

Curb Enthusiasm Episode 15 Transcript

00;00;00;16 - 00;00;03;07

Emily Weidenhof

Welcome to Curb Enthusiasm. I'm Emily Weidenhof.

00;00;03;08 - 00;00;04;14

Ryan Lynch

And I'm Ryan Lynch.

00;00;04;16 - 00;00;12;10

Emily Weidenhof

Our guest has spent his life fighting for social and economic justice and championing safer, more equitable, and more sustainable streets.

00;00;12;13 - 00;00;20;27

Ryan Lynch

He's a former teacher and New York City Council member who chaired the Transportation Committee. And for the past four years, he's led the New York City Department of Transportation as commissioner.

00;00;21;00 - 00;00;32;13

Emily Weidenhof

It's our pleasure to welcome Ydanis Rodriguez to the podcast. Welcome, Commissioner. We are so excited to speak with you today. And, Ryan, your chief of staff. Welcome as well.

00;00;32;14 - 00;00;32;25

Ryan Lynch

Thank you.

00;00;32;25 - 00;00;48;29

Emily Weidenhof

I'm very excited, here at 55 Water, you have a long history in this building. And a really amazing story about how you got to this amazing position as commissioner of an incredible agency.

00;00;49;01 - 00;00;51;28

Emily Weidenhof

Could you share with our listeners that story?

00;00;52;00 - 00;01;12;24

Ydanis Rodriguez

Well, first of all, thank you, Emily, and Ryan for being the co-host of this podcast. My first job was washing dishes at Old Henry restaurant, West fourth and sixth Avenue. Now there's a Capital [One], bank. So when I passed by through there, I told my daughter, this is where everything started. But my father took me there to work in the basement there.

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00;01;12;26 - 00;01;43;05

Ydanis Rodriguez

And being in this building decades after, when I used to work here doing sandwiches, where Chase Bank used to own most of the floors, and the cafeteria, used to be like at the 40th floor. And now being here to put myself through college, becoming a teacher and being a council member, and now having this opportunity to be part of an agency or 6000 men or women responsible to manage 27% of the land.

00;01;43;07 - 00;02;10;15

Ydanis Rodriguez

And as a New York City Charter established, we are responsible to providing a safe and efficient movement of people and vehicles. So, for me, it's a great opportunity because I see myself only as a person in the top of the agency. But I'm the story of the newcomer, I'm the story of whoever is, is taking care of the roadway, I'm the story of those who are cleaning, you know, our street and the story of those who are working in the correspondents unit.

00;02;10;15 - 00;02;26;13

Ydanis Rodriguez

So for me, it's like a great moment to be at my age of 60, working with so many great, talented people who are doing so many things to reimagine transportation in our city and being a role model for the nation and for the whole world.

00;02;26;16 - 00;02;34;29

Ryan Lynch

And, you know, having worked with you so closely over the past three years, gotten to know you not only as a boss, a coworker, but as a friend.

00;02;35;02 - 00;02;59;26

Ryan Lynch

You know, I think one of the cool parts about working for you is you have really great perspective. Perspective on, you know, achievement perspective on how projects evolve, but also perspective on life and what's important in life. And one of the things I most greatly appreciate about you is that you are always about family first. You're always putting your daughters ahead of anything, which is what,

00;03;00;02 - 00;03;00;27

Ydanis Rodriguez

Oh, they're my boss.

00;03;00;27 - 00;03;23;02

Ryan Lynch

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They're your boss, right? But you know, and then you expect that of your coworkers as well. You want your coworkers if they have something. If I've ever had anything with my kids or my wife, you've always been like, it's go. That's priority number one, so I guess. How does your relationship with your daughters sort of influence how you view the city, how you view transportation, and how you prioritize the work that you do?

00;03;23;04 - 00;03;46;09

Ydanis Rodriguez

Yeah, I would say my daughters are the most important things that I have in my life. For me, everything start and end with them, being a role model, and I appreciate it from their mother, who is Deputy Chancellor, Doctor Melendez, who always told me, I don't know how she got me, but she persuaded me that I had to be the role model or the type of person that we want our daughter to be in the future.

