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Dear Friends,

No city in the world has reached Vision Zero. I plan for New York to be the first. It’s a monumental goal. But they don’t call this the greatest city in the world for nothing. I see that our work is cut out for us when I look at this Class of Vision Zero: 2015 Mid-Year Report Card, the first of what will be bi-annual performance reviews of the City’s effort to end traffic fatalities and serious injuries by 2024. There have been major leaps forward, like the plan to rebuild Queens Boulevard, the most notoriously dangerous street in New York. There have also been costly delays, like the months wasted while Transport Workers Union Local 100 (TWU) tried (and failed) to gut the Right of Way Law, a Vision Zero policy already proven to work.** In order to reach our goal of zero, Mayor Bill de Blasio must hold agencies in the Vision Zero Task Force to measurable yearly benchmarks on the reduction of fatalities and serious injuries.

At the dawn of his administration, Mayor Bill de Blasio put the City of New York on the road to Vision Zero, and grabbed the attention of the globe. More resources have been invested in the effort to save New Yorkers’ lives than ever before. And many parts of the City administration have been called upon to work together, with dedication, toward protecting people from harm on city streets. I was proud that T.A. was there to stand with Mayor de Blasio this month when he broke ground on the redesign to transform Queens Boulevard from the “Boulevard of Death” to a Boulevard of Life.

Today, the world is watching our progress, but it will take more than new resources and effective policy to move the dial forward. It will take a culture change in the way we look at traffic safety. We, the people of New York City, must believe that Vision Zero is an achievable goal. And we must stop using the word “accident” to describe crashes that result from dangerous streets and unsafe driving. Like our friends who fight against gun violence today, and our friends who fought against unsafe labor conditions in the past, we know that “accident” is a word that covers up solvable problems. When a plane crashes, we don’t call it “an accident.” When a crane collapses, we don’t call it “an accident.” As a society, when these tragic events occur, we expect investigations, answers and solutions.

I am banishing the word “accident” from my vocabulary, as part of a campaign with Families for Safe Streets, backed by a cadre of writers and thinkers, plus 100,000 New Yorkers. And I am asking you to ban the word “accident,” too. By committing to this change, we are recognizing – and calling on others to recognize – that New Yorkers are being killed and injured needlessly, because of problems that we can solve.

We all have a role to play in the effort to reach Vision Zero. I am dedicated to the work of saving lives on our streets. When you read this report card, I hope you find a place where you can dedicate yourself to that work as well.

Sincerely,
Paul Steely White
Executive Director

** In 2014, in New York City, 8 people who were in the crosswalk with the right of way were killed by MTA bus drivers. So far this year, that number is zero.
Vision Zero and the City of New York

As a candidate for mayor, Bill de Blasio made a transformative realization: traffic-related deaths and injuries are preventable in New York City. In early 2014, as the first signature initiative of his young administration, the mayor declared that too many New Yorkers are killed and injured while walking, biking or driving, and he committed the City of New York to a goal of Vision Zero—the elimination of all traffic deaths and serious injuries by 2024. By the end of 2014, the City was making bold strides toward Vision Zero: the citywide speed limit was lowered to 25 mph, the NYPD successfully increased enforcement of the most dangerous traffic violations and a total of 12 new laws were passed to advance Vision Zero. Pedestrian fatalities reached their lowest point in recorded history.

Today, that stride has slowed. In the first six months of 2015, street improvements were underfunded, and city agencies bowed out of critical Vision Zero projects. The rate of reduction in fatalities and injuries is currently not on track to reach zero by 2024. At the current rate of street redesign, it will take the City 100 years to fix every broken, dangerous corridor in New York. To achieve Vision Zero, City decision-makers need to cultivate ardent dedication at every level of government.

That means our Department of Transportation must begin to see bike lanes and safe crosswalks as urgent necessities, and officials must consider the safety of a street every time they make changes to paint and asphalt. New York cannot reach Vision Zero until the City’s halls of power are wholly dedicated to saving lives.

