

**NYC Department of Transportation Testimony Before the
City Council Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
March 3, 2026**

Good afternoon, Chair Abreu and members of the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure. I am Mike Flynn, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Transportation. With me today are First Deputy Commissioner Margaret Forgione, Paul Ochoa, Executive Deputy Commissioner, Eric Beaton, Deputy Commissioner for Transportation Planning and Management, and Rick Rodriguez, Assistant Commissioner for Intergovernmental and Community Affairs. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of Mayor Zohran Mamdani on the New York City Streets Plan.

Although we are only a couple months into the new year, we are already making great strides in achieving the Streets Plan's goals with efforts built on the bold and ambitious work of previous years. In 2025, we made significant progress in improving transportation and the city achieved some major milestones: we ended the year tied for the fewest traffic deaths in New York City's history with traffic fatalities, down 31 percent since the launch of Vision Zero in 2014. These successful results are a direct reflection of our safety-focused approach to street redesign, education, and enforcement.

In addition to historic progress making our streets safer, Manhattan also benefited from the MTA's congestion pricing initiative, which led to an 11 percent reduction in traffic, faster bridge and tunnel crossings of up to 50 percent, and increases in transit ridership and walking trips. Combined with our major street redesign projects, it is easier and safer to walk, take transit and cycle throughout the city. Speaking of street redesign projects, across the five boroughs, we completed over 130 projects in 2025 that support safe and sustainable transportation. These projects include expanded pedestrian and cyclist space on the Queensboro Bridge, a transformational Bike Boulevard on 31st Avenue in Astoria, bus lanes on Hillside Avenue in eastern Queens that improve service for more than 215,000 daily riders, a new pedestrian plaza in Washington Heights, a new segment of the Harlem River Greenway on Bailey Avenue in the Bronx, and many more.

But, there is much more to do.

When Mayor Mamdani selected me to serve as DOT Commissioner, he tasked us with thinking big, being ambitious, and making our streetscape the envy of the world. And, that is what we are going to deliver.

We are going to do it with a focus on safe, affordable, and low-pollution transportation and building a vibrant and equitable public realm. As someone who has spent his career focused on this work, it is deeply personal to me and I recognize the special opportunity I have in this important role serving my fellow New Yorkers.

As I know from the nearly ten years that I previously spent serving our city at DOT, the agency has some of the world's best minds in transportation and is full of hard-working, mission driven employees. So, we are ready for the challenges that lie ahead.

Our most immediate steps have been to resume important street redesign projects that stalled due to political considerations or legal challenges. These projects include implementing parking-protected bike lanes along McGuinness Boulevard in Greenpoint, extending the Madison Avenue double bus lanes south from 42nd Street to 23rd Street in Manhattan, and restarting the process to redesign the 31st Street corridor in Astoria.

Just last month, we also announced the revival of two stalled bus and bike lane projects, which include finalizing the designs for the Fordham Road offset bus lanes and completing the final segment of the protected bike lane on Ashland Place in Brooklyn. This spring, we will also implement other Brooklyn bike lane projects including a long-delayed plan to build a bike lane network across Midwood, Flatbush, and East Flatbush and we will also install parking-protected bike lanes on East New York Avenue and conventional bike lanes will be added in Prospect-Lefferts Gardens. And this is just the beginning.

Later this year, we will release the second Streets Plan, presenting the City's comprehensive vision to make our streets even safer, more welcoming, and more sustainable. This time, we will focus squarely on outcomes—not just miles. We have to be attuned to how the work we do improves the lives of New Yorkers. We will ask clear, measurable questions:

- Are buses moving faster?
- Are fewer people being killed or seriously injured?
- Are more New Yorkers choosing to bike?
- Is it easier and more affordable to get around our city without a car?
- Is the public space we're creating high quality and equitably distributed?

These are metrics that matter.