00;03;46;11 - 00;04;08;02

Ydanis Rodriguez

So it means, like, for being sure that we all have equal voices, for knowing that, you know, they're the ones that are the future of our society, and for me, my daughters are only part of the generation of young people who will be future whatever they choose to do in their lives. I learned from so many people.

00;04;08;02 - 00;04;16;08

Ydanis Rodriguez

Like for me, it's like I can say, as Lin-Manuel says, immigrants get the job done. You know, and I claim that. I claim that.

00;04;16;10 - 00;04;25;27

Ryan Lynch

Yeah, you often talk about even you're the mother of your kids and your neighbors are like, what are you doing? Why are you building a bike lane? Or why are you building a plaza here?

00;04;26;00 - 00;04;46;18

Ryan Lynch

But you talk about how transportation has to be viewed not just from an equity perspective, but from a perspective of socioeconomic class, like how have you sort of advocated that in communities that have historically not seen transportation as a priority or safe mobility as a priority, and, you know, and sort of kept that vision on the on the broader citywide goal?

00;04;46;25 - 00;04;53;21

Ydanis Rodriguez

I think the way of how I've been able to keep that perspective is by never being disconnected with who I am.

00;04;53;23 - 00;04;54;02

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Ryan Lynch

Yeah.

00;04;54;05 - 00;05;15;26

Ydanis Rodriguez

And I think that for me, like if looking to do the best I can, my daughters make me the best human being possible, it's like, be who you are. Be authentic. And I think that that's something that go for me beyond being a council member, beyond being a teacher, beyond being a commissioner. So, I think that right now we, well we having again putting the perspective

00;05;15;26 - 00;05;45;27

Ydanis Rodriguez

yes on transportation is great opportunity for us to bring all the energy and really celebrate all the accomplishments that we have obtained in this city for the last couple of decades. Putting the city in the best place possible and celebrating that we are a role model in the nation. With the largest number of protected bike lanes, with the largest numbers of public spaces, with the largest numbers of bus lanes, and never losing perspective.

00;05;45;29 - 00;06;01;16

Ydanis Rodriguez

Let's celebrate all the big accomplishments. And I think that that's a way for me on how I, you know, have decided to carry my soul and do my job as one, as is another member of 6000 men and women of duty.

00;06;01;18 - 00;06;24;00

Emily Weidenhof

So talking about perspective, I think another perspective that you brought to this agency that's been incredibly important for me and my team has been a perspective of celebrating and really looking at our cumulative accomplishments, you know, taking a moment to pause and to celebrate.

00;06;24;03 - 00;07;05;01

Emily Weidenhof

Speaking personally as a civil servant, it's so easy to be always thinking about the next thing or be feeling and seeing the thing you didn't get accomplished. But you know, it was a really important project, and you're just thinking about what's, what's, the next opportunity to be able to advance this set of improvements. So it's really easy to just always be thinking about the future and the next thing, and something you've really brought in in your time here at DOT is taking moments to celebrate the amazing work and energy and accomplishments of, of, of, this incredible agency.

00;07;05;01 - 00;07;19;11

Ydanis Rodriguez

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And I personally, I have to say, I'm so grateful for, for you bringing that value. And, you know, could you share what is at the heart of that value and the perspective that you see in the celebration of accomplishment?

00;07;19;13 - 00;07;30;15

Ydanis Rodriguez

Yeah, I think it is important that we as individuals, and we as an institution, take time to celebrate. Whatever new values I have brought to this agency

00;07;30;15 - 00;07;57;26

Ydanis Rodriguez

expanded from what we have built is coming from a good place in my heart of How can we keep moving forward? I always say that as someone that has been part of the movement, that has been one of the things that many people influence in my life; always to celebrate the moments of success, because there's going to be moments of defeat, there's going to be moments where we cannot accomplish everything we want as individuals, and as an institution.

