



New York City Automated Speed Enforcement Program

2014–2020 Report



Executive Summary

In 2013 the New York State Legislature and Governor Cuomo enacted Sec.1180-b of New York State's Vehicle and Traffic Law (VTL), which granted New York City the authority to pilot an automated speed enforcement program to deter speeding in 20 school speed zones. The first speed camera violation was issued in January 2014. In June 2014, the pilot was expanded to a total of 140 school speed zones, in order to support the pursuit of the City's Vision Zero goal of eliminating traffic deaths and serious injuries.

Following the passage of S04331/A06449 and its enactment into law by Governor Cuomo in 2019, the New York City Department of Transportation (NYC DOT) is now authorized by the State to deploy speed cameras in 750 school speed zones on all weekdays between 6 AM and 10 PM. Cameras may be placed at any location within a quarter-mile radius of the school building. This change allows NYC DOT to use data to guide installations to where deterrence of dangerous speeding can have the greatest impact on preventing injury and death. NYC DOT data specialists have prioritized installations at locations with the highest incidence of speeding and serious crashes involving pedestrians. NYC DOT completed installation of at least one camera in all 750 zones by June 2020.

Indeed, the expansion of the speed camera program has proven effective and efficient in its goal of reducing both dangerous speeding and its consequences. As of December 2020, speeding at fixed camera locations had dropped, on average, 72 percent. Many large corridors, including the Bronx's Grand Concourse, Queens' Union Turnpike, and Brooklyn's Fourth Avenue have seen even greater decreases.

However, the Covid-19 pandemic that began in early 2020 brought with it an epidemic of speeding that continued throughout the year and revealed a vulnerability of the speed camera program: Just over one-third of all non-highway traffic fatalities in New York City in 2020 happened in school speed zones that had cameras, but at times when they were not legally permitted to operate (nights and weekends). A change to State law to permit 24/7 operation of speed cameras could potentially extend life-saving benefits to this city's motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians.

Throughout 2021, DOT will install an average of 60 new cameras per month, with the aim of reaching a total of 2220 cameras in 2022.

This report covers data from the program from its inception through December 2020, to the extent to which it is available. However, injury and severity data is only available for calendar year 2019. This is because starting in 2019, the National Highway Safety Administration (NHTSA) mandated that all jurisdictions follow the Model Minimum Uniform Crash Criteria (MMUCC) 4th Edition guidelines for collecting Serious Injury crashes. They did this to standardize what data is being collected across the country. Accordingly, the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) changed their definition of severe, "A"-type injuries. As a result of this change, some injuries not previously attributed to the serious injury classification are now included. This change has made data from 2019 difficult to compare to previous years. Any numerical increase in severe injuries may reflect the change in the formula and not an actual change in the trend of severe injuries, and so year-on-year comparisons of these injuries are not included.

Dangerous Speeding is a Leading Cause of Serious Crashes

Excessive speed is one of the leading factors in serious crashes in New York City. The faster a vehicle is traveling, the more time and space a driver needs to react to circumstances to prevent a crash. A driver at 40 MPH needs 300 feet to perceive, react and brake to an unexpected event—twice as far as a driver at 25 MPH, who only needs 150 feet.

Not only does speeding make it more difficult to avoid a crash, but it also worsens the damage caused upon impact when a collision happens. Even a small difference in vehicle speed makes a big impact in terms of safety – a pedestrian who is struck by a vehicle traveling at 30 MPH is twice as likely to be killed as a pedestrian struck by a vehicle traveling at 25 MPH.

When New York City initiated its Vision Zero street safety program in 2014, speeding was one of the top

concerns raised by residents during Vision Zero town halls and workshops held by the New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) and New York City Police Department (NYPD). It remains a concern of residents across the City today, despite the progress achieved through the speed camera program.

These facts inform the New York City's Vision Zero initiative's focus on speed management. The City uses a variety of approaches aside from speed cameras, including increased installation of speed bumps, focused NYPD enforcement, signal reprogramming, reduced speed limits and street redesigns to combat speeding. This effort has contributed to the fact that the seven years of the Vision Zero program have been among the eight safest years on New York City roadways since record-keeping began in 1910.

