



THE COUNCIL
OF
THE CITY OF NEW
CITY HALL
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10007

August 24, 2023

Commissioner Ydanis Rodriguez
Office of the Commissioner
Department of Transportation
55 Water Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10041

Dear Commissioner Rodriguez:

As Chairs of the New York City Council's Committees on Oversight & Investigations and Transportation & Infrastructure, we thank you for your prior testimony before the Council and answers to our previous letters, regarding the implementation of the NYC Streets Plan ("Streets Plan") and Local Law 195 of 2019. We write to continue that conversation and to request an update on several points regarding the mandates in the Streets Plan. In order to better understand and support the Department of Transportation's ("DOT") plan to achieve the Streets Plan's mandates, we ask that you supplement your previous responses by providing the following information by no later than September 7, 2023:

Year-to-Date Progress

1. Please provide a monthly breakdown of the Streets Plan quantitative mandates (Protected Bus Lanes; Protected Bike Lanes; Bus Stop Upgrades; Transit Signal Priority; Accessible Pedestrian Signals; Pedestrian Space; and Redesign Intersections) achieved for each month of Calendar Year (CY) 2023 through the date of your response.
 - a. For Protected Bike Lanes, please identify how many miles have been protected by physical barriers and how many miles are off-road or on raised pathways.
 - b. For Protected Bus Lanes, please identify how many miles have been protected by physical barriers and how many miles are monitored by camera.
 - i. For Protected Bus Lane miles monitored by camera, please specify which are monitored by stationary cameras installed by DOT, which are monitored by bus-mounted cameras installed by the MTA, and if any overlapping miles are monitored by both camera systems.

Remaining mandates planned to achieve in CY 2023

2. Please provide a detailed description of each project of the seven types of mandated projects that DOT anticipates completing between the date of your response to this letter and the end of CY 2023.

- a. For Protected Bike Lanes, please identify how many miles will be protected by physical barriers and how many miles will be off-road or on raised pathways.
 - b. For Protected Bus Lanes, please identify how many miles will be protected by physical barriers and how many miles will be monitored by camera.
 - i. For Protected Bus Lane miles monitored by camera, please specify which will be monitored by stationary cameras installed by DOT, which will be monitored by bus-mounted cameras installed by the MTA, and if any overlapping miles will be monitored by both camera systems.
3. Please explain in detail what specific actions DOT has taken to accomplish each of the following goals—highlighted in your February 21, 2023 and April 12, 2023 letters—in pursuit of meeting the mandates under the Streets Plan:
 - a. Bring on additional facility space;
 - b. Fill vacancies; and
 - c. Reform DOT’s contracting process.
4. Please explain the current status of the following projects. Please specify the mileage length of each and whether those miles will be “protected” so as to count towards the Streets Plan quantitative mandates:
 - a. Each of the “Potential Upcoming Projects” numbered 1 through 20 on page 59 of the February 2023 Streets Plan Update.
 - b. Each of the “Potential Upcoming Projects” numbered 1 through 35 on page 65 of the February 2023 Streets Plan Update.
 - c. Each of the “Green Wave Protected Bike Network – Upcoming Projects” segments identified by a dashed brown line on the map on page 65 of the February 2023 Streets Plan Update.
 - d. Each of the “Green Wave Protected Bike Network – Proposed Projects” segments identified by a light green line on page 65 of the February 2023 Streets Plan Update.
 - e. For any of the foregoing projects that will not be completed in 2023, please explain why (e.g. “community engagement, design challenges that are revealed in the planning process, and implementation capacity,” as noted in your February 21 letter).
5. Please provide the following contracts, two of which were previously requested in March 2023:
 - a. Contracts with any contractor who performs roadway marking work for bus lanes, bike lanes, or any other Streets Plan mandate.
 - b. The contract(s) under which American Traffic Solutions, Inc. (or any other contractor or sub-contractor) is providing to DOT, or installing, bus lane monitoring cameras.
 - c. The contract under which JCDecaux (or any other contractor and/or subcontractors) is contributing to Bus Stop Upgrades, as defined in Local Law 195.
6. In a letter dated April 12, 2023, you said that “bus lane camera supply chain issues are improving” and “[i]f these issue are resolved, we believe we will be able to install approximately 100 cameras by the end of May 2024.”
 - a. Please specify how many of these 100 cameras have been installed as of the date of your response to this letter.

- b. Please explain how many CY-2023-protected-bus-lane-miles and how many CY-2024-protected-bus-lane-miles those installations will produce under the Streets Plan.

Staffing and organization

- 7. In your letter dated February 21, 2023, you wrote, “We recently hired a Streets Plan Director to coordinate tracking of progress on the plan’s benchmarks and recommendations and produce reports. The Director works with different units throughout the agency, particularly Transportation Planning and Management to evaluate progress and produce reports.”
 - a. Please provide all reports produced by the Streets Plan Director.
 - b. Please provide a description of any pending reports to be produced by the Streets Plan Director.
 - c. Please identify each system, application, or tool (including any mapping tool) that the Streets Plan Director uses to track various projects and evaluate progress towards the mandated Streets Plan benchmarks and explain in detail how the Director uses it.
- 8. How many vacant positions is DOT currently trying to fill as of the date of your response to this letter?
 - a. How many of these vacancies are in the Transportation and Planning Management Division?
 - b. Have these vacancies slowed or prevented DOT from fulfilling its mandates under the Streets Plan?

Please send the requested information and any questions to the Council’s Director of Oversight & Investigations, Aaron Mendelsohn, at amendelsohn@council.nyc.gov or (212) 482-4240. Thank you very much for your transparency in responding to the Council's requests for clarification and for your partnership in implementing the mandates laid out in the Streets Plan.

