NYC Department of Transportation Testimony Before the City Council Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

October 27, 2026

Good morning, Chair Abreu, and members of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. I am Mike Flynn, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Transportation. With me today is Eric Beaton, Deputy Commissioner for Transportation Planning and Management and Madeline Labadie my Chief of Staff. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of Mayor Zohran Mamdani about Vision Zero and the Administration's street safety strategy.

October has been an exciting and busy month as the city is ramping up our reimagined Vision Zero approach. Vision Zero is a comprehensive, multi-agency priority initiative to build multiple layers of protection to both prevent crashes in the first place and minimize severity when they do occur. Our strategy is working. Earlier this month, we announced that traffic deaths have reached historic lows over the first three quarters of 2026, with the second fewest traffic deaths since the city started tracking data in 1910. Pedestrian fatalities are at an all-time low and, to date, this is the second safest year on record on our streets.

But we know that one death is one too many. On top of the tremendous progress to date, the Mamdani administration is committing to Vision Zero through the new *Vision Zero Reimagined* action plan, citywide strategy for the next decade, because there is more work to be done. Our decades-long initiative has shown that building safer streets works to keep more New Yorkers safe while traveling, and our newly released action plan continues the Administration's commitment to expanding the deployment of proven safety interventions.

While Vision Zero is a citywide effort, DOT is highlighting a variety of goals to support Vision Zero, which include:

- Implementing safety improvements for all of the city's most dangerous streets within three years—by the end of the mayor's current term in office
- Removing dangerous drivers and devices from our streets
- Encouraging safe travel modes while discouraging oversized vehicles
- Cultivating a safety culture of accountability through education and enforcement
- Leveraging emerging data, technology, and analysis for smarter interventions

Altogether, these efforts support a holistic, citywide strategy with our sister agencies to eliminate traffic deaths and serious injuries by targeting behaviors, vehicles, and street conditions that inflict the most damage.

The progress we have made under Vision Zero is remarkable, but we aren't satisfied. Not when New Yorkers are still losing their lives on our streets. When Mayor Mamdani announced my appointment as DOT Commissioner, he made clear our bold ambition: to make our streetscape the envy of the world. And, that starts with safety.

In just nine and a half months, we have reinvigorated the work at our agency. We advanced long-delayed street redesigns, we have ambitious new projects in the pipeline, and we are scaling up all the foundational resources we need to do more and do it faster: hiring additional staff, expanding work capacity with contractors, investing in new facilities and equipment, and so much more. I expect that this year will see record output at DOT – in terms of both quantity and quality – and we will set a new high-water mark each and every year.

We have a clear roadmap for where we are headed and we are laser-focused on delivering. We want to keep our eye on the ball by following the data, prioritizing the projects that will have the greatest impact, and directing resources towards where they are most needed.

We see the Council as a vital partner in this work. We share your commitment to street safety and welcome ideas and oversight. However, discretion and flexibility are critical to our success. In order for DOT to keep improving safety outcomes on our streets it is vital we preserve our focus on the projects and initiatives that have the greatest, data-driven impact. In the past, we've seen well-intentioned mandates curb our ability to adapt to the changing needs of the City's streetscapes. We are excited to work with Council to strike that balance and implement the most impactful projects possible.

My ambition for DOT—and it is shared throughout the organization—is simple: to execute with purpose and urgency because lives depend on it.

Legislation

Turning to the legislation before the Council today.

Introduction 46

First, Intro. 46 sponsored by Council Member Ariola. This bill would require DOT to install, at the request of a child's parent or legal guardian, warning signs with plaques to warn a motorist of the presence of a child with autism.

Being an attentive and safe driver, cyclist, or pedestrian is extremely important for everyone sharing the street in any neighborhood. We support the intent of protecting vulnerable road users – doing so is core to our agency's mission. However, guided by the federal Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), we use signage carefully. Both the manual and independent studies demonstrate that too many signs create visual clutter, which increases the

chances that drivers will ignore signs with critical information. It's also important to acknowledge that research shows that these specific types of signs don't make streets safer or change driver behavior. Finally, the system proposed would require substantial new staffing and funding – without an effective removal process, we would be concerned to see these signs up on every block.

We are happy to have further discussions with the Council about this bill and our rigorous process for street safety design interventions.

Introduction 113

Next, Intro. 113 sponsored by Council Member Brooks-Powers. This bill would require DOT, in coordination with the Police Department and other appropriate agencies, to conduct an annual study of driving behavior to determine what behaviors are associated with traffic crashes, injuries, and fatalities.

Our priority is enhancing street safety, which is driven by comprehensive data collection to inform the thoughtful implementation of new initiatives. By examining our streets, we're able to build safer streets that work to keep more New Yorkers safe while traveling. We support studies that help the City better understand equitable and targeted safety strategies, and look forward to working with Council on a few suggested amendments to ensure comprehensive reporting.

Introduction 613

Next, Intro. 613 sponsored by Council Member Joseph. This bill would require DOT to install 100 miles of protected bike lane per year for the next six years.

Biking in New York City is safe and getting safer – the rate of cyclist deaths is trending down – but of course we have more to do. As part of the mayoral administration, we are excited to build up our in-house capacity and to deliver more transformative and ambitious street redesign projects. As demand for safe and comfortable bike routes increases, we are responding by expanding opportunities beyond just protected bike lanes, ensuring the tools we use are appropriate for each respective corridors.

We share the Council's goal to enhance safety by delivering protected bike lane miles citywide and look forward to conversations with the Council on how to best implement these designs in an efficient and equitable way. As I said earlier in my testimony, mandates don't always adapt to our evolving city. You have an administration and a DOT that is committed to achieving shared goals, so let's work together to deliver the greatest possible impact on street safety while preserving the flexibility needed to do so.

As always, we are happy to meet to address specific corridors in your district that may need closer attention.

Introduction 1070

Next, Intro. 1070 sponsored by Chair Abreu. This bill would require DOT to establish a two-year low traffic neighborhood pilot program to direct traffic away from residential areas.

With 6,300 miles of streets and 12,000 miles of sidewalk, DOT is responsible for a vast and vital portion of the City's public space. Safety is our top priority when determining design treatments, and reclaiming roadway into vibrant public spaces increases safety by enhancing pedestrian comfort and flow. We are always thinking creatively about how we can reimagine and transform our streets into public space open to all. We support the goals of this bill, which would expand upon proven initiatives like Open Streets, Pedestrian Plazas, and even Trick-or-Streets coming up this weekend, to ensure that our streets continue to be a valuable local asset across neighborhoods citywide. We have thoughts on how best to define or structure low traffic neighborhoods, and we are excited for future conversations on this subject.

Introduction 1153

Next, Intro. 1153 sponsored by Council Member Santosuosso. This bill would require the City to establish a demonstration program for the installation and maintenance of intelligent speed assistance devices.

The Administration was proud to support the inclusion of Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA) in the State Budget, which authorizes the City to implement a Stop Super Speeders pilot program which would require a vehicle owner who racks up 16 finally adjudicated speed camera tickets in 12 months to install a speed limiter device. New York City has been a national leader in combatting traffic violence, and our automated traffic enforcement cameras have been an effective intervention, but a small group of recidivist speeders continues to flagrantly endanger themselves and others. Technology like ISA can target and preempt these super speeders' dangerous behavior, as it prevents a vehicle from traveling fast enough to break the speed limit in the first place. Since local authorization is required under the state law to stand up a program, we support this bill and look forward to future conversations to ensure the success of the pilot program.

Conclusion

I would like to thank the Council for the opportunity to testify before you today. We would now be happy to answer any questions.