New York City's Speeding Solutions Toolkit



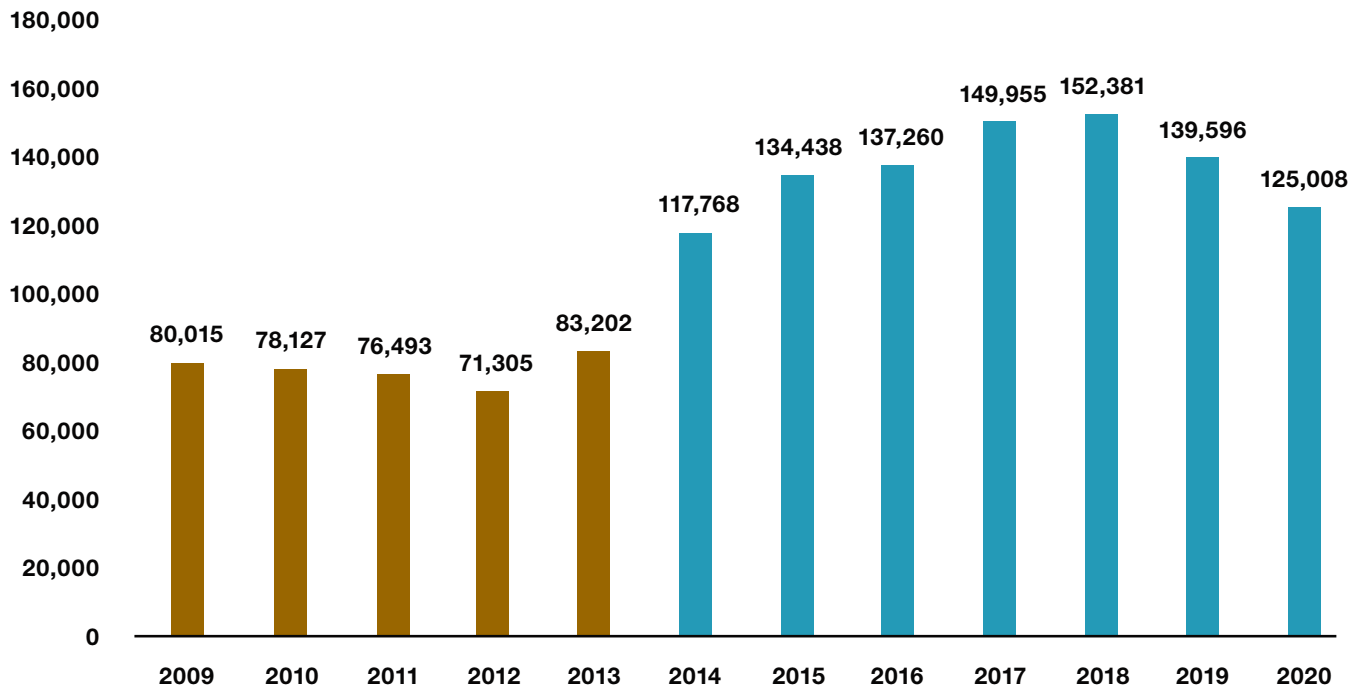
The City uses a variety of methods in addition to automated enforcement to encourage people to drive at safe speeds. DOT and NYPD frequently assess the speeding conditions in neighborhoods across the City, and identify the appropriate solutions for each context.

Speed limits

Speed limits promote road safety by establishing an upper limit on speed appropriate for the street's design, vehicle volume, and pedestrian density. On November 7, 2014, New York City reduced the citywide default speed limit to 25 MPH, and has installed over 5,000 new speed limit signs, each with a rider alerting motorists to the use of Photo Enforcement.

Some arterial roads within New York City retained speed limits of greater than 25 MPH after 2014. Since 2019, DOT has reduced the speed limit by 5 MPH on over 70 miles of these corridors, including West Street in Manhattan; Pelham Parkway, Jerome Avenue, and Bruckner Boulevard in the Bronx; Hamilton Avenue, Third Avenue, and the Shore Parkway Service Road in Brooklyn; Woodhaven Boulevard, Cross Bay Boulevard, Northern Boulevard, and Conduit Avenue in Queens, and Hylan Boulevard and Targee Street in Staten Island.

NYPD-Issued Speeding Summonses



New York City Police Department

NYPD Enforcement

The officers of the NYPD enforce the speed limit in order to deter dangerous driving. In contrast to speed camera notices of liability, traditional speeding summonses carry financial penalties, along with points on the driver's license and significant consequences for the driver's insurance. In 2020 NYPD issued approximately 125,000 speeding summonses.



Speed Humps and Cushions

Speed humps are a raised area of a roadway, typically 3 to 4 inches, which deflects the wheels and frame of a traversing vehicle to reduce vehicle speed. On bus routes, truck routes, and key emergency corridors, where a traditional speed hump is unsuitable, a speed cushion may be used instead. These raised sections have cutouts spaced for large vehicle tires, but still require passenger vehicles to slow down. From 2014 through 2020, the City has installed 2,136 standard speed humps. Speed cushion installations became part of DOT's toolkit in 2018 and currently number 38.

Street Improvement Projects

Street redesign strategies which reduce speeding include removing excess width from existing traffic lanes or converting a lane to use for pedestrians or cyclists. This “traffic calming” is a context-dependent approach to reducing excessive speeding. The City has completed more than 720 total safety engineering projects since the start of Vision Zero. The majority of these projects have taken place at Vision Zero Priority Locations – the intersections, corridors, and areas with disproportionately high pedestrian deaths and serious injuries.