00;07;57;29 - 00;08;22;05

Ydanis Rodriguez

And I think that, that, in this agency, again, the average New Yorkers, they are not taking time to know who's taking care of their pothole, who's doing their roadway, why we are not able to pave during the winter. And, and, I think that it is important that everyone who dedicates so much time, you know, are acknowledged and recognized.

00;08;22;05 - 00;08;34;26

Ydanis Rodriguez

And that's why I always say, like, I know my job, I know my role. I know that I'm the leading person in this agency, but I always will be successful if I share that spot.

00;08;34;29 - 00;08;50;13

Ryan Lynch

If we're not in the news for something, it generally means we're doing the right thing. So when the agencies when the operational agencies are hitting their marks and hitting all the benchmarks that we have in terms of pothole repair, in terms of lane miles, pay just the the bread and butter, what the agency does.

00;08;50;15 - 00;09;08;10

Ryan Lynch

If we're not in the news, that's a that's a positive thing because I'm always going to write about oh we did all this wonderful stuff. You know, New Yorkers are tough. So like when we don't hit benchmarks or we're the challenge to hit the different things in terms of bike lane miles or, or whatever the case may be, they expect really high levels of service and they deserve high levels of service.

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00;09;08;18 - 00;09;35;07

Ryan Lynch

But one of the things that I really liked about your tenure here, to the point of celebrating things, was allowing team members, yourself included, to go to different conferences, to speak with different agencies and sort of that cross collaboration that we had with a lot of different cities or different countries on transportation, to remind the team of the amazing amount of work the product that comes out of the agency.

00;09;35;10 - 00;09;59;03

Ryan Lynch

Everyone is looking to New York City as the leader of sustainable transportation in the country, competing in the world with all the amazing programs that we have. So that ability that, you know, to to your point earlier about celebrating the wins, like those are really great opportunities for to remind people you're doing amazing work. We're doing more than anything any one other city is doing combined in the country.

00;09;59;10 - 00;10;17;04

Ryan Lynch

And it's really important to kind of remind staff to, for example, Audubon, you know, that we just cut ribbon cut yesterday. That's the 150th or 151st New York City DOT Art project during your tenure here as commissioner. It's 11,000ft² of public space in an area that's devoid of public space.

00;10;17;07 - 00;10;18;25

Emily Weidenhof

And our 93rd plaza,

00;10;18;29 - 00;10;22;05

Ryan Lynch

93rd Plaza, taking a moment to, like, really cherish that.

00;10;22;08 - 00;10;44;07

Emily Weidenhof

Well, and also an agency of 6000 people. That's a city in and of itself. So the opportunity to lift up and amplify and celebrate all the amazing work also helps us all know about what our entire city, of, of an agency is doing. Because, yeah, as as I think we all like to say transportation is a team sport.

00;10;44;07 - 00;10;52;25

Emily Weidenhof

And, being able to respect everybody's contribution, and see how we're all lifting each other's work up is really important.

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00;10;52;27 - 00;11;12;02

Ydanis Rodriguez

And I see this agency not only as a place where we continue receiving, you know, great, talented people, and the level of retention. Like most people who come to DOT, they don't leave DOT. Like most people who are here, they have this opportunity to grow in our family.

00;11;12;02 - 00;11;48;11

Ydanis Rodriguez

And and I think that the level of honesty that everyone develop is so amazing. And for me, like I always say that when I came here, I saw every single person in this agency has great access that we cannot afford to lose. And I think that that's the most important thing that I see at the New York City is like the level of retention of people here is like 15, 20 years, and they are so dedicated, and many of them dedicate their whole lives and retire from this agency because they cared about the job that they do.

00;11;48;11 - 00;12;09;02

Ydanis Rodriguez

And so I encourage everyone, any audience that we have right now, to go to the New York City DOT. website. Look for opportunities to come and join this great agency, because you would not find another place if you want to make the difference, reimagining transportation, then coming to the New York City Department of Transportation.

00;12;09;02 - 00;12;12;27

Emily Weidenhof

Hey listeners, we hope you're enjoying this episode of our podcast.

