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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO ANNOUNCES RECORD 5,000 LANE MILES OF
CITY ROADWAYS HAVE BEEN REPAVED**

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Thank you, Vinny. Vinny, you've always been a voice of truth, and when you say something was done the right way and something was done without any inconvenience to the neighbors, that is music to my ears, and I want to thank you for being here. But let's give credit where credit is due, to the folks that work at DOT that have done an amazing job.

[Applause]

These are unsung heroes. You see this extraordinary impact the repaving makes in people's lives. But the folks who do the work don't get the acclaim that they deserve. So, it's something for me that makes it especially important that we're here thanking people who really have done something special, and, by the way, have given a little bit of faith to the people of Staten Island that something actually can be done the right way with their tax dollars. And so, you've made a big impact, guys. Everyone, well done. Congratulations – congratulations to all.

I want to say on a sober note that this work – all of the work that the people at DOT does – that they do all the time can be unfortunately very dangerous and we lost a good man last month, Goerge Staab, a DOT worker in the middle of doing his job one day who died trying to help the people of this city actually get around and helping this city function. So, we keep him in our memory, and his family – we stand by them. But it's a reminder that this work can be dangerous and it's another reason to say thank you to DOT workers, because they're out there for us no matter what the elements throw at them or the traffic or anything else. But the good news, the news to celebrate is the amazing progress that has been made on behalf of Staten Islanders, and people all over this city.

I want to take you on a little trip down memory lane, not as far back as Jack Paar – that was an obscure reference, but I want to take you back to 2014. And for years leading up to 2014 there really had not been enough investment in our roads. And so when you went around the city you saw a huge number of streets that really were in bad shape. A lot of deferred maintenance and that meant for a lot of motorists accidents and damage to their vehicles and a poor quality of life – driving too often felt like an obstacle course to everyday New Yorkers – that was not an acceptable situation for any city, certainly not acceptable for the greatest city in the world. We

still have a long way to go, but the difference now is we actually invested. The plan we put together back in 2015 was for \$1.6 billion over 10 years to right some of the wrongs of the past, to focus on repaving, not just patching up as Vinny said, not a temporary fix that around here doesn't last very long, but to actually go to the root of the problem.

Now, I think we can all agree \$1.6 billion is real money and it's making a real impact. The numbers speak for themselves but every great initiative needs a great slogan. And to that we turn to a man, a visionary who said one day and once he said it I couldn't get it out of my head. He said pave, baby, pave and I know it was you homage to Sarah Palin, but that's okay.

Staten Island Borough President James Oddo: Sometimes staring at the sun pays off.

Mayor: That's right. Another great quote. He's got one every day. Pave, baby, pave said it all. It's like let's get to work, let's do this, let's do everything we can do.

So what have we done? What have all of you done? Well we're here to announce – it's been now basically three full years of work, and after those three years, here's the amazing fact. This city has repaved 5,000 lane miles of road all over the five boroughs. How far is that Jimmy?

Borough President Oddo: How far is that Mr. Mayor?

Mayor: I'm glad you asked. That is the equivalent of driving all the way to Las Vegas and back to give you a sense of how much these good men and women achieved – 5,000 lane miles. Well that is now evidence of the fact we have repaved over a quarter of the roads in this city. And in this borough, where driving is particularly important to people's lifestyle because of the reality of the geography and the reality of mass transit, in this borough we have repaved almost half of the roads. Almost half the roads in Staten Island repaved in the last three years. So we're living up to that slogan.

But there was another piece to the equation, and I want to say that Jimmy and Steve were more than a little obsessed with this point, which is how ridiculous it has been that a street is repaved, it's beautiful, it's smooth, it's everything you could want, and then a month later it's torn up by a utility and it looks like all that work was in vain. We don't tolerate that notion. Obviously sometimes there's an emergency, we understand that. But we want to make sure the standards are clearer than ever. So DOT is instituting a new standard. They are increasing the restrictions for the utilities and other companies that ever need to open up the roads. Again, with the exception of emergency, it will now be a two-year standard that either you get the work done before the repaving happens, or you wait a full two years before you can go back into the road. And that's going to make life better. That plan will be initiated here in Staten Island in July. And I know it's going to make a big difference in the quality of life.