Community Outreach

Vision Zero Street Teams are a joint outreach project of NYPD and DOT that focus on the most crash-prone corridors of New York City. In recent years, these included Northern Boulevard and Jamaica Avenue in Queens, Grand Concourse in the Bronx, portions of Lexington Avenue and Second Avenue in Manhattan, Hylan Boulevard in Staten Island, and Linden Boulevard, Bedford Avenue, and Bay Parkway in Brooklyn. Street Teams hand out postcards focused on safety tips unique to each corridor while NYPD officers focus enforcement on dangerous driving behaviors including speeding. The COVID-19 pandemic limited Street Teams from operating during 2020, but work will continue with the reopening of the city.

Education

NYC DOT uses market research to guide its hard-hitting public education campaigns aimed at stopping dangerous driving behavior, with a particular emphasis on speeding. Advertisements on television, radio, billboards, bus stops and elsewhere alert aggressive drivers of the consequences of their behavior. These ads have proven effective: In 2020, 86 percent of drivers thought the ads encouraged them to be more responsible behind the wheel, 83 percent said they would give more thought to the speed at which they approached crosswalks and intersections, and 85 said they would pay more attention to pedestrians and cyclists while driving.



New York City's Speed Camera Program

In 2013, the New York State Legislature and Governor Cuomo granted New York City the authority to pilot an automated speed enforcement program to deter speeding in 20 school speed zones. In June 2014, the pilot was expanded to a total of 140 school speed zones as part of the Vision Zero program. Chapter 30 of the Laws of 2019 expanded both the number of school speed zones and the program's hours, which were previously limited to one hour before, after, or during school hours, or a half hour before, after, or during school activities. NYC DOT is now authorized to deploy speed cameras in 750 school speed zones on all weekdays between 6 AM and 10 PM. NYC DOT completed the expansion of at least one camera in each of the 750 zones in June 2020. Cameras may be located on any street within a quarter-mile radius of a school, which allows NYC DOT the discretion to place the devices where they are most needed.

NYC's speed camera program uses the same radar and laser technology relied upon by law enforcement to measure a vehicle's speed. If the system's radar finds that the vehicle is exceeding the speed limit by more than ten miles per hour, images of the vehicle are recorded, including the license plate. The violation is reviewed by a trained DOT staff technician for accuracy. If the technician verifies that the identified vehicle was exceeding the speed limit by more than ten miles per hour within a school speed zone between 6 AM and 10 PM on a weekday, the technician will issue a Notice of Liability (NOL) to the registered owner of the vehicle. Cameras do not capture an image of the individual driving the vehicle; the violation is the responsibility of the owner.

The fine associated with a speed camera NOL is \$50, regardless of the speed by which the vehicle was exceeding the speed limit, or whether it was a repeat offense. This is far less than the cost of a summons issued by a police officer for speeding more than 10 miles per hour over the limit in a school speed zone, which could range on the first offense from \$90-\$600, depending on the motorist's speed and prior record, plus an \$88 State surcharge. In addition, a conviction on a summons issued by a police officer will become part of the vehicle operator's driving record, adding points and influencing insurance rates.

State law prohibits the City from using the speed camera program to issue violations for speeding unless it is observed within a quarter-mile radius of a school building between the hours of 6 AM and 10 PM on a weekday. Camera footage may not be used for any purpose other than speed enforcement.

In 2020, New York City's speed cameras issued a total of 4,397,375 NOLs.

Results of Automated Speed Enforcement

State law requires the City to report on injuries in speed camera enforced school speed zones using State-issued data to the extent such data is available from the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles (NYS DMV). The crash data NYC DOT relies upon originates in motor vehicle collision reports compiled by New York City police officers at crash scenes. The individual crash reports are sent by NYPD to the DMV and State DOT, who enter the information into electronic databases, attribute locations to the collisions, categorize traffic injuries by severity and identify errors—a process which typically takes well over a year.

Starting in 2019, NHTSA mandated that all jurisdictions follow the Model Minimum Uniform Crash Criteria (MMUCC) 4th Edition guidelines for collecting Serious Injury crashes, in order to standardize what data is being collected across the country. Accordingly the New York State DMV changed their definition of severe,

“A”-type injuries. As a result of this change, some injuries not previously attributed to the serious injury classification are now included. This change has made data from that year difficult to compare to previous years, because any numerical increase in severe injuries may reflect the change in the formula and not an actual change in the injuries, and so comparisons of these injuries are not included.

In order to obtain a one-year period of data to use as the “after” scenario, the below figures only incorporate locations that had a camera installed prior to January 1st, 2019. Therefore, these results do not reflect the major expansion of camera locations and active hours that began in Summer 2019. What the below results show is that the speed camera program, prior to expansion, was still resulting in safety improvements, continuing to build on the larger progress of previous years’ installations.