Making the Grade: Report Card Methodology

Transportation Alternatives is a 501(c)3 non-profit charity, and New York City’s leading advocate for safe streets. The following Class of Vision Zero Mid-Year Report Card is supported by Families for Safe Streets, a group of people who have survived a crash or lost loved ones in traffic, and more than 100,000 New Yorkers who stand with Transportation Alternatives. At the outset of his administration, Mayor Bill de Blasio tasked his newly appointed commissioners with a bold assignment: Vision Zero by 2024. With such an ambitious task ahead, it was expected that district attorneys, City Council members and State legislators would also agree to play a part in saving New Yorkers’ lives. This Mid-Year Report Card judges those parties on their role in progress toward Vision Zero.

The letter grades, accolades and noted failures contained herein are based in part on policy analysis drawn directly from the City’s Vision Zero Action Plan, but more heavily on real-life results. Enforcement data herein cover the first five months of 2015, from January to May. June summons data were not available when this report card went to press.
For New York to reach Vision Zero, every person must be able to get from A to B safely, no matter what mode of travel they choose. Every person who moves about the City is a pedestrian at some point. Along with the 2 million people who ride MTA buses each weekday, hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers add bicycles, private automobiles and taxi cabs to the mix. With intelligently engineered streets and diligent traffic enforcement, the City of New York can keep this mixed multitude of modes safe.

Report Card: Citywide Fatalities and Injuries

People on Foot

60 people on foot were struck and killed by drivers in the first six months of 2015, compared to 56 pedestrians at this time last year. 4,685 people on foot were injured in the first six months of 2015, compared to 5,565 at this time last year.

People on Bicycles

Five people on bicycles were struck and killed by drivers in the first six months of 2015, compared to nine cyclists at this time last year. 1,576 people on bicycles were injured in the first six months of 2015, compared to 1,574 at this time last year.

Motor Vehicle Drivers and Passengers

50 passengers in or drivers of motor vehicles were killed in the first six months of 2015, compared to 59 at this time last year. 17,256 people in motor vehicles were injured in the first six months of 2015, compared to 17,428 at this time last year.

Infographic Source: NYPD Motor Vehicle Collisions Database
**Report Card: 2015 Agencies and Grades**

**City Hall**
- Noteworthy: Vision Zero Hero
  - Mayor Bill de Blasio
- Not-so-Worthy: Streetscape Cheapskate
  - Mayor Bill de Blasio

**City Council**
- Noteworthy: Blue Ribbon
  - Council Speaker
  - Melissa Mark-Viverito
  - Council Member
  - Ydanis Rodriguez
  - Council Member
  - I. Daneek Miller
- Not-so-Worthy: Bottom of the Barrel
  - Council Member
  - Rory Lancman
  - Council Member
  - Brad Lander

**Taxi and Limousine Commission**
- Noteworthy: Choice Chauffeurs
  - Taxi Driver
  - Frederick Amofo
  - Livery Car Driver
  - Luis Alvarez
- Not-so-Worthy: Hazardous Hacks
  - Taxi and Limousine Board of Commissioners

**District Attorneys’ Offices**
- Noteworthy: On the Job
  - District Attorney
  - Kenneth Thompson
  - District Attorney
  - Cyrus Vance
- Not-so-Worthy: Out to Lunch
  - District Attorney
  - Robert T. Johnson
  - District Attorney
  - Richard A. Brown

**State Legislature**
- Noteworthy: Best in Show
  - Assembly Member
  - Joe Lentol
  - State Senator
  - Brad Hoylman
- Not-so-Worthy: Lobbyist Lapdogs
  - Assembly Member
  - Walter T. Mosley
  - State Senator
  - Martin Malavé Dilan

**Community Boards**
- Noteworthy: Leading the Charge
  - Manhattan
  - Community Board 4
- Not-so-Worthy: Standing in the Way
  - Queens Community Board 4
Thanks to remarkable leadership, and some unfortunate gaps in funding, Mayor Bill de Blasio is the only official to earn positive and negative ranking in the Class of Vision Zero Mid-Year Report Card.
Report Card: City Hall

Is City Hall prioritizing Vision Zero?

yes!

Mayor Bill de Blasio led the charge at City Hall in the first six months of 2015, publishing a robust agenda for the Vision Zero Task Force and demanding that City agencies work together on street safety. He brought Vision Zero policy to bear in Central and Prospect Parks, by banning vehicles from the majority of park roads, and within the City fleet, by insisting on the installation of bicyclist- and pedestrian-protecting side guards on every City truck. With his Vision Zero Great Streets initiative, Mayor de Blasio also made clear that he understands that fixing big streets is critical to saving New Yorkers’ lives.

