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CONTACT: pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov, (212) 788-2958

VISION ZERO: DE BLASIO ADMINISTRATION TO INCREASE TRAFFIC SAFETY MEASURES, CALL ON STATE TO APPROVE OVERNIGHT AND WEEKEND SPEED CAMERA ENFORCEMENT

NYPD will focus holiday enforcement and education efforts on speeding and DWI

Public awareness campaigns to keep New Yorkers informed on critical traffic safety laws

NEW YORK—As year-end data proves the COVID-19 pandemic led to unsafe driving speeds on emptier city streets, Mayor Bill de Blasio today joined the Department of Transportation (DOT) and NYPD to announce major initiatives to bolster speed camera enforcement, crack down on drunk driving, and increase public awareness of traffic safety laws.

Three quarters of traffic fatalities this year happened in times or places where no automated speed enforcement is allowed under current State law, and over a third of non-highway fatalities occurred in school-camera zones during hours when the cameras could not issue tickets. The City will call on the State to amend the state speed-camera law to allow cameras to operate around the clock. And as the holiday season reaches its peak, NYPD will focus its annual holiday enforcement – including for DWI – along corridors that have seen high rates of speeding crashes.

The administration also released speed camera enforcement [data](#) from 2014 to 2019, which demonstrates the cameras’ effectiveness as a safety tool, and shared new seasonal public-education campaigns focused on driver and motorcyclist safety.

“Emptier streets are not an invitation to drive at unsafe speeds, and we will not let drivers threaten New Yorkers’ safety without consequence,” said **Mayor de Blasio**. “I’m proud to stand with partners in government across the city and state to increase enforcement and call for commonsense traffic safety reforms that let us catch bad actors, no matter when they choose to put this city at risk.”

While pedestrian fatalities are on pace to be their lowest ever this year, total fatalities have risen. This year saw a marked increase in deaths among motorists and motorcyclists, and NYPD collision reports frequently cite excessive speed as a contributing factor in fatal crashes.

Despite those setbacks, this year is on track to conclude as the sixth-safest in New York City’s recorded history. Seven of the eight safest years in the City’s history have all happened since Vision Zero was adopted in 2014.

“The NYPD is as focused as ever this holiday season on ensuring safe roads for all New Yorkers,” said **Police Commissioner Dermot Shea**. “Our officers’ ongoing work to enforce speeding laws and target drivers who needlessly endanger others reflects the Police Department’s

precision policing philosophy and commitment to Vision Zero. As 2021 begins, the NYPD remains committed to protecting pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists alike.”

“In line with Vision Zero, the NYPD remains committed to ensuring the safety of every pedestrian, cyclist and motorist in the city,” said **NYPD Transportation Chief Kim Royster**. “Our officers work vigilantly to enforce the laws against speeding and driving while intoxicated. With education, enforcement and a close alignment with our Vision Zero partners, we are continuing our work to reduce fatal collisions this holiday season — just as we do throughout the entire year.”

“New York City has faced so many challenges in 2020, including on our roadways,” said **NYC DOT Acting Commissioner Margaret Forgiione**. “But as this difficult year comes to a close, we appreciate the Mayor’s leadership in proposing changes to the hours when we can operate speed cameras, which we have hard evidence have contributed to safer streets. We also look forward to our continued productive partnership with Vision Zero sister agencies, including the NYPD, working together to make sure that this holiday season is a safe one for all New Yorkers.”

“Drinking and driving can be deadly. In New York City, Taxis and Car Services operate around the clock every day of the year,” said **TLC Commissioner and Chair Aloysee Heredia Jarmoszuk**. “Instead of getting behind the wheel, the safest decision anyone who has been drinking can make is to hail, call, or request a TLC-licensed vehicle.”

Today’s Vision Zero announcement includes:

NYPD Holiday Enforcement

NYPD will be actively enforcing laws against speeding and Driving While Intoxicated (DWI) throughout the holiday season and beyond. Enforcement will occur along highways and on local streets where excessive speeds have been observed, including by DOT speed cameras. Enforcement will be conducted by NYPD Highway Patrol as well as by local precincts, each of which now has a radar detector.

Proposed Major Amendment to State Speed-Camera Law

In the wake of the large number of high-speed crashes overnights and on weekends this year, the Mayor today proposed expanding the State law that governs the hours during which speed cameras are operational. Under the current law passed in 2019, cameras are limited to 750 school zones Citywide – and can only operate during the hours of 6 am to 10 pm on weekdays. This proposal would make cameras operational 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

An analysis of 2020 fatal crashes shows that 36% of all traffic deaths this year that were not on highways occurred within school speed zones where permanent cameras are located, but happened during hours – on nights and during weekends – when the automated enforcement cameras were not legally allowed to issue summonses.