Before/After Change in Crashes and Injuries in School Speed Zone Camera Corridors During Hours of Operation*

(Before: an average of the 3 years prior to installation. After: one full year after installation)

	Before Period, Citywide	After Period, Citywide	Percent Change
Crashes			
Total Crashes	1,370	1333	-2.7
Crashes with Injuries	1,006	926	-8.0
Injuries			
Motor Vehicle Occupant	1187	996	-16.1
Pedestrian	220	211	-4.1
Cyclist	41	40	-2.4
Total Injuries	1449	1247	-13.9
Fatalities	4	2	NA
Bicycle/Pedestrian Crashes wth Children	46	37	-19.6

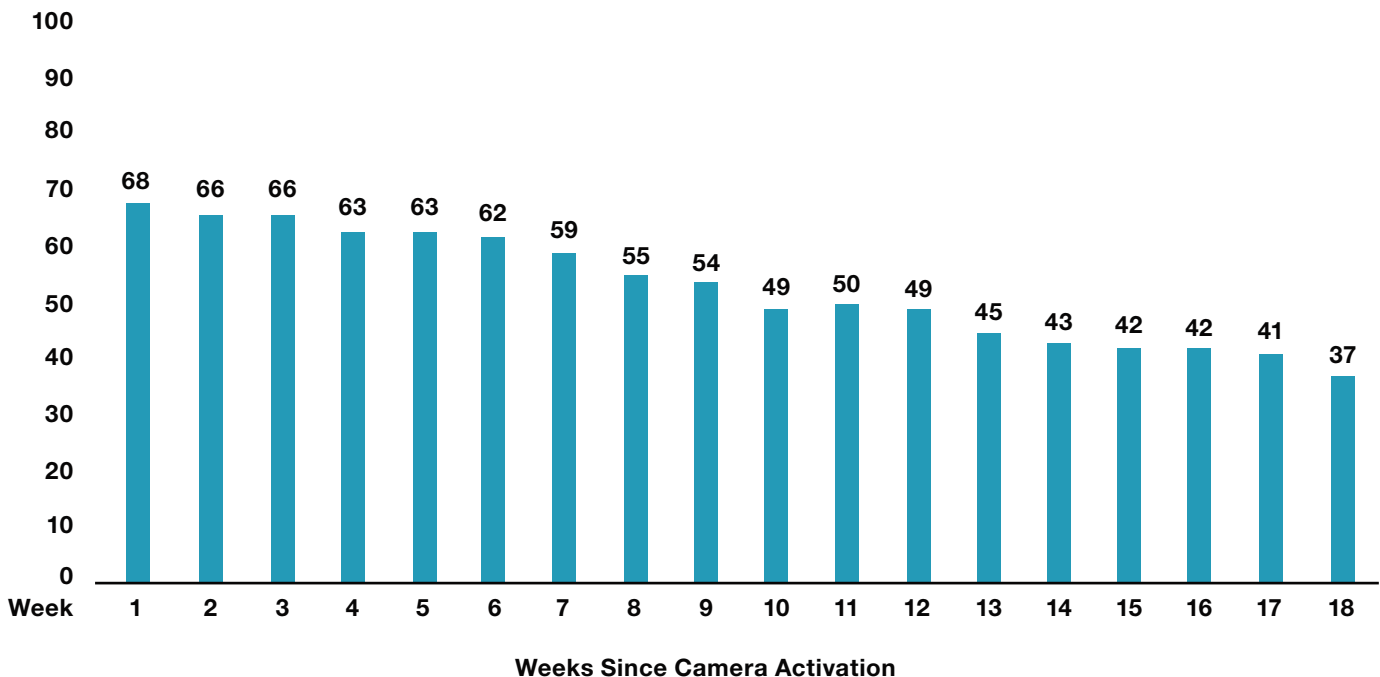
* Note that for school speed zones with multiple cameras, if there was over a year between installations, then the analysis only looks at the effect of the first camera installed; that the hours of operation are assumed to be 7am to 5pm on weekdays in non-summer months. Also, what is considered to be a corridor here is the road the speed camera is on within the zone.

Speeding Violations Within New Camera-Enforced School Speed Zones

The consistent and predictable enforcement provided by speed cameras leads to drivers quickly learning to change their behavior, meaning that cameras issue fewer violations over time. The graph below shows the average weekly number of violations from the first camera placed in 230 new school speed zones in 2020, for which there were at least 18 consecutive full weeks of data. The average weekly number of violations issued for excessive speeding in these new school speed zones has declined by about 45 percent, from 68 in the camera's first week to 37 in the 18th week. This shows the cameras are having the desired effect of deterring dangerous speeding. Calculations do not include subsequent cameras placed in existing zones that had at least one camera prior to 2020, because the baseline level of speeding there would have already been affected by the presence of existing cameras.