Sincerely,



Gale A. Brewer
New York City Council Member,
6th District
Chair, Oversight & Investigations
Committee



Selvena N. Brooks-Powers
New York City Council Member,
31st District
Chair, Transportation & Infrastructure
Committee



September 8, 2023

Honorable Gale Brewer
Council Member, 6th District
563 Columbus Avenue
New York, NY 10024

Honorable Selvena Brooks-Powers
Council Member, 31st District
1931 Mott Avenue, Suite 410
Far Rockaway, NY 11691

Dear Council Members Brewer and Brooks-Powers:

Thank you for your August 24, 2023 follow up correspondence regarding the Department of Transportation's (DOT) NYC Streets Plan.

We continue to work towards the goals laid out in the NYC Streets Plan. We are currently in the peak of our project implementation season, which generally runs from early spring to late fall, corresponding with temperatures that are appropriate for installing materials like markings, paint, and gravel. Given that, progress toward the Streets Plan's quantitative goals will become clearer as we near the end of the year. We continue to maximize our current in-house and contracted capacity to implement projects.

We are very excited about some transformational projects that are underway or recently completed, including:

- Bus priority and accessibility projects that will improve commutes for more than 225,000 daily bus riders
 - Northern Boulevard in Queens
 - Gun Hill Road in the Bronx
 - Livingston Busway in Brooklyn
 - Third Avenue in Manhattan
 - University Avenue in the Bronx
 - Washington Bridge connecting Manhattan and the Bronx
 - Seven completed bus accessibility projects and are on track to meet the goal of 25 a year
- Bicycle priority and public realm projects across New York City, including, but not limited to:
 - The next phase of our Broadway Vision in Manhattan, which added new plazas, shared streets, and two-way bike connections on Broadway between 25th and 32nd Streets, with the next phase from 21st Street to Union Square now in development.

NYC Department of Transportation

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- The Underhill Bike Boulevard that will add traffic calming, two-way bike connections, and plazas to the entirety of Underhill Avenue in Brooklyn.
- The longest protected bike lanes ever installed in East New York, in concert with pedestrian safety improvements on Cozine, Wortman and Louisiana Avenues in Brooklyn.
- Bicycle improvements in Soundview in the Bronx, including protected bike lanes on Soundview Avenue that are currently being installed.
- The recently announced start of construction on a 10-foot-wide protected bike lane on 10th Avenue in Hell’s Kitchen along with new pedestrian islands and redesigned intersections.
- A safety project on Lincoln Avenue (Father Capodanno Boulevard to Hylan Boulevard) that will restore 24-hour parking on the north curb of Lincoln Avenue, install improved markings and signage, and curb extensions at select locations.
- Ongoing transformation of Berry Street in Brooklyn into a bike boulevard, with two-way cycling, loading zones, pedestrian enhancements, and a plaza.
- A “Complete Streets” upgrade of 3rd Avenue on the Upper East Side in Manhattan, which, in addition to bus lanes, will create a parking-protected bike lane.

In addition to the above projects, DOT is reimagining public space across New York City in ways that are not quantified in the Streets Plan and which were prioritized and fast-tracked as a result of the pandemic. These include:

- The Dining Out NYC program that formalizes the temporary program set-up during the pandemic.
- More than 160 locations stretching over 300 blocks in our 2023 Open Streets program, with 25 new locations including the first Shabbos Open Streets on Staten Island.
- The most ambitious Summer Streets program ever, doubling its size and bringing the program to all five boroughs for the first time.
- The nation’s first-ever Trick-or-Streets program which expands public space during Halloween.
- Reimagining of Fifth Avenue in Manhattan by first implementing Holiday Streets during the winter season.
- Opened The Arches—new public space under the Brooklyn Bridge—after 10 years of closure.
- And much, much more.

For future NYC Streets Plan projects, as stated in the February 2023 Streets Plan Update, the published maps serve as a vision for potential projects and improvements during the current five-year Streets Plan (2022-2026). All geographies are approximate; projects are developed through detailed design and community feedback.

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As such, project lengths, design details, and their impacts on the Streets Plan quantitative goals are not yet available. These details are finalized after projects are announced, presented to the public, and designs finalized and approved.

A full accounting of progress toward the Streets Plan in 2023 will be compiled as part of the 2024 Streets Plan Update, scheduled to be published this winter. The 2024 Update will include a report on DOT's progress toward the Streets Plan's vision and goals including installation quantities for the seven benchmarks specified in Local Law 195. The report will also include updated visioning for future focus areas for transportation projects.

We continue to work to improve our capacity to progress toward the Streets Plan goals. While staffing remains an issue, we are making substantial progress on this front, and our overall staff availability has increased in recent months. We are still actively working on updated contracts for stationary bus camera enforcement and real-time passenger information displays and contracting capacity remains a limitation on the rate at which we can implement projects involving new street markings, paint, gravel, and physical barriers. As we have mentioned before, there are a limited number of contractors with the interest and capacity to conduct this work.

Continued expansion of implementation will require both an increase in capacity from private sector contractors and an increase in staffing and facility space at DOT. We continue to work with our sister agencies to identify opportunities to add facility space to enable more vehicle and material storage and staffing. We recently opened a new yard for our Sidewalk and Inspection Management group in Brooklyn that will help us work towards our protected bike lane and physical protection goals by focusing resources on building pedestrian islands and median separation on new and existing bike lanes. The new yard will also help us meet our intersection upgrade and pedestrian space targets.

We appreciate the Council's interest in this important work and are eager to continue partnering to implement Streets Plan projects throughout the city. As always, we welcome suggestions from Council Members on locations for projects in your districts that would help meet the Streets Plan benchmarks and value your partnership in building local support for such projects.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ydanis Rodriguez', with a stylized, overlapping flourish at the end.

Ydanis Rodriguez
Commissioner

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