00;12;12;29 - 00;12;31;16

Emily Weidenhof

For those of you who are as enthusiastic about transportation and planning as we are, we'd like to hear from you. You can submit topics and questions that you'd like us to cover at NYC.gov. Forward slash Curb Enthusiasm. And now back to our conversation.

00;12;31;18 - 00;12;57;28

Ryan Lynch

One of the greatest accomplishments that I've seen from you has just been like, we are going to focus on equity as an agency in everything we do, not just on where we deliver the projects, but in our contracting, in the makeup of the agency, like the people that work in the agency, and like the fact that we've gone from an 11% MWBE contracting the day you came in to, I believe

00;12;57;28 - 00;13;24;19

Ryan Lynch

it's 37% now, at the end of your the four years is a testament to putting your money where your mouth is and not just talking the game, but actually delivering on the game. And the

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same thing with, you know, the diversity in our leadership. The first time ever that DOT has had a leadership structure that is primarily, people of color, over 50% people of color, like, that's that's really reflective of New York City.

00;13;24;19 - 00;13;43;23

Ryan Lynch

And for an agency that has taken a lot of critique that way, it's not it's not made up of the people that represent the city or make up the city. I think that's a real testament to sort of the goal of achieving or getting into a position of power isn't the end goal. It's the actual delivery of what you can do when you get there.

00;13;43;23 - 00;14;19;03

Ryan Lynch

And those are some things that, like you've prioritized contracting, you've prioritized the projects in underserved communities. You prioritize the community engagement in underserved communities, just like through your your commissioner in your borough efforts there. There are a whole bunch of ways that you shape this agency, and I'd love to hear which one you're most proud of, but I think that the fact that you sort of put equity front and center in terms of not just a talking point, but actually a deliverable, has been really helpful in moving the city forward and moving this agency forward in a way that's going to be felt for generations to come.

00;14;19;09 - 00;14;42;28

Ydanis Rodriguez

Yeah. And I think that as a responsibility, I think that we all have to be in tune with that time and the movement. You know, the only reason why I share my perspective, my background, those values is because we do a great job, it's because no one can question like that we're taking care of the pothole in two days. No one can question that

00;14;42;28 - 00;15;17;20

Ydanis Rodriguez

we are doing our milling, our roadways, our sidewalk, our bridges, our 44,000 intersections under our light pole, you know, is working. And because we are able to do that, then I think that we had that time to brainstorm new ideas on what is behind this, what is the motivation? And for me, again, I'm happy. I thank God for this opportunity and, and, for me and my message, especially to the youngest ones, to those who may be thinking about, "I don't know if I can be successful in this area or not,"

00;15;17;21 - 00;15;38;29

Ydanis Rodriguez

I say yeah, you can. Just work hard and fight you obstacles. I can tell you even today. Like I know that I don't get the same airtime by the mainstream media because of my accent. It's clear that happens, but it doesn't put me down. I know that many people, when I came to this agency, start asking about the question, oh well, but is he a planner?

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00;15;38;29 - 00;16;06;29

Ydanis Rodriguez

Is he the engineer? None, of the previous commissioners we're engineers or planner but it's like, why don't you stop checking and having this conversation? So for me it's like society time go quick. And I feel that if we pass by through any division, through any position that we have in life, and yes, we become another person in charge of any area, and the commissioner, you get paid, you take care of the bill,

00;16;07;01 - 00;16;43;04

Ydanis Rodriguez

But what is that you fingerprint? And that's why for me, it is so critical that as we continue reimagining our transportation, first of all, we never separate from the biggest responsibility, which is to create a city where every movement of pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers are safe and efficient. And I think that when I look about DOT, I got to look back to Janette, to Iris, to Polly, to Hank, and know that I just took what they did further.