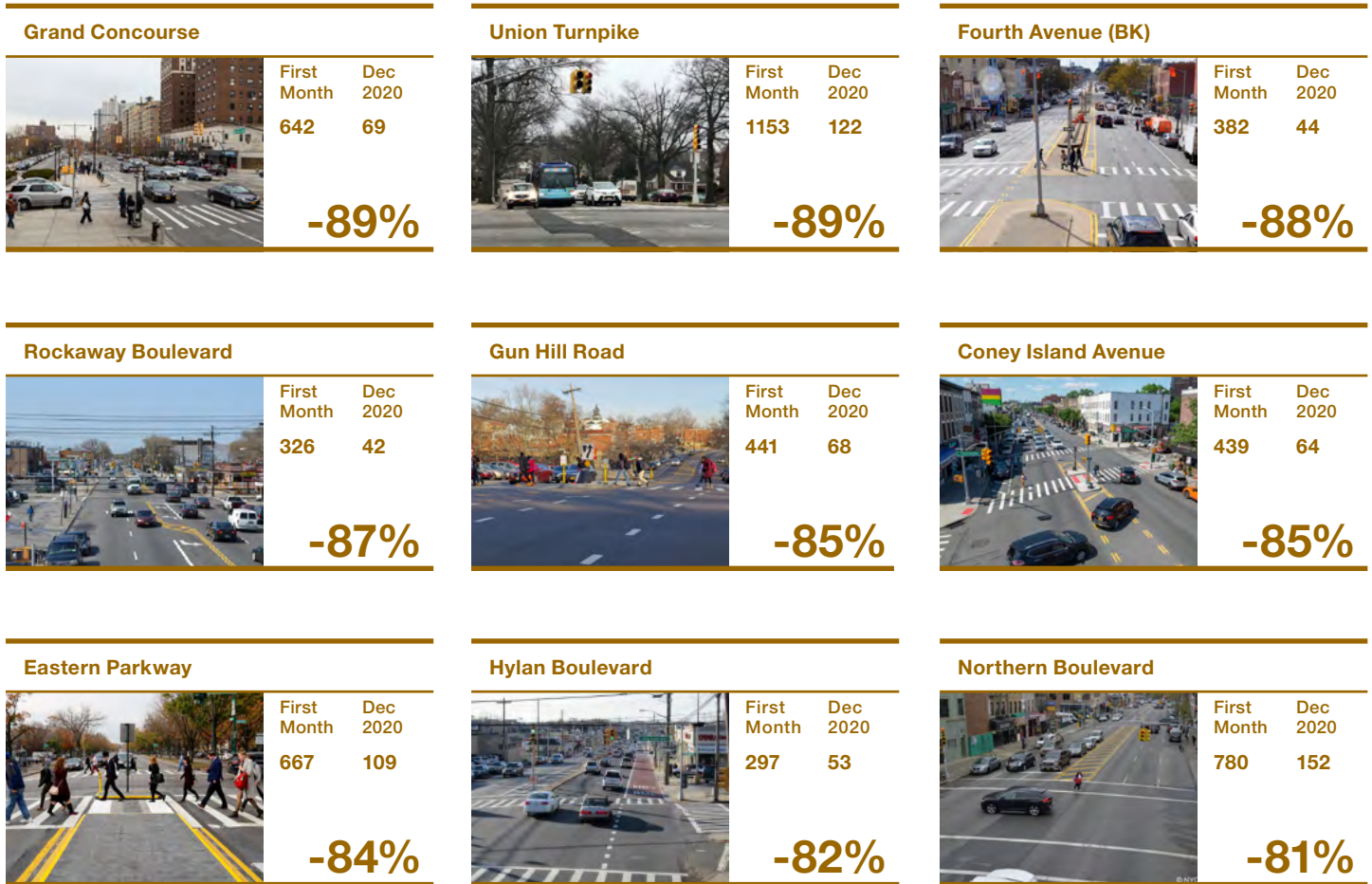
Notably, the average weekly violations for cameras in new zones for 2020 is significantly lower than for those installed in 2019. For example, while the average 2020 new zone's first camera saw 68 notices of liability issued in its first week, back in 2019, the average new zone's first camera issued 455 in its first week. This likely reflects two main factors. First, the general deterrent effect speed cameras have had citywide: The baseline level of speeding on New York City streets is now lower, and so new cameras issue fewer violations from the start. Additionally, because the order in which speed cameras are installed reflects the severity of the local speeding problem, these new locations had lower levels of speeding than those which received their first camera in a previous year.

Average Weekly Violations in New Zones, 2020



Source: New York City Department of Transportation

Decline in Average Daily Speeding Violations in Camera-Enforced School Speed Zones Along Key Corridors



Source: New York City Department of Transportation

The Extent of Dangerous Speeding in School Speed Zones

New York City's speed cameras do not issue a violation unless the vehicle is traveling more than ten miles above the posted speed limit. Citywide, almost all notices of liability – 98 percent – went to vehicles traveling more than ten but less than 20 miles per hour above that limit.