Pushing the Department of Transportation to publish five Borough Pedestrian Safety Action Plans was a step forward, but not funding those action plans was a step backwards.

When the TWU threatened to gut the Right of Way Law (passed in 2014), City Hall leapt to its defense, with Mayor de Blasio stating: “You have to yield to pedestrians. You have to respect that there’s new laws now that clearly penalize those who do not yield to pedestrians. We’re here to save lives and everybody has to be a part of that.”

Vision Zero Hero:
Mayor Bill de Blasio

Mayor Bill de Blasio has vehemently defended the Right of Way Law, which has already reduced the number of deaths in the crosswalk since it was passed last year. He ordered City trucks — America’s largest fleet of public vehicles — and private sanitation trucks to install side-guards by 2024, which will save the lives of bicyclists and pedestrians and set an example for transforming truck design nationwide. In addition, as part of the Vision Zero Great Streets program, Mayor de Blasio showed unprecedented leadership in his commitment to transform Queens Boulevard from the “Boulevard of Death” to a Boulevard of Life.

Streetscape Cheapskate:
Mayor Bill de Blasio

Mayor Bill de Blasio underfunded street improvements, only increasing the Department of Transportation’s budget for immediate street-safety redesigns by less than 10 percent. As a result, many changes will not be implemented, including bike lanes, traffic signals that prioritize pedestrians, and curb extensions that could have started saving lives this year.

Preventable Crash:
Dylon Ramirez

Dylon Ramirez, age 16, was struck and killed crossing Baychester Avenue in the Bronx on January 4th. Baychester Avenue was identified as being in urgent need of redesign in the DOT’s Bronx Borough Pedestrian Safety Action Plan, but funding to redesign the street was not included in the City Budget.
Queens Boulevard has been the most dangerous street in New York City for too long. In 2015, Mayor Bill de Blasio ordered a wholesale redesign of the street. The innovative plans will become a model for how redesigning a street can save lives.

The redesign of Queens Boulevard will prevent approximately 76 injuries to drivers and people walking and bicycling every year.

That’s enough people to fill all the seats in two cars of the F train that runs beneath Queens Boulevard!
Report Card: Department of Transportation

Is the Department of Transportation fixing New York City’s most dangerous streets?

some of them!

The Department of Transportation set out a bold agenda in the first six months of 2015, with designs for transforming four of New York City’s most dangerous streets: Queens Boulevard, Atlantic Avenue, Fourth Avenue and the Grand Concourse. The plans for these Vision Zero Great Streets set a bold standard for safety improvements. But while these designs are ambitious, the actual scope is less so, with plans to complete only four Great Streets projects in the next ten years.

The publication of five Borough Safety Action Plans in conjunction with the NYPD, detailing urgently needed street fixes and enforcement gaps in every borough, was a high point. But the DOT only committed to completing a small percentage of these projects in 2015, and the agency also did not advocate for adequate resources for more safety improvements. Banning vehicles from much of Central and Prospect Parks was a step forward that couldn’t have happened without the DOT, and the department’s Your Choices Matter public service announcements have been compelling, and well-distributed throughout the city.

Safety Queen(s):
Polly Trottenberg

Department of Transportation Commissioner Polly Trottenberg has boldly gone where no Transportation Commissioner has gone before: Queens Boulevard, the widest and worst street in New York. It’s the first, and perhaps most exemplary, street on the Vision Zero Great Streets docket. In addition to setting the standard for other street safety projects, a redesigned Queens Boulevard could prevent as many as 90 injuries a year.

Sir Stalls-A-Lot:
Steve Galgano

Executive Director of Engineering Steve Galgano currently has only 115 speed cameras in operation, though state law allows New York City to operate 140 cameras. Automated speed enforcement cameras have the capacity to reduce speeding by 60 percent or more. New York City may be gun-shy because of the backlash against automated enforcement in Nassau County. But NYC is not Nassau County, and the DOT should not underestimate New Yorkers’ support for Vision Zero. As of press time, officials confirmed with T.A. that the DOT would have all 140 cameras operational by the start of the school year.