DOT also today released its detailed report on the speed-camera law, which continues to change dangerous behaviors. Among the highlights of the report:

- Latest data shows that speeding has been reduced on average by over 70% at locations where speed cameras are installed.
- Injuries are down 17% at these same locations.
- Two-thirds of vehicle owners who received a notice of liability in 2019 did not receive another within the calendar year.

As part of the current law, vehicle owners who exceed posted speed limits by more than 10 MPH are mailed a \$50 fine per violation. During 2020, the de Blasio administration installed 720 new cameras – more than had been installed in the previous six years combined. For the next year, DOT will continue installing speed cameras at the rate of 60 per month, with the goal of over 2,000 cameras by the end of 2021– which will make the program the largest in the country.

New Public-Service Education Campaigns

DOT and NYPD announced that they would be using social media in the coming weeks to highlight major trends in high-speed fatal crashes during 2020. This public awareness campaign will include:

- “Legit and Alive” – Vision Zero agencies are working with the Motorcycle Advisory Council to encourage safe and legal riding. Motorcyclists will be offered safe driving tips and encouraged to license and fully register their vehicles. As the City prepares for increased ridership of motorcycles and other forms of micro-mobility in the coming year, safe operation of motorcycles will be even more critical.
- “Move Over for Stopped and Emergency Vehicles” – This campaign will remind New Yorkers that under New York State law, when a vehicle is disabled or otherwise stopped on the roadway, drivers are legally obligated to move as far away as possible in a moving lane from the stopped vehicle, including police and emergency vehicles.
- “Everybody, Every Seat” – A new campaign will continue to remind drivers that in November, New York State began mandating that **all** motor vehicle passengers, including adults, must buckle up, no matter where they sit within the vehicle.

"To achieve safe streets, we have to change our laws, driving culture and infrastructure," said **Senator Andrew Gounardes**. "I'm proud to have been a champion for the expansion of speed cameras in New York City because they save lives. Period. But there is more we can do to improve this program and to build upon its success. No one should fear for their life crossing the street, let's work toward a city free from vehicular violence."

“The COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increase in speeding and speeding-related traffic fatalities in New York City. We need to be doing everything in our power to crack down on reckless motorists who speed, threatening the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and other drivers who share the streets. Thank you to DOT Acting Commissioner Forgione and Mayor de Blasio for your support for expanding the hours of the City’s speed camera program. I’m proud to carry legislation in Albany that would let the City operate its speed cameras overnight and on weekends to help the City further its Vision Zero campaign and make our streets safer. New

Yorkers have enough to deal with right now -- it's time to pump the brakes on dangerous driving by utilizing speed cameras in hotspots at night and on weekends," said **Senator Brad Hoylman**.

"I strongly support enabling speed cameras to issue violations in school zones during off-school hours. It's essential to curbing the out-of-control drag racing in our streets—and the damage it causes to our communities. That's why I have signed onto my colleague Senator Hoylman's FURIOUS Act, and will be encouraging my fellow Senators to join me in passing it right out of the gate during our next legislative session in Albany. I look forward to partnering with NYC DOT on this campaign," said **Senator Robert Jackson**.

"It is important that we make sure our roadways are safe for both drivers and pedestrians this holiday season. I applaud the Mayor's Office for the Vision Zero campaign which will work to both, educate drivers and implement a protocol that will ensure safety for all this holiday season," said **Senator Kevin Parker**.

"Despite the pandemic and the need to stay at home, more people are outdoors during the holiday season," said **Assembly Assistant Speaker Felix W. Ortiz**. "This makes it even more important that everyone obey traffic safety rules. Speed cameras help slow drivers from reckless driving. Crackdowns on drunk driving keeps irresponsible drivers off the roads. Let's all be safe during this holiday season and obey the laws. Stay safe, New York!"

Pedestrian safety is a priority concerning residents of my district and our office. We must continue to drive safely this holiday season with an awareness that senior citizens, bicyclists and students are statistically most vulnerable to the impacts of dangerous driving. This public awareness campaign can help to promote safety for our communities," said **Assembly Member Khaleel M. Anderson**.

"As a child, I was struck by a vehicle, and suffered injuries as a result. I am pleased that the Mayor has increased enforcement of traffic safety in order to make our city a safer place for everyone," said **Assembly Member Rodneyse Bichotte**. "Vision Zero protects pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists alike from traffic hazards. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen a transformation in residents commuting style. I am hopeful that with these steps in place, we will make New York a model for national success."