We're going to be doing a lot of other things to improve our repaving efforts and improve our roads. Our Borough Commissioner Tom Cocola will talk about that in a moment. But I will tell you this, this city and this agency, DOT, we are going to be repaving non-stop, day and night. We're not stopping. There's a lot to do. A lot of people we can help. And the good work is going to continue. And I'll say it this way, this is not the easiest city to live in. Life in New York City

can be kind of tough. Life in New York City can be kind of bumpy, but at least our streets can be smooth.

So, in Spanish. It's not as good as pave, baby, pave but I'll take it. I'll take it. *En Español* –

[Mayor De Blasio speaks in Spanish]

With that I turn to the original spokesman and visionary of paving, Borough President Jimmy Oddo.

[...]

Mayor: I want to thank our Borough Commissioner for the work that he does leading the way to get this done and again this is a borough that depends on DOT especially. And when Jimmy was pointing out the difference in the history of what's happened in recent years versus the past.

Just want to note this is also about a recognition that there are five boroughs in this city and that seven million of us live outside Manhattan and that the government needs to represent all five boroughs, serve all five boroughs, so this repaving effort is important because it's a recognition of actually helping in every kind of neighborhood and making sure that the resources really are distributed fairly in this city. With that, the man we depend on to do so much of that here, our Borough Commissioner Tom Cocola.

Staten Island Borough Commissioner Tom Cocola, Department of Transportation: Thank you, thank you. Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Good afternoon to everybody. Commissioner Polly Trottenberg unfortunately wasn't able to come here today, but she's very excited to share this news.

I want to welcome you, this is our [inaudible], and I think City Hall picked the right borough to mark our administration reaching five thousand lane miles. Our DOT colleagues, those wonderful men and women over there, they've worked extremely hard over the past few years to fulfill the Mayor's commitment to deliver the more resurfacing miles here at Staten Island and also across the City, and I'm glad that these results pay off.

I have to acknowledge Borough President Oddo, author of the "the Marshall Plan" for improving roads that he wrote in December of 2014, our great Councilwoman of the North Shore, Debi Rose, who is a tireless advocate, Joe Borelli of the South Shore and before him Vinny Ignizio, and then my good friend Steve Mateo. We've named a machine after Steve, when we do wear and tear's, we call it formally the Mateo masher.

I'm sure today is special for all of them, and I want to also acknowledge Galileo Orlando, who the Mayor says has the greatest, I think, non-[inaudible] name in City government. And he oversees our pothole operations and he is our Deputy Commissioner.

Reaching 5,000 miles just a few months into this second term is no small feat. Aside from the milestone there are several innovations that will keep our resurfacing program to the performance level it is today. The Mayor noted the street cutting pilot program that will start in

July and it will help us address the frustration brought by utilities cutting up freshly paved streets. Expanding the whole time by six months is definitely a step in the right direction.

Keeping our roads in a state good repair is why we are here today and it is crucial. But so too is maintaining the trucks and rollers that make it happen. Our \$36 million investment in paving equipment, such as what you see in this wonderful yard, increases our Roadway Division's performance. As for the project itself, rubberized asphalt is something we tested on Staten Island and we know that we have many fans here who are working to find a vendor who can efficiently produce this material. And in terms of conventional asphalt I'm glad to say we will expand the use of red asphalt and dedicated bus lanes, such as Highland Boulevard and step up the addition of asphalt codes over concrete roadways in the City to add to the longevity.

We are in the homestretch of the paving season and as we round the bases to get into the fiscal year, DOT will be surfacing major streets across the five boroughs, included are Todt Hill Road right here in Staten Island. With the assistance of Debi Rose, York Avenue is just done right where – near where Vinny lives, Castle Hill Avenue in the Bronx, Troy Avenue in Brooklyn, Vernon Boulevard in Queens, and Manhattan's Third Avenue.