I want the agency to go big and be bold. But, ambition alone is not strategy. The next Streets Plan should be a blueprint that aligns aspiration and execution to deliver real results for New Yorkers.

The scale and pace envisioned in the original Streets Plan reflected a significant and immediate shift. Experience has shown that sustained delivery requires aligning goals with an ability to execute at scale. If we are to move faster and deliver more impact, the agency needs the flexibility to prioritize its resources and the projects that produce the greatest results.

We want to focus on strategies that ensure scalable, long-term progress and prioritize investments that maximize impact. This is something that mandates alone cannot achieve.

We will expand proven tools, designs, and treatments across the city, while introducing new programs and commitments to transform our streets into vibrant, dynamic public spaces.

And, we look forward to working with the council to deliver these results in every district—with shovels in the ground building protected bus lanes, expanding pedestrian space, building protected bike lanes, and delivering life-saving street safety projects. No New Yorker deserves lesser results based on their council district.

Legislation

Turning to the legislation before the Council today.

Intro. 13

First, Intro. 13 sponsored by Speaker Menin. This bill would require DOT to install at least 100 illuminated, solar-powered traffic control devices at crosswalks annually over the next five years and to study the efficacy of these devices in comparison to regular crosswalks.

DOT frequently tests new materials to enhance safety on our streets, and we are always open to testing new technologies to increase safety. However, we have done some preliminary studies on the types of technologies envisioned in the bill and have concerns about their efficacy. Our previous tests found no notable difference in compliance compared to regular stop signs, and crashes did not significantly change at the five pilot locations when testing Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons.

Additionally, MUTCD guidelines would only allow for a limited universe of intersections, since in-roadway warning lights cannot be used at intersections controlled by traffic signals, stop signs, or yield signs. Analysis from other jurisdictions across the country identifies greater benefits in higher speed, lower traffic streets, which are typically in non-urban settings. Research also indicates a flashing light fatigue effect in which the more widespread the treatment, the less effective it is. Finally, this bill would require DOT to install a large number of devices—significantly more than is needed to determine efficacy.

We look forward to discussions with the Council and appropriate stakeholders on this legislation and the best strategies to explore new technologies.

Intro 93

Next, Intro 93 sponsored by Council Member Brewer. This bill would create a bicycle parking station program. In the first year, it requires DOT to identify 5,000 locations of potential sites for bicycle parking stations, 2,000 of which are to be within commercial corridors. Over the next 5 years thereafter, DOT is to install bike parking stations in at least 1,000 locations a year, 400 of which must be in commercial corridors. It also requires DOT to make a map of all locations installed and submit a report to the council within 6 years of the effective date analyzing the program.

Our city's cycling trends continue to grow, and with more than 600,000 bicycling trips taken in the city each day, we know accessible bicycle parking is critical for New Yorkers. Currently, we are aiming to install at least 2,000 bike racks per year on the sidewalk or roadway. But we are often exceeding our goal as we strive to offer free, short-term bike parking to keep our city moving. We install our large and small hoop racks, along with our bike corrals, based on bike parking demands and we're also looking to the future to include secure bike parking. Similar to current practice, we plan to use public input to identify locations for secure bike parking access, which will continue to fuel New Yorkers' embrace of cycling, a safe and environmentally friendly transportation option – while balancing operational considerations and competing roadway and sidewalk needs. We look forward to ongoing conversations with the Council to identify initiatives that meet our shared goal to support continued cycling growth.

Intro 163

Next, Intro. 163 sponsored by Council Member De La Rosa. This bill would require DOT, in consultation with the Department of Small Business Services and the New York City Economic Development Corporation, to conduct a study on the feasibility of providing ferry service to Inwood in Manhattan.

Although DOT owns and operates the Staten Island Ferry, we do not oversee or operate the NYC Ferry contract, and defer to our sister agency, EDC, who does.