00;16;43;06 - 00;17;26;21

Ydanis Rodriguez

And I hope that after January, whoever my sub or anybody else would, may be a commissioner after January, that they take the value of this agency and also taking further. I think that, you know, being a commissioner in this agency is their biggest privilege, but the biggest one is to be working with this great team of men and women, those 6000 who are working so hard, 24/7 and because we run a tight operation in this agency, we can guarantee all New Yorkers and visitors that as they walk, they use the scooter, the e-bike, the regular bike, as they drive that

00;17;26;21 - 00;17;45;24

Ydanis Rodriguez

We are a city of 350 square mile that provides an efficient movement and a movement of people and vehicles. And of course, a vehicle today is not a vehicle 30 years ago, because a vehicle 30 years ago was only cars, today scooters, e-bikes, you know and other.

00;17;45;24 - 00;17;54;06

Ryan Lynch

Yeah. So New York City right now thankfully is experiencing close to record lows in terms of fatalities on our streets.

00;17;54;08 - 00;18;18;22

Ryan Lynch

That comes at the heels of like a spike during Covid. So, we do you know transportation from the three years perspective, engineering enforcement, an education. I think over the past four years, we've had really great, projects. I'm interested to hear. What do you think

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you're most proud of in terms of engineering projects that are really turning, moving the needle on, fatalities writ large across, New York City?

00;18;18;24 - 00;18;44;12

Ydanis Rodriguez

Yeah, I think you're right. As you say, we all can celebrate that we have 18% reduction of traffic death this year by compared to 2024. And as a result of big accomplishment, we have built the largest numbers of protected bike lanes in this administration. That's larger than the numbers have been that been built by previous administration in the same period of time. But also we've been widening the bike lane

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Ydanis Rodriguez

at Third Avenue, Second Avenue, 10th Avenue, and Third Avenue. We also have established the Weight in Motion, and other cities now are trying to learn from us. As under the BQE, And I got to say thank you to Tanvi, and Paul, and the whole team of bridges who worked with the private sectors. And we developed this software that now allow us to give a \$650 fine to those overweight trucks going through the area.

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Ydanis Rodriguez

And immediately after we started implementing the Weight In Motion, we saw a 60% reduction of overweight trucks, that allow for us to protect our bridges. But I think that among the big accomplishment being like from the Weight in Motion, the numbers of bike lanes, bus lanes. If you look at Hillside. Yes, the, the, bus lane that we did in Hillside

00;19;37;11 - 00;20;01;14

Ydanis Rodriguez

allows us to see how 200, 225,000 riders use that corridor every day.

Ryan Lynch

So, are, I think it's the longest bus lane we've ever done as an agency. Right?

Ydanis Rodriguez

It's the longest, and if we put in perspective, there's a 1 million bus ridership that we have in this whole city every day. And 225,000 go through Hillside.

00;20;01;22 - 00;20;26;14

Ydanis Rodriguez

So yes, finishing that one and taking on Flatbush than is have a lot of complicity. But we're working you know, building the bus lane in that area to the in the Broadway vision that that where we hope to see the futures of a Broadway from in Union Square all the way to Columbus Circle. That's what we want to see

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00;20;26;22 - 00;20;52;25

Ydanis Rodriguez

The future New York City making that big avenue more pedestrians and cyclists friendly. But we're not waiting for future plans. We've already been redesigning, building pedestrian space, bike lanes from 25 to 32nd and we will continue moving forward. Fifth Avenue! That's another big vision and not only are we discussing the vision of Fifth Avenue,

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Ydanis Rodriguez

but when we close with Fifth Avenue and during the holiday, we also saw a, a high increase of sales in that area. So again, I think I'm proud of all the bus lanes, the bike lanes that we have built. And, is this our final goal? No, we need to do more. And I hope again as we will look to the future of the city

00;21;13;15 - 00;21;30;11

Ydanis Rodriguez

we need to talk about what is a plan of how we will make the city more pedestrian and cyclists friendly, in a city where moving in our bus should be a good experience. Not an experience that it takes so long for people to go from point A to point B.

00;21;30;11 - 00;21;34;29

Ryan Lynch

So you talked a little bit about some of these projects that you're proud of.