So again, Mayor de Blasio, thank you for your support, DOT greatly appreciates it, and we just want to make the world better for New Yorkers with safer streets and Vision Zero safety fixes. Everybody, have a great weekend and thank you for coming to Staten Island.

[...]

Mayor: Well, to both of you persistence pays off. Thank you for being so strong on this issue, and we've all gotten somewhere and a whole lot more to come. I want to see – take first any questions on this topic on the repaving and related topics, and then we'll go to other topics as well, so anything first about this announcement here in Staten Island and beyond? Yes?

Question: Mayor, do you ever feel like you're going to really win this battle though will all the people that [inaudible] stories on that say I got a flat tire here or there that's [inaudible]. I mean, do you ever feel like you're ahead of the game? Or is it just a question for maintenance?

Mayor: I feel like we're going to get someplace better. I don't feel like it'll be perfect obviously. And like every New Yorker I get frustrated anytime you know I hit a road that's not in good shape. But I think we will get to a place that Jimmy referred to before where every year we're doing the level of maintenance we should be to actually have a livable city. It won't be perfect but it'll be a lot better than what we've known in the past. Basically – I mean think about it, anything else in life. If you go years and years where you don't repave, things get worse and worse. Then you're just playing catchup. We're talking about the day coming soon where we're not playing catchup anymore. Where we're actually on a standard of regular repaving all over the city so hopefully you know as one road is getting to the point where it really is about time. That's exactly when you're coming in to repave it. That's what a 10-year-plan gives us the opportunity to do that was never there in the past. So, perfection? No, will we all stop grumbling? No, will it be a lot better than what we knew in the past? Yes. Yeah?

Question: Mr. Mayor [inaudible] data showing the [inaudible] now you're saying [inaudible]. Can you clarify if things gotten worse?

Mayor: Let's see if Tom can speak to that or if that was – I don't know if the first one was an approximation or not but –

Borough Commissioner Cocola: Yeah, I am not sure what was an approximation. But obviously as Councilmember Matteo said if you continually resurface a road and you also do ware and tares. When you do a ware and tare, you're usually fixing like 10 to 12 potholes at a time. And before we got aggressive with the ware and tares, we would go in and fill the pot holes one by one and then those pot holes inevitability would pop back up because there was usually some sort of water problem. So now that we've been aggressively resurfacing, doing ware and tares, the pot holes figures have gone down. They continue to go down, although this year where there is actually the last two months, there's been a slight increase because as you can well imagine we had four nor'easters in March and it feels like we're living in Seattle. So you know we've got all this rain that's been going on. So we've had a slight increase but believe me I remember days in the winter time our open pot holes complaints in Staten Island were in the 800's, 900's you know and now you know we're getting that down and down. Where I'd say 300 today because again we've had an entire week of rain, and rain and precipitation is always sort of like the pot holes biggest friend and our biggest enemy. So, that's it.

Mayor: Okay, other questions on this? Yes?

Question: When will Staten Island be getting the rubber ice asphalt? How much is it going to cost? And will Arden Avenue [inaudible] will be the first when it comes to be getting [inaudible]?

Borough Commissioner Cocola: Right, thank you. Yes we did do a rubber asphalt pilot per the request of the Councilman and the borough president, and the delegation. We did it on Fingerboard Road you know several years ago. It looks promising. The issue for us now is we'd like to get a Staten Island based vendor you know to do asphalt for us regularly, and once we're able to do that we'll have the flexibility to incorporate the rubber asphalt treatment. Because it's really something, it's like you take a vat of asphalt and you're basically pouring like a mix into it to make the rubberized asphalt and we did that at the Hamilton Yard on experimental basis. But we're hoping that once we get a bonafide Staten Island plan here we'll be able to do it more regularly.

Question: When do you think you're going to be getting this vendor? Do you have like a timeline? And do you have any [inaudible] that you [inaudible] use this asphalt –

Borough Commissioner Cocola: Right, yeah. Well I'd like to use them on the major roads once we get going. We've got some encouraging news with a plan that we'd like to use on Staten Island. So hopefully we can get that up in the next several weeks. But I have to say that the plan we are using now is really, really good work. And those men and women are doing a great job; you know laying out the roads for us.