Preventable Crash:
Ervi Secundino

Ervi Secundino, age 12, was struck and killed by a livery cab driver on May 6th in Harlem outside the Frederick Douglass Academy where he attended sixth grade. A speed camera was once deployed on the block, but that camera was relocated a few months prior to the crash that killed Ervi Secundino.
Last year, the New York State Legislature authorized the City of New York to install 140 speed cameras in school zones.

This authorization passed because of the effectiveness of speed cameras, which are proven to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured in traffic crashes by 40 percent.
Report Card: New York Police Department

Is the NYPD enforcing moving violations that are most likely to harm New Yorkers?

C+

sort of...

The New York Police Department made a noteworthy effort, with active participation in the Vision Zero Task Force, and a citywide increase in enforcement of the most dangerous moving violations. The publication of five Borough Safety Action Plans in conjunction with the Department of Transportation, detailing necessary street fixes and enforcement gaps in every borough, was a high point, too. However, data shows extreme inconsistency among the precincts, and a lack of concerted effort to increase enforcement across the board. While some precincts are issuing more summonses for dangerous violations than ever before, others issued far fewer than last year. With such inconsistencies telling drivers they can “get away with it,” it’s no surprise that crashes caused by speeding and failure to yield are increasing at a higher rate than last year.

Despite the City Council and State Legislature recently creating new and helpful enforcement tools like the Right of Way Law (which allows the NYPD to charge drivers with a misdemeanor if they kill or injure a person in the crosswalk), the NYPD has yet to train their officers on using the laws, or formally encourage their use.

Top Cop:
Susan Herman

Deputy Commissioner Susan Herman brought Families for Safe Streets, and other victims of traffic crashes, to the table in the first six months of 2015. Her concerted effort to incorporate the voices of those most affected into policing protocols and policy standards will change perspectives and push Vision Zero forward.

Pitiful Precincts:
42nd Precinct (Bronx)
62nd Precinct (Brooklyn)

The 42nd precinct in the Bronx issued 74 percent fewer summonses for failure to yield in the first six months of 2015, while the number of cyclists and pedestrians injured in the precinct increased 30 percent. Brooklyn’s 62nd precinct issued 60 percent fewer speeding summonses and 80 percent fewer summonses for failure to yield, while the number of cyclists and pedestrians injured in the precinct increased 16 percent.

Preventable Crash:
Galina Shibayeva

Galina Shibayeva, age 76, was killed by an SUV driver in Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn on May 21st. In the past six months, the local 62nd Precinct issued 60 percent fewer summonses for speeding and 80 percent fewer summonses for failure to yield than last year, while injuries to cyclists and pedestrians in the neighborhood increased 16 percent.
Report Card: Department of Motor Vehicles

Is the Department of Motor Vehicles preventing unsafe drivers from driving in New York City?

Absolutely not.

The Department of Motor Vehicles spent the first six months of 2015 without a commissioner in charge, and despite its critical role in Vision Zero, the DMV has no agenda for reducing traffic fatalities and injuries. In a huge number of cases, drivers with suspended licenses remain on the roads, while summonses are adjudicated at a snail’s pace. Furthermore, the driver education program does not address Vision Zero or the nuances of driving in a pedestrian-dense urban environment. The points system, intended to keep dangerous drivers off the road, remains ineffectual and subject to manipulation. Often, when a driver kills someone, the family of the victim will have to wait more than half a year for an administrative hearing.

On a singular high note, the DMV began to post basic information about hearings for fatal crashes on their website. Additionally, DMV Administrative Law Judge Marc Berger made a clear effort to listen closely and render what justice he could to the family of Sammy Cohen Eckstein, recently suspending the license of the reckless driver who killed the 12-year-old boy two years ago.

Laudable Listener:
David Sampson

Acting Department of Motor Vehicles Commissioner David Sampson listened up after complaints from Families for Safe Streets about the DMV’s failure to notify the victims of traffic crashes about perpetrators’ hearings. In 2015, the DMV began notifying victims’ families, and posting limited information about crash hearings online.