"Speed cameras help save lives, and, they should be on all of the time. I agree with the City's request to my state colleagues on calling for evidence-based steps to make people safer, especially during such a difficult time as we will still endure COVID-19 fatigue. Increasing the use of speed cameras could be a promising way to mitigate traffic-related deaths in the evening hours, in a way that also potentially reduces the possibility of racial bias in enforcement. But, we have to make sure that the City is accounting for, and responding to, racial disparities in enforcement as they arise in New York's general strategy through the holidays and beyond," said **Assembly Member Michael Blake**.

"We must continue to work to protect the safety of pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists here in NYC" said **Assembly Member Kenny Burgos**. "This is a welcomed step forward in the Vision Zero initiative and I look forward to safer streets during this unprecedented holiday season."

"Speed cameras save lives. It's as simple as that. These life-saving devices should be able to operate 24/7/365 because that's when pedestrians deserve to be able to safely cross the street. Thank you to Mayor de Blasio and leaders at NYPD and NYC DOT for supporting this vital legislation and I am committed to fight and get this change enacted as soon as possible," said **Assembly Member Jeffrey Dinowitz**.

"Speed cameras have saved lives in school zones across New York City, but those same roads become more deadly when the cameras are off. Simply by keeping the cameras running, we can calm traffic and save lives," said **Assembly Member Mathyde Frontus**. "Even as the pandemic has seen an increase in speeding on emptier streets, Vision Zero continues to make roads safer for pedestrians, drivers and cyclists. We need to use all tools at our disposal to ensure a safe holiday season."

"We know that speed kills and while we started by protecting school zones during the most likely hours of school use, it is clear all New Yorkers deserve safer streets at all times," said **Assembly Member Deborah Glick**. "I have been honored to work with advocate groups like Families for Safe Streets, and am pleased to have had the support of both the City Administration and my colleagues in the Legislature. It was just a year and a half ago that Governor Cuomo signed our legislation reinstating and expanding our speed camera program. It is now time to take the next step to make this a 24 hour 7 day a week program to address the safety of every New Yorker."

"Speed cameras are one of our most important and proven tools to stop reckless driving. The Council was proud to establish a local speed camera program in 2018 to hold reckless drivers accountable and keep children safe. Expanding the hours of operation for speed cameras is an important next step in this fight," said **Council Speaker Corey Johnson**.

"Our once filled streets have now been filled with open streets, open roadway restaurants, cyclists, and pedestrians. Now with more New Yorkers reclaiming their streets, we must ensure that all drivers are respecting the speed limit at all times," said **Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez, Chairman of the Transportation Committee**. "Speed cameras are our best safety tool in reducing the number of speeding drivers. I look forward to continuing to working alongside Mayor de Blasio, DOT, and the NYPD to ensure we are setting up all proper road protection for New Yorkers."

"Thanks to Mayor de Blasio and his team for this initiative to right the city's traffic safety trend. The city's speed cameras have already delivered safer streets. Redoubling their effectiveness should be a top priority in Albany in 2021," said **Jon Orcutt, advocacy director for Bike New York**.

"The COVID-19 pandemic emptied our streets as the entire country was placed under 'stay at home' orders. However, open roads are proving to be more dangerous because less traffic creates more opportunities for speeding," said **Liam Blank, Policy and Communications Manager for Tri-State Transportation Campaign**. "Traffic calming measures and automated speed enforcement are two of the most effective tools we can use to prevent collisions, injuries, and

fatalities. We commend Mayor de Blasio and NYC DOT for taking this threat to public safety seriously by rolling out these new initiatives."

"We applaud and completely support Mayor de Blasio's call to allow the city's life-saving speed cameras to operate 24/7," said **Eric McClure, Executive Director of StreetsPAC**. "As DOT's report on the speed-camera program plainly shows, automated speed enforcement works, and there's no reason it shouldn't operate around the clock. Every New Yorker deserves to be safe from speeding drivers, and one ticket is, in the majority of cases, enough to get responsible operators to slow down."

"We are pleased that the City is working to reduce speeding and enhance street safety this holiday season. Speed cameras make streets safer for families which will encourage more New Yorkers to walk and bike, helping to slash congestion and pollution. This would go a long way toward reducing emissions from the transportation sector - the State's leading contributor to climate change - which is why NYLCV will be advocating for this bill in Albany next year. We thank Acting Commissioner Forgione for her dedication to this issue," said **Julie Tighe, President of the New York League of Conservation Voters**.

About Vision Zero:

Vision Zero is the de Blasio administration's initiative to use every tool at its disposal to end traffic deaths and injuries on New York City streets. Since the program's inaugural year in 2014, when New York City became the first American city to adopt Vision Zero, the city's traffic fatalities have largely declined — bucking national fatality trends, which have increased over the same period.

For more information about the de Blasio Administration's Vision Zero initiative, please see www.nyc.gov/visionzero.

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