Violations by Speed Over Limit, 2020

Speed of Vehicle Over the Posted Limit	Number of Violations, 2020	Percentage of Violations, 2020
>10, but < or = 20 mph	4,305,486	97.9%
>20, but < or = 30 mph	86,125	2.0%
>30, but < or = 40 mph	5,073	0.1%
>40 mph	691	<0.02%
TOTAL	4,397,375	100%

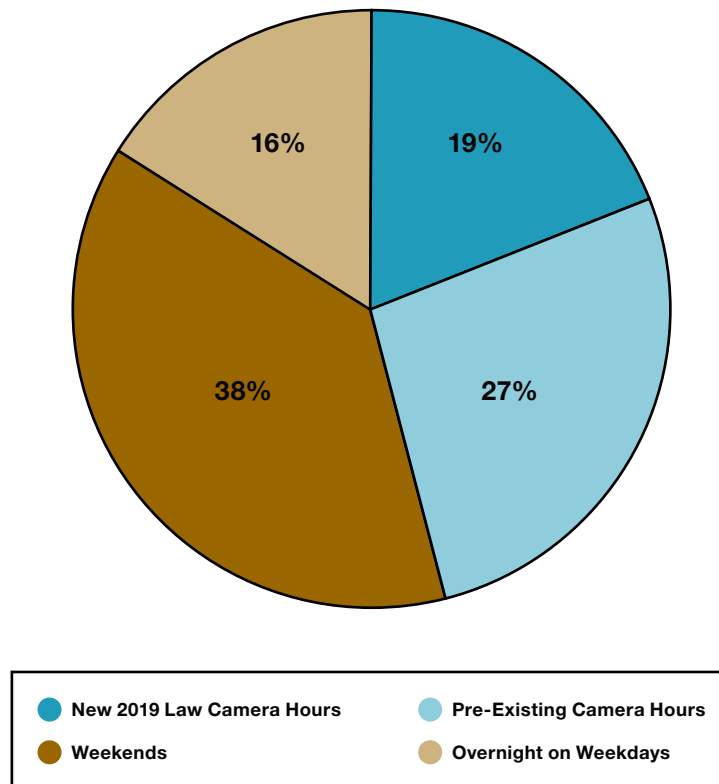
Source: New York City Department of Transportation

Sufficiency of Speed Camera Program Hours

In 2020, 35.5 percent of all non-highway traffic fatalities in New York City took place in school speed zones with cameras, but at times when those cameras were not legally permitted to operate. Those times include overnight hours (10 PM through 6 AM) on weekdays, and the entirety of weekends — approximately 52 percent of the hours in a week.

Looking solely at fatal crashes that took place within school speed zones with fixed cameras, approximately two in five happened on weekends, and one in six happened overnight on a weekday. An expansion of the hours of operation of the speed camera program to seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day, would likely reduce the incidence of speeding at those times, and in turn would reduce serious injuries and fatalities.