Mayor: Okay, other questions on repaving here or around this city? Let's see if there is anything else on this. Going once, going twice, okay other questions. Yes?

Question: Mayor, can you tell us about the Lincoln Tunnel crash? There were a number of folks who [inaudible] on the roads what happened.

Mayor: We're just getting preliminary information on that. Thank god, what I am hearing so far is that the injuries are not life threatening. But there are some serious injuries none the less. So waiting to hear more about the specifics – NYPD certainly responded because it was closer to the New York side as I understand it. But you know, obviously I am hoping and praying for the best for anyone who was injured in that incident and so far again, none – no one who appears to be in a life threatening situation. Yes?

Question: Mr. Mayor, next week is the convention, the state convention. You said at some point you'll be weighing in on the governor's race. I am wondering if you're ready to weigh in. I am wondering whether you sat down with Cynthia Nixon, or talked the governor about his [inaudible] or [inaudible].

Mayor: No, on either of the gubernatorial candidates. I have not spoken to them about their candidacies. And no, not today is not the time. I'll be speaking to my decisions on how to handle the 2018 elections. That will be a day in the future.

Question: [Inaudible]

Mayor: Before the elections.

Question: Mayor, we reported today that [inaudible] has settled a Southern District investigation into NYCHA. It was like I'm coming but [inaudible] held up by demand from the federal government that the city put up some significant money towards NYCHA, kind of like an assessment and that the City has been reluctant to do so. Can you [inaudible] any details [inaudible] –

Mayor: Let me be broad on purpose. The settlement discussion, a legal settlement is a very sensitive matter. So I am not going to get into the details. I will say this is a process that's been going on for over two years with the Southern District. I think it's been in the last month or so a very productive process. Meaning, there's been a lot of dialogue. I think people are working well together. I am not going to get into the ideas on each side about how to resolve it. I want to say that I think we will get there. I am very hopeful. And I believe there is a shared goal to do what we all can do to support NYCHA in addressing some of its decade's long problems. So I think the process is good. I am hopeful for a conclusion fairly soon, but I can't get into any of the specifics.

Question: Can you say whether some kind of payment by the city –

Mayor: Not going to get into specifics, well everything that's being talked about is being talked about cooperatively. Marcia.

Question: Mr. Mayor the [inaudible] of transportation is [inaudible]

Mayor: You know I care a lot about making sure there is fairness for working people. This issue has to be considered in light of some other really big challenges we're having. We have a huge congestion problem. And the number one goal of changing the policy is to address congestion. Because if we don't get the kind of turnover we need in those spaces, it just means a lot more vehicles looking for a place to go when they're trying to get to those shopping districts for example. We want to incentivize people to use the metered space just only the time they need and not use it longer because other people need to get in there to shop. So I would say this is different in some other situations because it is about solving an underlying problem. It's not everywhere, its places where in particular there is a congestion problem. But the other thing I'd say is it's in a scheme of things obviously an occasional expense as opposed to many other things that are a constant expense in people's lives. So you know, looking at your question which is a great question is very different than something like a sales tax for example which is on a wide variety of purchases you might make all the time. At this case I think it's fair because it helps us to address a really urgent problem in this city and it creates fairness opening up those spaces for more people who need them.

Question: [Inaudible] most of these spaces [inaudible]

Mayor: Right.

Question: [Inaudible]

Mayor: Marcia, I am concerned about all working people. And I want to tell you, I like your question because it gets to all of the pieces of the equation. I would argue that a lot of small business owners, if those spaces don't open up more often, they're going to lose a lot of customers. If customers can't find a place to park, they're not going to keep going to those stores. And so, point-one – the idea is actually to create more fairness, to make sure that people can get to the stores they need to get to, but to encourage them then to give up that space as soon as you don't need it anymore so someone else can use it – that's actually in many ways good for small business. Second, as a Brooklynite, I wish your original statement were entirely true. I agree with you that Midtown Manhattan – it's probably our number-one congestion problem. But boy, I can tell you, as a Brooklynite, there's plenty of places in Brooklyn that have major congestion problems, plenty of places all over the city. So, the targeting that we're talking about here is to address congestion problems all over the five boroughs. Unfortunately, they're existing more and more in all five boroughs for the reasons we've all talked about – population's going up, more tourists, more jobs, more business, more construction, obviously the for-hire vehicles, which we now see more and more of them driving around empty. There's a lot of things that are coming together to create a congestion problem that's going way beyond Midtown Manhattan.

