



January 17, 2025

Seth Contreras
Policy Advisor for Innovation
55 Water Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10041

Re: Designation of New York City Department of Transportation's Senior Policy Advisor for Innovation Seth Contreras to Serve on the Center for Smart Streetscapes ("CS3") Advisory Board Pursuant to COIB Rule 1-13(e)

Dear Mr. Contreras:

I am pleased to be informed that you have been designated by Commissioner Rodriguez to serve as a member of the Advisory Board for the Center for Smart Streetscapes ("CS3"). According to its website, CS3 is a National Science Foundation ("NSF") research center at Columbia University. Its mission is to take a new approach to smart cities and streets by prioritizing community input, organizational partnerships, and education initiatives in the research process. CS3 is funded by a grant from the NSF with a focus on tackling urban transportation challenges in Harlem using technology and community engagement.

CS3's Advisory Board is comprised of community organizations, government agencies, including the New York City Office of Technology and Innovation ("OTI") and technology companies. The Advisory Board advises CS3's overall strategy and development plan by providing input on strategic research and education plans, ongoing project performance, and proposed project plans.

As the Senior Policy Advisor for Innovation at NYCDOT you have the following duties:

1. Coordinate all research and development efforts that focus on testing emerging technologies with the private sector that can help the City achieve its climate and road safety goals;
2. Create and direct NYCDOT's first ever Innovation Committee, comprised of cross-sectional teams, in order to help unify research and development efforts, including maximizing information sharing and enhancing data collection, analysis, and reporting; and
3. Manage the City's first ever e-bike charging pilot program for food delivery workers in collaboration with the New York City Fire Department.

I have determined on behalf of NYCDOT Commissioner Ydanis Rodriguez, for the reasons below, in accordance with Conflicts of Interest Board Rule 1-13(e), to designate you to serve as a member of the Board.



Under COIB Rule 1-13(e) a public servant may be designated by an agency head perform work on behalf of a not-for-profit corporation, association or other such entity that operates on a not-for-profit basis, including serving as a board member or other position with fiduciary responsibilities provided that:

1. there is a demonstrated nexus between the proposed work, the public servant's City job and the mission of the public servant's agency;
2. such work furthers the agency's mission and is not undertaken primarily for the benefit or interests of the not-for-profit;
3. the designated public servant takes no part in the entity's business dealings with the City at the entity or at his or her agency, except that Council Members may sponsor and vote on discretionary funding; and
4. within 30 days the written designation is disclosed to the Conflicts of Interest Board.

Here, there is a direct connection between the mission of DOT to support responsible innovation and testing of emerging technologies that can help enable a safe, environmentally responsible, and inclusive transportation system.

Your participation on the CS3 Advisory Board will directly further and benefit the City's focus on testing emerging technologies that can help the City achieve its climate and road safety goals. Specifically, you will provide input on CS3's strategic research and education plan, ongoing CS3 project performance, and proposed CS3 project plans. You will also participate in the NSF's annual site visit and the annual Innovation Summit. You confirmed that you are not involved in any business matters related to CS3 or Columbia University as part of your job responsibilities at NYCDOT.

The reasons stated above in support of your membership on the Board and your agreement to recuse yourself from reviewing CS3 issues while serving as NYCDOT's Senior Policy Advisor for Innovation, leads me, on behalf of Commissioner Rodriguez, to approve your designation as a CS3 Advisory Board member in compliance with COIB Rule 1-13(e).

Within 30 days of my designation of you to serve on the Board, this letter must be submitted to the Conflicts of Interest Board which will then post this designation on its website.

Sincerely,

Margaret Forgione
First Deputy Commissioner

cc: R. Lynch, M. Dean, W. Carry, R. Wanttaja, D. Fenichel, J. Caldarella