When Fatal Crashes Occurred in School Speed Zones with Cameras, 2020

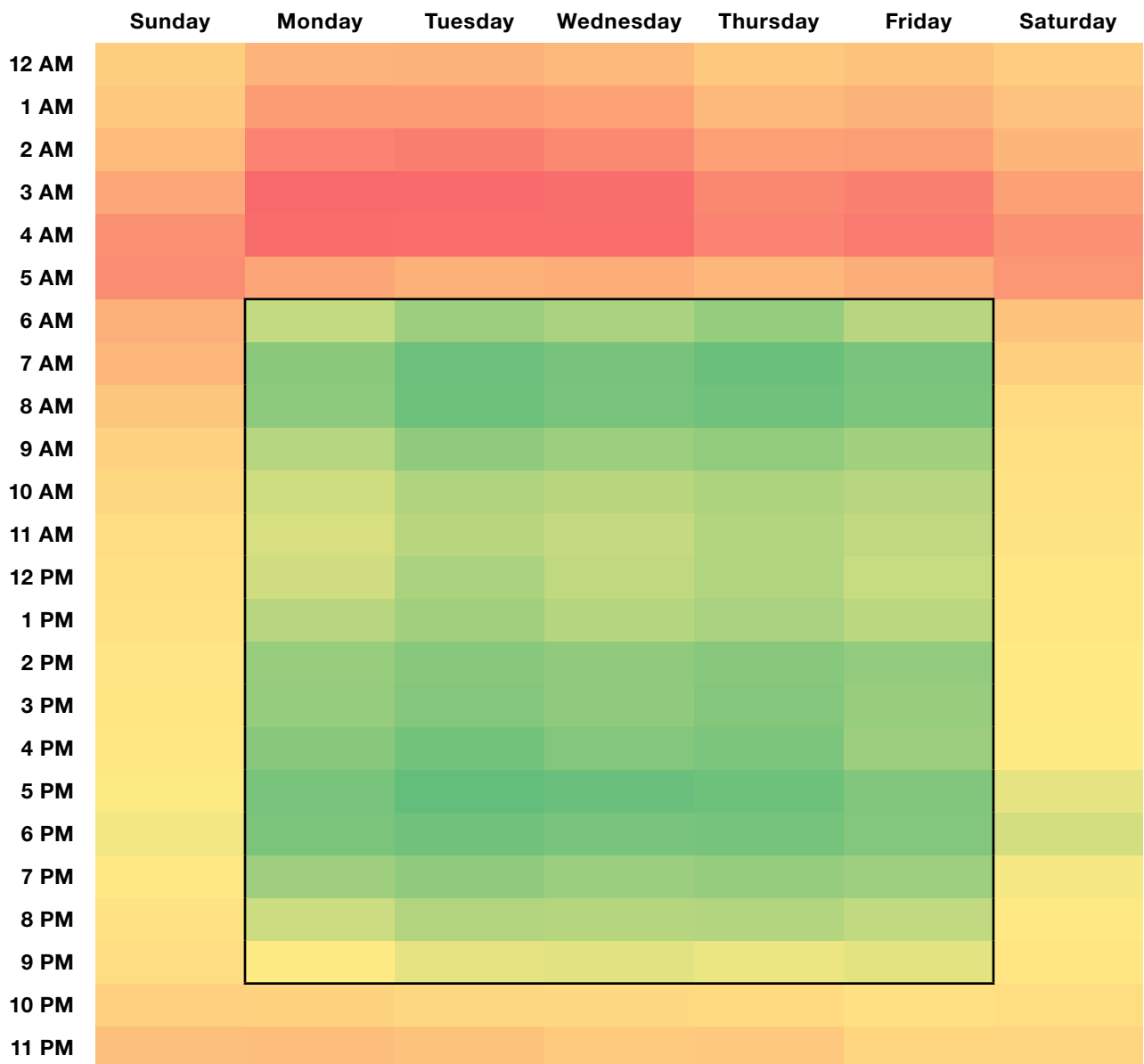


Note: Pre-existing camera hours, defined as one hour before to one hour after school activities on weekdays, are here rounded to 7 AM–5 PM in order to accommodate different start and end times among New York City schools. New law hours are defined as 6 AM–7 AM and 5 PM–10 PM on weekdays.

Looking at the ratio of camera trigger events to overall traffic volume can provide insights into both how the current hours of operation are reducing speeding and how further expansion could benefit New Yorkers. The following “heat map,” drawn from February 2020 data in order to capture the state of speeding prior to the disruptions of the Covid-19 pandemic on traffic volumes, indicates the percentage of vehicles photographed

speeding by the cameras. Red boxes indicate larger proportions of vehicles captured exceeding the speed limit, whereas green shading indicates fewer speeders. The current hours of operation permitted by State law are outlined in black. This indicates a pattern of relatively less speeding during camera hours of operation, and a higher proportion of vehicles speeding when the cameras are forbidden by law to issue violations.

Ratio of Speed Camera Events to Traffic Volumes, February 2020



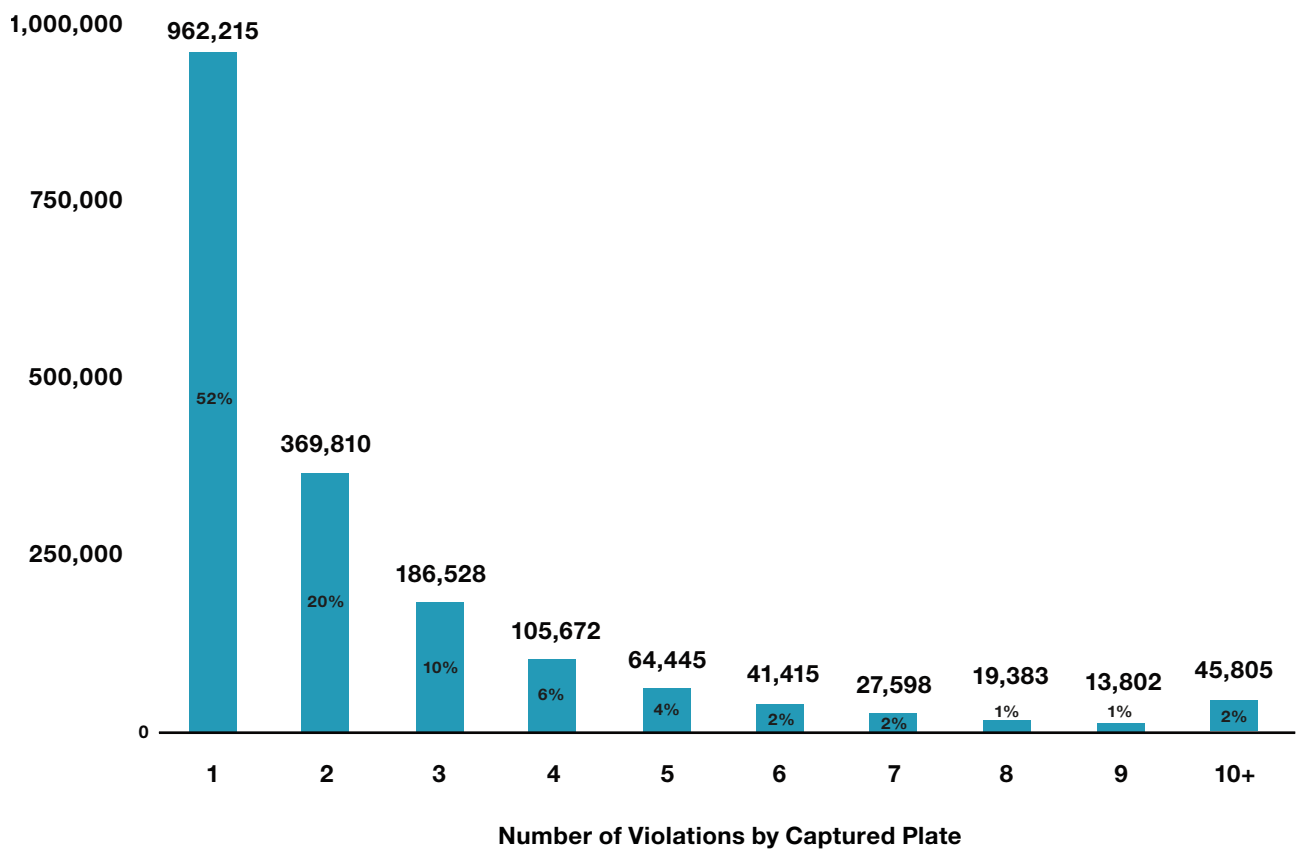
Note: Black outline indicates speed camera hours of operation under State law.