Question: [Inaudible]

Mayor: I know DOT is trying to figure out what would be a fair amount. Whatever we do, I obviously hold a fairness standard, that we have to make sure it's not overly onerous to every-

day New Yorkers. But again, we also have to make sure that we're getting those spaces to turn over. Go ahead –

Question: Do you support the new City Council legislation, cracking down on placard abuse? Because some proponents said it's needed because [inaudible]?

Mayor: I have not seen the new Council legislation, but I do believe in cracking down on placard abuse, and that has been the message that we have sent to the NYPD and all agencies. Now, that initiative – I'm trying to think of the exact date we started this, it's been here a while, but not too long. I want to give everyone in this city an update on what has happened on that initiative. As we discussed with the Council other options, I can tell you the NYPD takes it very seriously. We all know Rome wasn't built in a day, so changing a lot of bad habits and bad practices takes time, but we are very focused on making sure that placards are not abused.

Question: Staten Island has some pretty unique, you know, wildlife and animal challenges. Most recently, a turkey laid like 16 eggs at a Staten Island man's backyard. [Inaudible] called different agencies, but he can't get any help. He can't take the turkey out on his own because he needs a permit, same thing with the deer. The deer will come in people's backyards, stay in there for days or weeks, and, you know, they call 3-1-1, 9-1-1 – all these different agencies and they can't get any help because the deer are not on State or City property, they're on private property. Is your administration – are you open to, you know, implement [inaudible] to help private property owners who have these animals just lingering on people's backyards, in people's backyards for days to get some help? And if not, what do you recommend for private property owners to do?

Mayor: I'll give you a broad answer and my colleagues may want to weigh in on this.

[Laughter]

I like to always to be straightforward if I don't have a complete on something. I do not have a complete answer on this. I know the history has been that the dividing line is also if there's a danger, which is when the Department of Health gets involved, versus if there's not. And I think it goes back to assumptions about private property that are foundational to our society, that the government does not get involved in every element of people's lives in that way. But I think you make a good point, if something is an ongoing situation, is there something more we can do. So, I don't have an answer for that. I'd like to see if there is something we can do, I just don't have it handy. Let's see what these guys think.

Councilmember Matteo: Yeah, you know, it's been – the turkeys have been an ongoing issue for a decade now. My office is trying to do – we're working on funding, we're working, talking with the Speaker to get additional funding, working with a person who runs a not-for-profit to see if we can get him with a DEC permit to come out to Staten Island and relocate the turkey's upstate. So, he needs funding for setting up a place upstate and then to come and do it. And so, I'm going to allocate some money out of my discretionary budget, and we're going to see if we can get additional funding to make that happen. But we've got to get DEC on board, so we just contacted DEC, saying we think we have someone who can come out and do this because we've had other relocation efforts – we just didn't get enough turkey's, obviously. And this is

specifically for the turkey's, so we're pushing to get the money for the next budget and see if we can work – get DEC to give the permit to the not-for-profit and see if we can relocate more.

Question: [Inaudible]

Councilmember Matteo: I'm sorry?

Question: [Inaudible]

Councilmember Matteo: Hundreds –

Mayor: Borough President, you seem – you seem strangely shy today.

