. When we, the city, made the [inaudible  
13 03:01:19] saying that they were the ones that had  
14 exclusive rights to do pickup and drop off and we  
15 changed those laws. We changed the numbers of  
16 passengers they would have and, based on that, the  
17 value of the medallion went down. Now, we, as a  
18 city, had to work harder and had to put more dollars  
19 to rescue that industry. With that, I mean, let me  
20 go back to my colleagues that have questions.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Chair.  
22 At this time, we will now call on Council members in  
23 the order that they used their zoom raise hand  
24 function. Council members, as earlier, please keep  
25 your questions to five minutes. At this time, are

2 there any members that have questions for the TLC  
3 Chair? Okay. Chair Rodriguez, it seems as if there  
4 are no other members that would like to ask questions  
5 at this time.

6 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: So, with that, this  
7 hearing is adjourned.

8 COMMISSIONER HEREDIA JARMOSZUK: Thank  
9 you.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair, we will not  
11 have public testimony.

12 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Hello?

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We have you.

14 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Sorry. Can you  
15 hear me?

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes.

17 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Yeah. So, I'm  
18 sorry that we didn't allow to finish the public  
19 session.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay. We can go  
21 ahead and finish public testimony now, if that's  
22 okay, Chair.

23 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Should I go  
24 back and issue you--

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I think we are good  
3 to go ahead and get started now.

4 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. So, now that  
5 we're back on session to finish this hearing with the  
6 public and with the public testimony, we will go back  
7 to our counsel and who will give instructions and the  
8 times that each participants have to give their  
9 public testimony. If you will take more than two  
10 minutes, please summarize by [inaudible 03:10:39].  
11 If it's longer, you can send in written testimony  
12 and, if it's longer, please summarize.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Chair.  
14 I will now turn to public testimony. I would like to  
15 remind everyone that, unlike our typical Council  
16 hearings, we will be calling individuals one by one  
17 to testify. Each panelist will have two minutes to  
18 speak unless otherwise instructed by the Chair.  
19 Council members who have questions for a particular  
20 panelist should use the raise hand function in zoom  
21 and I will call on you after the panelist has  
22 completed their testimony. For panelists, once you  
23 name is called, a member of our staff will unmute  
24 you. Please wait for the sergeant to announce that

2 you may begin delivering your testimony. Our first  
3 panelist will be Amanda Berman. Amanda?

4 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time starts now.

5 Amanda, you are muted. Hold on one second.

6 AMANDA BERMAN: Try again. Can you hear  
7 me?

8 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Yes.

9 AMANDA BERMAN: Okay. Good afternoon,  
10 Chair Rodriguez and esteemed Council members. My name  
11 is Amanda Berman. I'm the director of the Redhook  
12 Community Justice Center, a program of the Center for  
13 Court Innovation. In 2015, the Justice Center  
14 launched the Driver Accountability Program. We did  
15 this to address vehicular offenses within the  
16 criminal court system. The program seeks to improve  
17 traffic safety, and increase accountability, and  
18 provide alternatives to punitive sanctions such as  
19 fines and incarceration and it and today, six years  
20 later, I am proud to say that, thanks to the support  
21 of this Council, the program has now served over 2500  
22 participants across four boroughs. In addition, we  
23 have served as a model for the dangerous vehicle  
24 abatement program introduced by Council member Lander  
25 and past by Council last year. In the face of this

1 success, however, we continue to mourn, not only for  
2 the lives lost to the pandemic, but for the lives  
3 lost to traffic violence. Last year marked the  
4 deadliest year on our road to launch of Vision Zero  
5 with at least 244 lives lost. The need for more  
6 meaningful, effective, and equitable interventions  
7 has never been more urgent and we are, therefore,  
8 respectfully requesting the Council continue to  
9 support our program in the upcoming fiscal year. The  
10 funding would support four critical areas of work.  
11 First, it would allow us to sustain our program  
12 operations at our existing sites in Bronx, Manhattan,  
13 Staten Island, and Brooklyn. Second, it would  
14 support ongoing research to evaluate programmatic  
15 impact. Our existing preliminary findings suggest  
16 that the program is effective in reducing risky  
17 driving behaviors, but, with support from Council, we  
18 are in the process of completing a full evaluation  
19 which will continue into the next fiscal year third,  
20 renewal funding would allow us to expand our program  
21 into Queens, the only borough we are currently not  
22 surveying, yet where the need is particularly acute.  
23 Traffic fatalities in Queens increased by 22 percent  
24 last year, twice the rate of increase for the city  
25

2 overall. At the Center for Court Innovation, we are  
3 well positioned to meet this need in Queens.