Absent Appointer:
Governor Andrew Cuomo

Governor Andrew Cuomo, despite a full six months since ineffectual former DMV Commissioner Barbara Fiala stepped down, has yet to appoint a new commissioner to head the agency. Without a leader, the DMV is unable to move forward on even the most basic improvements, like keeping drivers with suspended licenses off the road, much less to participate fully in Vision Zero.

Preventable Crash:
Wesley Mensing

Wesley Mensing, age 27, was killed crossing the street in Midtown Manhattan in January. The driver who killed Mensing was issued a summons for driving without a license, but that summons was dismissed by the DMV.
It’s clear that New York’s Taxi and Limousine Commission has good intentions on the Vision Zero front, but until the TLC sets actionable safety-related goals, their progress is difficult to judge. The Commission took an important step forward by adopting the Drive Like Your Family Lives Here public service announcement as part of the required training program in the first six months of this year. Awarding the safest for-hire drivers and initiating a “Tip 25 percent for Driving 25 mph” day are all important ways that the TLC has endeavored to create a culture of safety among its drivers. Other steps toward Vision Zero include prioritizing safe vehicle designs, whether in their successful defense of the safer Taxi of Tomorrow, support for closing the passenger seatbelt exemption in taxi cabs, or the launch of the Vehicle Safety Technology Pilot Program, which puts black boxes in some New York City taxi cabs to record data on driver safety.

But where it really matters, the TLC is dangerously ineffective. In the first six months of this year, nine people were killed by drivers licensed by the TLC, all of whom are still on the road. TLC drivers should be held to the highest standard, and the Board of Commissioners has the power to remove drivers who kill from their fleet. After each crash involving a TLC-licensed driver, the agency should publicize the status of the driver’s license.

Choice Chauffeurs:
Frederick Amoafo
Luis Alvarez
Taxi Driver Frederick Amoafo and Livery Car Driver Luis Alvarez are for-hire drivers with impeccable driving records and a key understanding that the way they behave sets the standard for other drivers on the road. Amoafo is quoted as saying “You have to understand that you have people in your car, and they are human beings.” Alvarez echoes that sentiment: “I would like to advise my colleagues that to work safely, we must renounce selfish driving and put safety first.”

Hazardous Hacks:
Taxi and Limousine Board of Commissioners

While Taxi and Limousine Commissioner Meera Joshi and her staff stand out for their understanding of basic Vision Zero concepts, the Taxi and Limousine Board of Commissioners she manages failed to participate in the first year of Vision Zero, and remains unhelpful where it counts: sharing data and holding reckless drivers licensed by the TLC accountable. Regardless of whether or not there were temporary license suspensions, the bottom line is that the TLC has the power to permanently take their licensed drivers off the road, but they are not.

Preventable Crash:
Robert Simon

Longtime CBS correspondent Robert Simon, age 73, was a passenger in a livery cab when the driver crashed in Manhattan. The livery cab driver reportedly accelerated seconds before the crash, and had nine prior license suspensions and two open moving violations.
Report Card: MTA
Is the Metropolitan Transportation Authority advancing Vision Zero?

sort of...

After prodding from Families for Safe Streets in the first six months of 2015, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority agreed to officially join Mayor de Blasio’s Vision Zero Task Force. Now, MTA driver training courses include a video, Drive Like Your Family Lives Here, featuring the families of crash victims. At the dangerous intersection where 23-year-old Ella Bandes was killed by a bus driver, the MTA made plans to reroute their buses through a safer path. The Right of Way Law passed in 2014 showed a noticeable effect on the MTA; last year, eight people were killed by bus drivers in the crosswalk with the right of way, but to date, no pedestrians with the right of way have been killed by MTA bus drivers in 2015.

However, the MTA has been quiet, and quite unhelpful in challenging the TWU’s lobbying campaign to gut the Right of Way Law. In the first six months of 2015, the MTA fell further behind private bus fleets in their adoption of life-saving safety technology, with an aging fleet of buses that need crucial safety upgrades, like better mirrors, turn alerts, and side guards. The MTA’s victim-blaming Look Out for Buses public service announcement puts the onus for safety on the most vulnerable party.

Johnny-Come-Lately: Thomas Prendergast

Metropolitan Transportation Authority Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Tom Prendergast finally, officially joined Mayor de Blasio’s Vision Zero Task Force, making clear that with a wealth of their buses operating on city streets, the MTA has a big role to play in making Vision Zero happen.