Borough President Oddo: So, the turkey situation goes back a decade, that it's been an issue. And as comical as it is to folks off the island, 50 percent of the public looks at you and says you have nothing better to do as an elected official than worry about the turkey's, leave the turkey's alone. And the other 50 percent says you're so incompetent, you can't even get rid of the turkeys. The removal, to-date, or the relocation, to-date, has been in conjunction with the State, and the turkeys were taken –

Councilmember Matteo: And USDA –

Borough President Oddo: And USDA – taken off State property, whether it's the South Beach Psychiatric Center, in particular, because of the health issues raised by what turkey's do –

Councilmember Matteo: And the hospital –

Borough President Oddo: And the Staten Island University Hospital. To me – and that is an annoyance – to me, the more serious issue is the deer issue, because I just had a meeting with the City Health Department. We are collaborating with the Health Department in terms of tick surveillance, and we're working with Columbia University, and they did a sweep of ticks and came back and found 26 percent of the ticks on Staten Island are infected, have a pathogen. And that's a scary number – the national number is 20 percent. The tick-born disease issue related in-part – and we can debate whether it's in-whole or just how much in-part, related to the deer – is a serious issue. The number of Lyme cases are going up across the City, but only on Staten Island is the universe of folks within the borough. Other boroughs are getting them when they go out of State or out of the City. So the turkeys – Steve is working on a plan. We from time to time have the USDA come in and reduce the population. The deer situation is – as you know, the City's plan is going to take a much longer period of time – the vasectomy plan. The concern I have that I share with the Mayor and the administration constantly is the tick-born related diseases, and I appreciate the cooperation to-date by the City Department of Health. But the Lyme disease issue is here and now, and it's real, and it's getting worse.

Mayor: Can I just say, even though the question was on something else, I appreciate that point very deeply and I will follow up with the Health Department and Deputy Mayor Palacio because

the last thing we want to see is anything that exacerbates the Lyme disease problem. So, I'm hearing you loud and clear.

Borough President Oddo: Thank you, sir.

Mayor: Other questions?

Question: Mayor, recently the Parks Department [inaudible] that there are rats there [inaudible]

Mayor: The – again, that's your newspaper deciding to characterize something a certain way, as you often do. The anti-rat initiative has many, much bigger elements to it, and a number of you have been there when we've announced different pieces of it. The kind of trash cans that did not allow rats in is a good example. Putting concrete floors in public housing buildings is a good example. A lot more trash pickups – these are big, substantial things that are proving the ability – we're proving that we can really reduce the rat population, obviously using the dry ice, which is something we're now doing in a big scale. So, the point you're raising is about a very small initiative in a much bigger arsenal of weapons we're using to go at rats. But it's also true that people litter too much in this City. And I'm sitting next to an expert on the topic. And what those officers were doing were reminding people, if you don't like rats, don't leave food out on the ground for the rats. It's not so obvious, people do it all the time not thinking, I'm helping to feed the rats. So, it's actually was an information blitz to say – if you want to help us stop rats, take your food with you or put it in a proper receptacle, don't leave it around where it's going to end up feeding rats. It's actually common sense.

Question: [Inaudible]

Mayor: Because they're in the parks where the people are.

Question: [Inaudible]

[Laughter]

Mayor: It's refreshing. Thank you, David.

Question: First, you talked the other day about marijuana and back in 2015, the Police Commissioner at the time, Bratton – Bill Bratton – talked about [inaudible] you said at the time, I agree with the Commissioner, there's a lot of violent crime related to marijuana that we're addressing every single day. In March of this year, you said after some reporting was done around the disproportionality of marijuana arrests, you said I think what's happening now is very much moving in the right direction. But this week –

Mayor: I'm sorry, that quote – you've got to give me a little more context on.

Question: You said in terms of your marijuana policies and the arrests –

Mayor: The reduction in arrests.

Question: No, no, this was after reporting in Politico [inaudible]

Mayor: Reducing disparity.

Question: So that was in March of 2018, [inaudible] moving in the right direction. But this week you sort of made a little bit of an about-face, but at least you've acknowledged that there's a problem. What is the problem that you see and what over the next 30 days do you hope to see officers [inaudible]?

Mayor: I really don't – I respect – I think media tends to think of a lot of things as an about face, that's a normal skeptical, healthy journalistic worldview. I don't think this one is, I think this is a natural evolution and I'll tell you why. Because the reference I made in March, I think was very much about reducing arrests which has clearly been the truth. We have been reducing marijuana arrests but we've been reducing arrests overall. On that level, I am very comfortable we've been moving in the right direction.