4 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time expired.

5 AMANDA BERMAN: Oh. If I could ask your  
6 indulgence and just share one more sentence before I  
7 wrap up?

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Sure. Go ahead and  
9 conclude.

10 AMANDA BERMAN: Okay. Thank you.  
11 Lastly, we were hoping to support the expansion of  
12 our program to address more traumatic crashes on our  
13 road. And so, thank you very much for the  
14 opportunity to testify and we look forward to working  
15 with you.

16 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Thank  
18 you for your testimony. Do any Council members have  
19 questions for Amanda? Okay. Seeing none, our next  
20 panelist will be Ira Macner. Ira?

21 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time starts now.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: There you go.

23 IRA MACNER: Okay. Hi. Okay. Hello. My  
24 name is Ira Macner. I am a volunteer at 350 Brooklyn  
25 and a resident of Greenpoint. I am here to advocate

2 for the inclusion of electric school buses into the  
3 budget. All facts that I mentioned, from a 2018  
4 study, *New School Year, Same Dirty Buses*, from the  
5 New York League of Voters Conservation Fund., The US  
6 first funded school buses nationwide. In doing so, a  
7 precedent was set to provide children with safety as  
8 they travel to and from school. I remember vividly  
9 the vulnerability I felt as a child. Children  
10 literally have no choice but to trust the adults  
11 around them to preserve their well-being. We must  
12 stop subjecting their developing respiratory systems  
13 to diesel rod school buses. Not only does diesel  
14 exhaust pollute our environment with damaging  
15 greenhouse gases, but some of the exhaust, which is a  
16 carcinogen, and tours inside of the carriage itself.  
17 According to the 2001 NRDC study, the amount of  
18 exhaust found inside a bus is four times higher than  
19 that of cars. At 2015 study from the Universities of  
20 Michigan and Washington showed that after  
21 implementing the Diesel Admissions Reductions Act in  
22 2005, there was a 16 percent decrease in lung  
23 inflammation of children riding on those retrofitted  
24 buses. The study also showed a 20 to 30 percent  
25 decrease in lung inflammation among children already

2 diagnosed with asthma which, as you know, is a  
3 prevalent health challenge in New York's underserved  
4 neighborhoods. Also, school attendance rates  
5 increased by eight percent. Many see natural gas as  
6 the obvious solution. All natural gas has no  
7 greenhouse emissions, the process of fracking itself  
8 creates damaging emissions and a host of  
9 environmental problems such as volatile pipelines  
10 that threaten our wildlife, or soil, and our water  
11 supply. Electric buses are the best possible  
12 solution. They will not poison our children or that.  
13 The neighborhoods in which they drive--

14 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time expired.

15 IRA MACNER: Thank you.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your  
17 testimony.

18 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Sorry. Thank you  
19 for your leadership and your goals and your work  
20 around electrical buses. It's something that is very  
21 important also for myself and for everyone in the  
22 Council. So, thank you.

23 IRA MACNER: Thank you. May I please have  
24 the email again so that I can email my testimony?

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We will follow up  
3 with you. Thank you. Do any Council members have  
4 questions for this panelist? Seeing none, our next  
5 panelist will be Linda Nguyen. Linda.

6 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time starts now.

7 LINDA NGUYEN: Hi. Can you hear me?

8 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Yes.

9 LINDA NGUYEN: Okay. Thank you for the  
10 opportunity to provide testimony today. My name is  
11 Linda Nguyen and I am the senior policy and research  
12 analyst at ALIGN, the Alliance for a Greater New  
13 York. ALIGN is a long-standing alliance of  
14 community, labor, and environmental justice  
15 organizations dedicated to creating good jobs,  
16 vibrant communities, and an accountable democracy for  
17 all New Yorkers. Now, more than ever, year due to  
18 the pandemic, without any clear sight, we need the  
19 city budget to prioritize investments in job creation  
20 for the communities that have been hit hardest from  
21 both climate change and the Covid 19 pandemic.  
22 Within the city's 2022 budget, we are calling for an  
23 investment of 3 million dollars towards New York City  
24 S Bus, New York City's municipal electric school bus  
25 program. The 3 million dollars would allow the DOE