Intro. 202

Turning to Intro. 202 sponsored by Council Member Gutiérrez. This bill would require DOT to complete installation of any necessary traffic calming device or traffic control device on any

street adjacent to a school, in no more than 60 days after DOT issues its traffic study determination.

DOT shares the goal to act as expediently as possible and we're continually striving to deliver more efficiently. We work to enhance safety through a variety of "traffic calming" and "traffic control" design changes that – together – make streets safer by encouraging slower speeds and reducing opportunities for aggressive driving. For traffic control devices, we have a detailed process called an "intersection control study" to determine if traffic signals or multi-way stop signs are appropriate. We also consider weather conditions and active site constraints like construction and sidewalk sheds – even in a perfect scenario we still need to consider factors that are out of our control when determining timing for installation.

Additionally, our traffic calming design guidelines determine the appropriate conditions for installation based on a field study. Many of our traffic calming measures are dependent on weather conditions and some treatments may fail, deteriorate, or lead to increased risk if installed during sub-optimal conditions.

Regardless of the treatment, we are taking unprecedented steps in our safety engineering efforts with thoughtful and comprehensive review that may take time prior to installation and we welcome collaboration in identifying specific areas of concern where we can bring additional safety intervention. We look forward to discussions with the Council on this legislation and the best strategies to ensure efficient yet thoughtful treatment installation timeframes.

Intro. 310

Next, Intro. 310 sponsored by Council Member Marte. This bill would require DOT to establish a program to ensure each sign in Chinatown has the street name in Chinese and English. As part of the program, DOT would also conduct a study to determine the Chinatown borders and then add the Chinese name of the street to each English only sign within the borders. This bill would also require DOT to replace any damaged bilingual street name sign in the City with a new bilingual sign, and enable a Council Member or the Public Advocate to request DOT add a street name in English and another language. Lastly, this bill would require DOT to create and maintain a website regarding bilingual street name signs for Council Members and the Public Advocate to enter sign requests, a searchable map, and a searchable database.

With over one million street signs citywide, our teams work quickly to prioritize the repair and maintenance of signs with designs following federal guidelines, which have a direct impact on safety. At the same time, we are committed to maintaining the current set of signs in

Chinatown, and would want to make sure not to add new administrative burdens to this process. We think Council's current practice of working with the City to identify street co-naming locations is the smart strategy when there is an interest in celebrating cultural influences at specific locations. We would be happy to have further discussions with the Council about this bill.

Intro. 655

Turning to Intro. 655 sponsored by Council Member Restler. This bill would expand the City's outdoor dining program by allowing grocery stores to apply for a sidewalk cafe license, removing seasonal restrictions on roadway cafe operation, and providing the option to expand frontage for certain cafes upon consent. This bill would also streamline the review process for restaurants applying to operate a sidewalk or roadway cafe by restricting Community Boards from requiring applicants to supply additional materials.

We are continuously exploring new ways to increase program participation and remove barriers to access for Dining Out NYC and support the bill, while also acknowledging operational and other considerations. We are exploring new rules to address heating and winterization standards, strengthen sanitation and quality-of-life requirements and enhance enforcement protocols. As we prepare for the program's second season, we look forward to using lessons learned from the program's first year to continue improving upon the program's success. We are happy to have more discussions with the Council and stakeholders about adapting our program processes.

Intro. 628

Next, Intro. 628 sponsored by Council Member Restler. This bill would require DOT to issue and receive applications to operate a sidewalk cafe and roadway cafe online and at a physical location accessible to the public. This bill would also allow applicants to save partially filled-out online applications in order to complete the application at a later date.

Our Dining Out NYC team works diligently with applicants to provide support on the outdoor dining application process, both virtually and in-person based on applicant preference. We already offer robust resources in partnership with sister agencies to provide free services for applicants to submit applications in-person, and applicants already have the opportunity to apply online or in-person. We are continuously exploring how to improve our online application process and are pleased to announce that the function to save in-progress applications is already available for applicants. We look forward to continuing the ongoing work of enhancing our application process by working with the sponsor on this bill.