You've been at a lot of our crime press conferences or crime statistics press conferences and you've heard a focus on reduction of arrests, overall not just for marijuana, as a central message from the NYPD that they're creating a safer city with fewer arrests. So, on that level, I absolutely believe we have been and continue to move in the right direction.

On the question of disparity, I do think we've also made progress overall on reducing disparity because of everything about neighborhood policing. But what is true at the same time is we continue to get different pieces of information that confirm a still too high level of disparity. That is the point – the evolutionary point that I bluntly had hoped we would get more done. We haven't gotten enough done. We have to do something more.

I saw the reduction in arrests as a really good step. I saw the reduction in marijuana arrests specifically as a really good step and I saw neighborhood policing as something that was working overall. But what I didn't see was the kind of steadiness in the marijuana arrest reductions I would have liked. And what I didn't see was the reduction in disparity I would have liked.

And I've had this conversation in great detail with Commissioner O'Neill. He feels the same way. So, the idea of the 30 days is to say go back to the drawing board, which the NYPD is really good at, innovating and saying okay what should we do different, if we like some of the outcomes we got but we don't like the arrest levels and we don't like the disparity, what can we do?

I have a strong belief that they'll come back with some very tangible plans and we will announce them within the 30 days and put them into effect immediately.

Question: [Inaudible] –

Mayor: Again, I want the outcome. I respect the NYPD, which has proven the ability to innovate, to come up with the how. I have a mandate for them. I'm convinced they will figure out how to act on it.

Question: [Inaudible] regret having talked about [inaudible] dynamic at the Education Department given the fact that [inaudible]?

Mayor: What I should have done was put the horse before the cart and make very, very clear that we have to take every complaint seriously, we do, and investigate thoroughly every complaint. In fact, we've added a lot of new investigators to DOE. And the issue we all have to address in this society and certainly in this City government is to go to the core of making harassment unacceptable in all its forms.

So, retraining the entire City workforce – 370,000-plus workers will all be retained – annual reporting to the people of this city on how we're doing in addressing sexual harassment, a single standard rather than different standards. That's what I should have said very, very clearly.

Other issues about – and challenges within the DOE should be talked about separately and the Chancellor is going to look at those other issues and come back and tell me what he thinks we can do if there's something we can do to improve that atmosphere.

Unknown: [Inaudible]

Mayor: Yeah?

Question: What do you think of Tish James' decision not to seek the Working Families Party line [inaudible] –

Mayor: Yeah.

Question: [Inaudible] paying attention, will they care, will it affect Tish James' presentation [inaudible]?

Mayor: Well, the first thing I would say, Melissa, is you know the ball game ain't over. I don't sense she's closed any doors permanently here. I mean, most people who run for office in this state want as many lines as they can get. And I don't know who else is going to be running and what this election is going to look like but it just stands to reason, Working Families Party has been a very positive force in this state and has a lot of people that believe in it and look to its endorsement.

So, you know, I don't want to assume anything about what her ultimate decision will be. I think it's something that should be looked at on the merits. You know, here's a force in this state, a force for good that people honor and appreciate. Think about that in making any final decision.

As to the question of the Governor's involvement – I don't know. I hope it's not true. I don't think it would make sense to suggest someone shouldn't take that line but I can't speak to it because I don't know if it's true or not.

Question: [Inaudible] –

Mayor: Sure.

Question: [Inaudible] year since the car went out of control in Times Square. You've put up some bollards –

Mayor: A lot of bollards, yeah.

Question: [Inaudible] we don't know actually where all those are going.

Mayor: Yep.

Question: Can you talk a little bit about the status of that [inaudible] –

Mayor: Yeah, I am pleased because it is not just the permanent installations. That work is ongoing and a lot of resources – I want to thank the City Council who have been very, very supportive on this – it is also a lot of temporary barriers were put in place quickly after that incident to immediately secure a number of key locations. Something Commissioner O'Neill talks about all the time – we're not going to be able to put one in front of every building on every street in New York City. We're going to put them in the places that are the most well-trafficked, that are the most potentially important targets for our enemies. It's going to be a big effort that's going to make a big impact.