Radio Silence: Adam Lisberg

Despite incontrovertible proof that the Right of Way Law is working to save the lives of New Yorkers, and ugly debates in both the New York City Council and the New York State Legislature about an effort by TWU lobbyists to create a special exemption to the law for bus drivers, MTA Spokesperson Adam Lisberg was silent, making no effort to call out lies or support the lifesaving law in these heated conversations.
Recently, Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance presented strong opposition to the TWU’s attempt to gut the Right of Way Law, and pushed for manslaughter charges in the case of the speed-related crash that killed a pedestrian on the Lower East Side. Brooklyn D.A. Kenneth Thompson, the only district attorney to take a leadership role in Vision Zero, established the first-ever Driver Accountability Task Force. He also dedicated major resources to the successful prosecution of a driver who killed three people in a speed-related, hit-and-run crash in Williamsburg in 2013 and the recent prosecution of the driver who killed a child pedestrian with an illegal U-turn in Fort Greene.

In the past six months, Bronx District Attorney Robert T. Johnson and Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown have made no effort to advance Vision Zero or distinguish themselves as prosecutors interested in traffic justice. Due to a special election, Staten Island had a temporary, acting district attorney for part of the first six months of 2015.

On the Job:
Kenneth Thompson (BK)
Cyrus Vance (MN)

Brooklyn District Attorney Ken Thompson and Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance led the fight for traffic justice in the first half of 2015, with aggressive and highly-publicized efforts to prosecute reckless drivers who were sober when they killed pedestrians or other vehicle passengers. These cases will set the precedent for how traffic justice can move Vision Zero forward. District Attorney Thompson also chose to lead the Vision Zero agenda with a collaborative effort, creating a cross-agency Driver Accountability Task Force.

Out to Lunch:
Robert T. Johnson (BX)
Richard A. Brown (QN)

Bronx District Attorney Robert T. Johnson and Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown have made no effort to participate in Vision Zero. Despite being up for re-election and presiding over traffic justice issues in boroughs plagued by traffic violence, neither district attorney appears to have attempted pro-active Vision Zero prosecutions, and both have failed to promote transparency when it comes to data about prosecutions related to dangerous driving.
Report Card: NY State Legislature

Is the State Legislature passing laws that will advance Vision Zero?

yes and no

Notable heroes of the Vision Zero agenda emerged in the New York State Legislature in the first six months of 2015, along with a few State Senators who seemed intent on reversing any progress New York City has made. Votes to increase penalties for dangerous drivers and authorize the installation of 140 speed cameras across New York City were notable victories. Sen. Michael Gianaris (D-Astoria) led the charge for legislation that would crack down on drivers who kill or seriously injure others while driving with revoked, suspended or otherwise invalid licenses. Assembly Member Linda Rosenthal introduced smart legislation that would hold reckless drivers accountable by addressing the arcane “rule of two,” and became a leader among her colleagues on Vision Zero issues, joining Brooklyn District Attorney Ken Thompson’s Driver Accountability Task Force and participating in Families for Safe Streets’ Vision Zero Vigil.

However, in the final days of the 2015 legislative session, a bill potentially weakening the crucial Right of Way Law was rushed through with no hearing. It passed in the Senate, but was effectively stalled in the Assembly.

Best in Show:
Assembly Member Joe Lentol
Senator Brad Hoylman

Assembly Member Joe Lentol made Vision Zero a priority, locally in his North Brooklyn district, with construction recently beginning on Pulaski Bridge safety improvements, and citywide, with his defense of the Right of Way Law, despite the TWU’s expensive lobbying effort against the law. State Senator Brad Hoylman stood out as one of few senators who resisted lobbyists’ effort to weaken the Right of Way Law, and demonstrated his dedication to Vision Zero by participating in Families for Safe Streets’ Vision Zero Vigil.

Lobbyist Lapdog:
Assembly Member Walter T. Mosley
Senator Martin Malavé Dilan

Assembly Member Walter T. Mosley and State Senator Martin Malavé Dilan introduced a bill that would gut New York City’s effective Right of Way Law, bowing to the demands of special interest lobbyists at the expense of New Yorkers’ protection in the crosswalk, and having a very public chilling effect on local police in their districts and citywide.
Report Card: New York City Council

Is the New York City Council passing laws that will advance Vision Zero?