00;21;35;02 - 00;21;59;14

Ryan Lynch

You know, I think you highlighted a couple projects, Flatbush in particular, in my mind, that that really goes to what Emily had mentioned earlier about the long term nature of a lot of these projects, like Flatbush Avenue is a very as you mentioned, a very complex corridor entails a lot of traffic analysis, a lot of community engagement. And we kick this off in 2022, and we're just starting to see paint on the ground, this past year.

00;21;59;16 - 00;22;25;03

Ryan Lynch

And I think that's like a testament to the sort of long term nature that you're talking about, like the baton passing from previous commissioners to yourself and to whomever comes after. And really sort of like where we're at right now is as a baseline to jump off of moving forward. But the challenge is that a lot of these projects are longer term projects that we do short term measures with paint and plastic, but the longer term stuff is capital.

00;22;25;03 - 00;22;41;09

Ryan Lynch

And, it's hard to sort of translate that to the public sometimes. So how do you think that moving forward, we can kind of communicate better with the public or engage with the

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public to kind of like highlight how complex these projects are, how, how, why they take so long and what we can do to speed them up.

00;22;41;09 - 00;22;44;10

Ryan Lynch

Because we do know that we need to speed projects up and implementation up.

00;22;44;14 - 00;22;59;13

Ydanis Rodriguez

I think it's about changing the culture. And I think that it's about knowing that when we from commissioners to everyone who works together, we take any project, we don't do it trying to be popular.

00;22;59;16 - 00;23;05;02

Ryan Lynch

You're in the wrong business if you want to be popular.

00;23;05;02 - 00;23;07;00

Ydanis Rodriguez

It's the wrong business and we got to do it because it's the right thing to do.

00;23;07;01 - 00;23;07;06

Ryan Lynch

Right.

00;23;07;09 - 00;23;29;25

Ydanis Rodriguez

And we need to do it because we have to understand that even though people may complain, people may be against it, but when they will see the benefit of a bike lane or a bus lane. Those places are not only important because they move our riders quickly and more safely and more efficiently, but also reduce speeding in those areas.

00;23;29;27 - 00;23;51;03

Ydanis Rodriguez

So, when we see that we have 48 more lives today than what we had last year, those, as we always say, these are always reminders, you know, you know, in our talking point. Those are not numbers. Those are lives. And I think that, you know, that's one of the big accomplishments for me. The most important one is to save lives.

00;23;51;06 - 00;24;19;15

Ydanis Rodriguez

And when we save just one life, for me, that's priceless. That's more important than hundreds of people that may be railing against a project or a bus lane or a bike lane. So, I'm happy to see where New York City is today. Everyone across the nation and the globe

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should be cheering New York City, not comparing the city with Amsterdam, or any of the places where he's only made by middle class people.

00;24;19;17 - 00;24;54;05

Ydanis Rodriguez

New York City is the most dense city in the nation. Knowing that our city is only made of 350 mi² of the 54,000 mi² of the state of New York, and we make half, almost almost half percent, half percent of the New York State population. We are 9 million people, of the 20 million of the state. For me it's about all the challenges that come on any project that we take, knowing that we have four different stations that, we cannot take many projects during the winter, that we had to provide space for the utility companies

00;24;54;05 - 00;25;24;01

Ydanis Rodriguez

Verizon, con-ed to do the work at the same time that we do the milling, and the paving of the street, knowing that in the city of New York, there's 30 million different opinions when we take any project. So, for me, I'm happy to see how New York is, Even those who are against it, now they celebrate having the bike lane where they can move across the five boroughs, through bike, through bicycle, or scooter, or mopeds.

00;25;24;03 - 00;25;29;23

Ydanis Rodriguez

I think and say one of the biggest accomplishments that we have, but the most important for me, is about saving lives.

00;25;29;25 - 00;25;38;13

Emily Weidenhof

Yeah. Having been at the frontlines of this work for the past four years, what advice do you have for the next administration?