2 to expand the current to vehicle pilot program to  
3 approximately 16 additional school buses next year  
4 and would support the improvements to the necessary  
5 charging stations and bus depot infrastructure. As  
6 the person mentioned earlier today, the program  
7 expansion allows the city to directly target  
8 localized pollution in communities that have been  
9 disproportionately impacted by both climate change  
10 and Covid 19. Air pollution from New York City's  
11 aging fleet of 10,000 diesel and gas school buses  
12 creates an unequal burden, especially for students  
13 with disabilities. Students with respiratory  
14 illnesses who are more likely to ride the bus for  
15 longer periods of time and also environmental justice  
16 communities where hundreds of diesel buses are housed  
17 each day. Let's also remember that Harvard study  
18 that came out last year linking communities that are  
19 more exposed to air pollution like those  
20 coming from air pollution are more likely to die from  
21 Covid 19. Electric school buses create zero  
22 emissions, can be charged locally using renewable  
23 energy sources, and can also create high quality  
24 manufacturing jobs which is exactly what our folks  
25 need right now, especially during the pandemic. As

2 the city looks towards an equitable recovery for all,  
3 it must continue the practice of community led  
4 transportation planning to identify transit issues  
5 and priorities for the most mobility burdened New  
6 Yorkers, including clean, resilient, and accessible  
7 public transportation and Street safety. We believe  
8 these investments will move New York City on the  
9 path---

10 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time expired.

11 LINDA NGUYEN: towards an equitable  
12 recovery for all. Thank you so much.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your  
14 testimony. Do any Council members have questions for  
15 this panelist? Okay. Before we move on to our next  
16 panelist, the address to submit written testimony in  
17 his [testimony@Council.NYC.gov](mailto:testimony@Council.NYC.gov).

18 [Testimony@Council.NYC.gov](mailto:Testimony@Council.NYC.gov). Our next panelist will be  
19 Terri Carta. Terri?

20 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time starts now.

21 TERRI CARTA: Thank you. Good afternoon.

22 My name is Terri Carta and I am the Executive  
23 Director as Brooklyn Greenway Initiative, private,  
24 nonprofit that has been focused on, for nearly two  
25 decades, on the development, establishment, and long-

2 term stewardship of the Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway  
3 and a proponent of our citywide Greenway network of  
4 landscaped, protected, multi-use trails for people of  
5 all ages and abilities. Urban greenways create  
6 essential public space for human powered  
7 transportation and healthful outdoor recreation,  
8 provide numerous environmental benefits like  
9 stormwater and carbon capture, create jobs and foster  
10 acts of tourism, and provide connection to job  
11 centers in transit. Greenways offer sustainable, low  
12 cost mobility by encouraging more people to travel on  
13 bikes, scooters, and other electric and human powered  
14 means, significantly reducing greenhouse gas  
15 emissions and reliance on personal cars. Greenways  
16 are also an opportunity to center frontline community  
17 leadership and promote equitable, accessible, and  
18 resilient transportation and infrastructure  
19 solutions. The relationship between infrastructure  
20 and health is undeniable and the lives of black and  
21 brown and low income communities across New York City  
22 depend on the infrastructure investment decisions  
23 that are made today. It is with this multitude of  
24 benefits and I come to you today to call out the  
25 absolute essential need for increased capital

2 commitments to the closing gaps in our Greenway  
3 network in this capital budget cycle. Specifically,  
4 BGI asks the New York City Council Committee on  
5 Transportation and DOT Commissioner Gutman to  
6 advocate and approve necessary capital investments to  
7 close these gaps. Currently, greenways run through  
8 every district in the city, but they are rarely  
9 connected and, therefore, cannot deliver benefits  
10 equitably or fully. Our city needs bold and robust  
11 investments in public realm infrastructure that will  
12 enable all communities to thrive. We need to take a  
13 holistic citywide and interagency view. Significant  
14 capital investments made by other agencies can't be  
15 fully realized until corresponding DOT right-of-way  
16 projects are committed.

17 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time expired.

18 TERRI CARTA: I have one closing sentence  
19 that support for greenways is overwhelming across  
20 age, gender, neighborhood, and level of physical  
21 activity and emphasize the likely rate of return on  
22 a relatively modest level of investment. Thank you  
23 so much for your time today. We look forward to  
24 working with you.

25 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your  
3 testimony. Are there any questions for this  
4 panelist? Okay. Seeing none, Chair, I will turn it  
5 back over to you.

6 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you,  
7 everyone. Especially the sergeants and everyone  
8 behind the screen. The tech team and all members of  
9 the finance, the lawyers, in my own team in my  
10 office. So, hopefully we will continue again having  
11 conversation with the issue related to the relief  
12 fund that was announced today by the Mayor, as you  
13 heard. I don't think that the \$65 million as a  
14 solution to the crisis, especially when we put  
15 specific recommendations after we have spent months  
16 working in the yellow taxi medallion task force.  
17 With that, this hearing is now officially adjourned.  
18 Thank you.

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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 May 26, 2021