Preconsidered bill 1336

Turning to preconsidered bill 1336, sponsored by Speaker Menin. This bill would limit the clear path requirement for pedestrian paths in front of sidewalk cafes to no more than 8 feet or 50 percent of the width of the sidewalk, whichever is greater.

Sidewalk space is becoming more competitive than ever and it is critical to prioritize the sidewalk as being a safe place for New Yorkers to walk, use a wheelchair, or push a stroller or shopping cart. Further, sufficient clear path requirements are necessary for our planners to meet various needs including providing space for bike racks, EV charging stations, Citi Bike stations, bus shelters, and other street furniture. It is also imperative to maintain sufficient space for pedestrian access and people with disabilities. And as we have seen all too well from this winter, overcrowded sidewalks during storms can lead to additional accessibility issues.

Currently, there are three tiers of clear path in the Dining Out NYC program based on DOT's innovative Pedestrian Mobility Plan: 12 feet on Global Corridors, 10 feet on Regional Corridors, and 8 feet on all other streets. The Global and Regional corridors exist largely in the Central Business District in Manhattan – the most heavily foot trafficked part of the city. 97% of all streets in the city already fall into the 8' clear path requirement.

We are thrilled with the growing interest in the program, but we are also wary of creating sidewalk congestion and compromising the accessibility needs for New Yorkers in the busiest sections of the city. We are happy to discuss our current clear path requirements to determine if any adjustments can be made while maintaining our commitment to making our pedestrian space safe and accessible for all.

Preconsidered bill 1335

Next, preconsidered bill 1335 sponsored by Council Member Hanif. This bill would require DOT to identify intersections that pose the greatest danger to pedestrians, based upon incidence of traffic crashes involving pedestrians, and implement curb extensions prohibiting parking within 15 feet of a crosswalk at a minimum of five intersections in each borough.

While curb extensions are an important tool in our traffic calming toolbox, we strongly believe that mandating specific treatments across the board, without considering the specific issues at a specific location, is inadvisable. Through the Vision Zero Borough Pedestrian Action Plans, the agency utilizes crash data, as well as engineering judgement, to determine the locations most in need of safety interventions, and what safety interventions are best suited for that location. While we support the overall goal to focus safety investments where they're needed most, we will want to ensure our engineers retain flexibility to make holistic determinations on where

safety treatments are needed and which treatments are most effective in those areas. We always welcome input from Councilmembers on any suggested locations to explore additional safety improvements.

Preconsidered bill 1338

Finally, preconsidered bill 1338 sponsored by Council Member Restler. This bill would require DOT to include in its next streets master plan, to be issued by December 1, 2026, a benchmark to expand pedestrian space by 1 million square feet per year for the next 5 years and to prioritize expanding pedestrian space in the areas around bus stops and subway stations that have the highest rates of pedestrian traffic.

Since streets make up 27% of the city's total land area, we maintain and manage a large portion of the city's public space. Pedestrian spaces transform reclaimed roadway into vibrant, social public spaces for all to enjoy and these projects simultaneously work to increase safety by enhancing pedestrian comfort and flow. As demand for pedestrian space increases, we are responding by expanding opportunities that prioritize pedestrians at the block, corridor, or district-wide scale. We are also developing some exciting new programs and commitments on this topic that we intend to incorporate into the upcoming new Streets Plan. These new commitments will complement our existing goals which result in approximately 500,000sqft of new pedestrian space a year. We look forward to ongoing conversations with the Council to identify initiatives that meet our shared goal to increase pedestrian space citywide.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Council for the opportunity to testify before you today. I'm really looking forward to partnering with you and your colleagues to ensure that all New Yorkers, and especially our least advantaged neighbors, can benefit from safe and livable streets that offer many different choices for how to get around. We would now be happy to answer any questions.