00;25;38;13 - 00;25;48;01

Ydanis Rodriguez

Yeah, I think that not only the four years, but I since I was a chairman of the Transportation Committee from 2014, most of the law that now I have to accomplish,

00;25;48;01 - 00;25;49;04

Ryan Lynch

It's your own fault!

00;25;49;06 - 00;25;50;13

Ryan Lynch

00;25;50;13 - 00;26;12;05

Ydanis Rodriguez

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It's my fault I passed those laws. Working with TA. Look for me is about as I say, regardless if I would be commissioner. January 1st on new people will come on board. The most important thing is that we have a mayor with Mamdani that is on public space that he already said, that he even say that we he will change the process where [SAPO] make decisions.

00;26;12;05 - 00;26;39;02

Ydanis Rodriguez

And I think that, you know, he wants, and that in his words, to simplify the process where CBO they will know how to pay for some permits when they do some events on the street. So, I'm happy that we have a mayor that he even thinking further. So, it will be a challenge if we would not have a mayor that we now believe in reimagining public space.

00;26;39;04 - 00;27;01;00

Ydanis Rodriguez

If we would not have a mayor that did not believe in bike lanes and bus lanes. But I think the on January 1st we will have a mayor that he would take the big accomplishment on this administration. And he will continue to make the city of New York a pedestrian and cyclist-friendly city, a role model for the nation and for the globe.

00;27;01;02 - 00;27;19;17

Ryan Lynch

Great. So, I've worked with you very closely for three years. I've never gotten a straight answer on this from you. What's your biggest transportation pet peeve? You're so you're so accessible, so go with the flow. I don't know if you have one or not. I mean, what irks you the most about the transportation world?

00;27;19;19 - 00;27;38;21

Ydanis Rodriguez

So I think that for me, like I, I and I was I have my two daughters, 18 and 12, in the 18 being going to school in the last two years, you know, taking a train, and, and knowing the, you know, the challenge, especially for women, you know, in our train not feel safe.

00;27;38;23 - 00;28;05;27

Ydanis Rodriguez

And it is something that, you know, for me makes me unhappy to know that we cannot guarantee that everyone who are moving in our roadway, especially pedestrians and cyclists, they're safe all the time. Those who are in the train station they feel they're safe, too. But we New Yorkers, and we had to leave with any type of annoying people that we deal with.

00;28;05;29 - 00;28;14;19

Emily Weidenhof

Curb Enthusiasm Episode 15 Transcript

All right. And, Commissioner, what are you most enthusiastic for the future of transportation?

00;28;14;19 - 00;28;28;18

Ydanis Rodriguez

Continue reimagining our transportation. The future for me is building a city that is more friendly to pedestrians and cyclists, and especially to bus riders.

00;28;28;21 - 00;28;41;10

Ydanis Rodriguez

Amazing. Well, Commissioner, we are so grateful for your time. And you have certainly, in your time here, energized an agency to continue to think about how we reimagine our streets as public space.

00;28;41;10 - 00;28;52;02

Emily Weidenhof

And we are certainly excited to work with you well into the future, on this incredibly important work. And also continue to celebrate with you.

00;28;52;04 - 00;29;10;13

Ydanis Rodriguez

Thank you to all of you. Thank you to the 6000 men and women of DOT. Thank you to everyone in different parts of this nation or across the world who are making a difference through transportation, moving people safely, and efficiently is a human right, and we should all be working to accomplish that goal.

00;29;10;15 - 00;29;11;05

Ryan Lynch

Thanks, Commissioner.

00;29;11;07 - 00;29;13;26

Ydanis Rodriguez

Thank you.

00;29;13;29 - 00;29;47;04

Ydanis Rodriguez

Hi, my name is Ydanis Rodriguez, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Transportation. Thank you for listening to Curb Enthusiasm by New York City DOT. This episode was produced by Michael Santos with various reports from Sigurjon Gudjonsson and Juan Vega, theme music by Michael Santos. Curb Enthusiasm is available on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and other major streaming platforms. To learn more, visit nyc.gov/curbenthusiasm.