But it will never replace the other places of the equation which is a strong counter-terrorism presence by the NYPD which we've obviously beefed up a lot again with the help of the Council, and the role of the people. This piece has to always be emphasized – “If You See Something, Say Something” is a very live concept. A lot of times attacks have been stopped because it was just one person who came forward to the NYPD and gave us information at the right time.

So, we're going to do all of the above but, am I satisfied the bollard effort is making a big difference? Yes.

Okay, we'll just finish that row and we'll be out. Go ahead.

Question: There's a proposal to require Airbnb to disclose the addresses [inaudible]. I just wondered if you would be supportive of something like that and your general position on the company now and how you view them [inaudible] –

Mayor: I'm not familiar with that proposal so we can come back with a specific answer on that. I believe a good thing is happening in the city and I want to give a lot of credit to the Office of

Special Enforcement that is cracking down on the many abuses related to Airbnb. Most egregiously, buildings that have turned into de facto illegal hotels in total, you know, folks who are taking advantage of affordable housing programs and turning around and using their apartment as a profit-generator, all sorts of situations that to me are unacceptable.

I think Special Enforcement is doing a lot. Again this was one where the Council really believed in this with us, put real resources in. So, we're going to take a tough line on anyone who violates the law related to Airbnb. As to where we go going forward, we're trying to make sense of that. But clearly strong enforcement in the meantime is necessary.

Question: Mayor, just going back to the marijuana issue. Today on Twitter, former Police Commissioner Bill Bratton argued that argument that enforcement is primarily targeting black and Latino people are baseless and he's arguing that the department is responding in areas where they get complaints. Obviously, some of the reporting and [inaudible] curious what you make of his comment –

Mayor: I think it – I understand his comments from working closely with him because some of the advocacy that's been put out there hasn't reflected the truth and has ignored how much a reduction in arrests have been made and how much there is a response to 3-1-1 calls driving a lot of this. So, unfortunately it feels like there's two opposite poles sometimes in this discussion when the truth is somewhere in between.

Anyone who says that 3-1-1 calls don't have something to this is missing the reality of life in this city because they have a lot to do with it. That said – and despite a good thing, a reduction in arrests which Commissioner Bratton had a lot to do with – we're just not where we need to be. And this why I feel strongly and I know Commissioner O'Neill feels this strongly too. We're not where we need to be.

The level of disparity, whatever is causing it, it's not acceptable and we have to figure out how to change it. And if there's anything in the culture of the department from the past that's at all contributing to this – because once upon a time you now the coin of the realm was maximize arrests, maximize stops, all that. We've obviously changed those policies but if we've got more work to do to weed out that reality, we got to do it.

Last call.

Question: Officials in New Jersey recently announced a [inaudible] New Jersey fast ferry that could be operational as early as 18 months. With Jersey getting this – I know the Arthur Kill [inaudible] issue in Staten Island getting a fast ferry on the South Shore – with New Jersey getting this route secured, is this something that [inaudible]?

Mayor: We're definitely looking at the future of ferry service. I would say that once – let me put it right. Right after repaving on Jimmy Oddo's obsession list has been ferry service additions for Staten Island. We've had 112 conversations on this, I would say.

The standard is the same from my point of view – meaning for the whole city. I have requests for more ferry service from Queens, Manhattan, the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Staten Island literally. Many communities. What I've said is when we get the Soundview line and the Lower East Side line up and running which will be at some point in the summer, that's going to be the natural point for us to turn our attention to where we go from there.

I'm very excited about what's happening with the ferry service. We have obviously doubled our projection for ridership. That's a big deal, tremendous potential. It comes with real costs. It comes with intense logistical challenges. There's a lot we have to work through but I'm sticking to a very simple timeline for Staten Island and for everywhere else. Later on this year is going to be the time of decision of where we go from here.

Thank you, everyone.

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