A- yes and no

In the first six months of 2015, a line in the sand was drawn in the New York City Council, dividing Council members who are actively working to advance Vision Zero, and others who are actively trying to dismantle progress toward safer streets.

Council Member I. Daneek Miller’s effort to gut the highly effective Right of Way Law was certainly reckless, but the Council’s brave rejection of his effort, thanks to the leadership of Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito and Transportation Chair Ydanis Rodriguez, was encouraging. Additionally, Council Member Brad Lander initiated a first-of-its-kind Brooklyn Driver Accountability Task Force to bring elected officials, police, advocates and victims to the table.

Blue Ribbon:
Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez
Council Member Brad Lander

New York City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, Transportation Committee Chair Ydanis Rodriguez and Council Member Brad Lander made a series of powerful demands to keep Vision Zero on the Council agenda in the first six months of 2015, defending the Right of Way Law and prioritizing legislation to put side guards on nearly 10,000 New York City trucks by 2024, deter distracted driving, and encourage City Hall to study the causes of pedestrian injuries and fatalities.

Bottom of the Barrel:
Council Member Rory Lancman
Council Member I. Daneek Miller

Council Members Rory Lancman and I. Daneek Miller have both introduced bills that would roll back New York City’s progress toward Vision Zero in the first six months of 2015. Miller’s bill would exempt all city bus drivers from the life-saving Right of Way law, while Lancman’s bill would require NYPD crash investigators at the scene to weigh weather and road conditions above dangerous driving when deciding whether to bring charges of failure to yield and failure to use due care.
Last year, the New York City Council passed the Right of Way Law, creating a misdemeanor penalty when a driver kills or injures a person who has the right of way in a crosswalk or bike lane.

Despite Transport Workers Union Local 100’s high-priced lobbying effort, this critical safety law has already saved lives.

# of pedestrians with the right of way killed by MTA bus drivers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IN 2014</th>
<th>2015 SO FAR</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
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Report Card: New York Community Boards

Are New York City community boards prioritizing Vision Zero initiatives?

not really

With 59 community boards advising local policy in New York City neighborhoods, local responses to Vision Zero have run the gamut from proactive to obstructionist in the first six months of 2015. Manhattan’s Community Board 4 showed initiative by asking the Department of Transportation for raised crosswalks. Community Board 12 pushed for the first protected bike lane in Upper Manhattan. Community Board 1 in Brooklyn put public participation first by asking community members to speak at the start of the meeting instead of the end. In the Bronx, at Community Board 2, life-saving plans for improving bicycling and walking on Bruckner Boulevard sailed through the board. And Community Board 2 in Queens led the historic redesign of Queens Boulevard by putting the neighborhood’s input first.

But Staten Island’s Community Board 2 still, in 2015, lacks a webpage, public agendas or any effort to respond to community questions. Recently, Community Board 9 in Manhattan refused to allow a community member to speak during a public comment period because that person supported a safety initiative on Broadway between 135th and 153rd streets, and the board rejected safety improvements to the Riverside Viaduct because one member “feared it would interfere with his weekend trips to Vermont.” Community Board 4 in Queens only has two members on its Transportation Committee, and during a recent meeting about safety improvements to 111th Street, tried to disallow the Department of Transportation from making a presentation.

Leading the Charge:
Community Board 4 (MN)

Manhattan Community Board 4 is seeking out dangerous conditions on local streets, and directing support to solving those problems. Leaders at the community board pushed for the implementation of split-phase traffic signals, which reduce incidents of people struck by turning vehicles while crossing the street. And with a participatory budgeting process, Community Board 4 secured $250,000 in funding for innovative raised crosswalks on 8th and 9th avenues.

Standing in the Way:
Community Board 4 (QN)

Queens Community Board 4 ignored a serious safety issue on busy 111th Street, despite the widespread demand evidenced in nine community workshops on the topic in just six months, recommendations that have the support of local City Council Member Julissa Ferreras. CB 4’s transportation committee, with only two members, blocked a request made by thousands of area residents