



OFFICE OF THE BROOKLYN BOROUGH PRESIDENT

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**City Council Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
Oversight Hearing: Bicycles, Micromobility, and Street Enforcement
April 24, 2023**

Good afternoon Chair Brooks-Powers and members of the Transportation Committee, and thank you for holding this important hearing today. This year has already been a disaster on our streets. In February, drivers killed four pedestrians in just three days, they killed three more just last weekend, and we're on track for the worst year on record for cyclist deaths. We must remember that these numbers are people, and I know you'll hear today from families and friends whose lives have been upended by these tragedies. It's unacceptable, and we must implement better policies and more safety infrastructure NOW to protect New Yorkers.

While I support all efforts to make our streets safer, I want to focus my testimony today on Intros 417 and 501-A, while acknowledging that these bills are a small part of a much larger effort needed to get us back on track to achieve Vision Zero.

Intro 417: The purpose of this bill is to underscore the fact that bicycle lanes and other safety improvements are **infrastructure**, and to remove barriers to implementation. Existing law requires DOT to outreach to the local community board and elected officials when they plan for a new bike lane or transportation project larger than a few blocks. This notice is important. However, existing law also requires an unnecessary waiting period after DOT completes these consultations before they can begin implementation – 45 days for bike lanes and 14 days for major transportation projects. This can delay critical safety projects, sometimes by up to an entire calendar year, if DOT cannot start them before the end of their weather-dependent construction season.

Intro 417 removes these unnecessary delays, and will help DOT expedite its pipeline by creating a single timeline for its projects. This bill has the support of three other Borough Presidents, and I want to thank them, Councilmember Restler, and the 38 other Councilmembers who have prioritized safety by sponsoring this bill. To Speaker Adams and Chair Brooks-Powers, I hope you will take steps to pass it quickly so that DOT can maximize its street safety efforts this construction season.

Intro 501-A: Private vehicle ownership in New York City has been steadily rising over the last 10 years, a trend accelerated by the pandemic. Similarly, the rise in e-commerce deliveries has led to increased truck traffic. Simply put, there's just more cars and trucks on our roads, and more potential for conflicts with pedestrians and cyclists. Enforcement simply hasn't kept up with

dangerous driver behavior, especially blocking bike lanes, bus lanes, sidewalks, and fire hydrants, creating a mess of safety concerns on the roads. I support the citizen-led enforcement system that Intro 501-A will create, which will help deter these dangerous practices without increasing interactions between New Yorkers and the NYPD.

Finally, I want to mention two issues being addressed in other proposals on today's agenda. Illegal obstruction of license plates is a problem that continues to get worse. Intro 712 will help us collect data, and building on that, we need the City and State to keep up their targeted enforcement strategies regarding obstructed, fake, and out-of-state plates. On the local level, implementing residential parking permits and/or a permit system for out-of-state plates to park in NYC neighborhoods could help deter some of this rogue behavior. Additionally, we need to do more to support our Deliveristas. The task force required by Intro 927 will help push forward efforts to create e-bike charging stations around the city, and we also need local elected officials to step up and support this critical infrastructure for essential workers in their communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I look forward to continuing to work with the Council to keep all New Yorkers safe on our streets.