Repeat Violators

In the seven full calendar years New York City's speed camera program has been in operation, just under half of vehicles receiving a Notice of Liability have not received a second. In 2020 alone, 52 percent of vehicles received only one violation, even as the number of cameras (and therefore the odds of any speeding vehicle being captured on camera) increased.

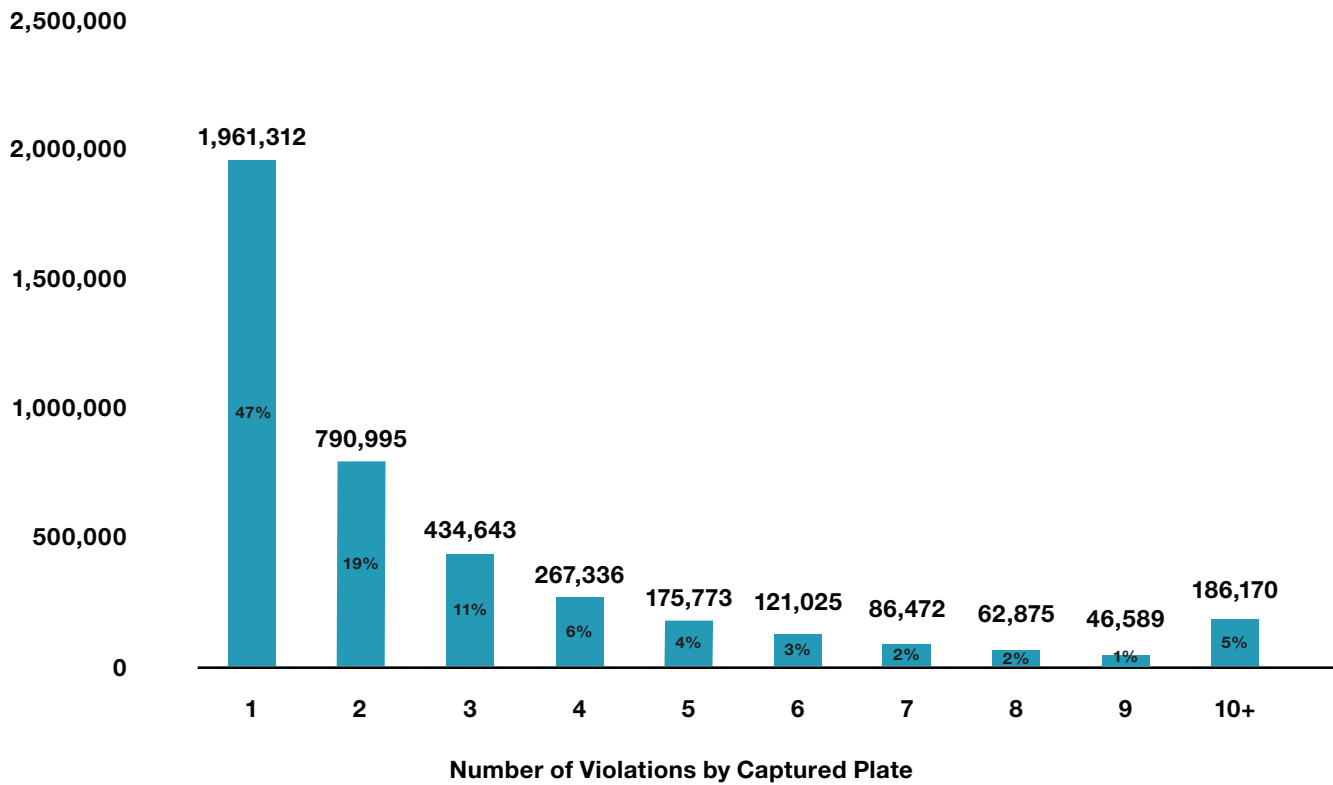
While the majority of drivers are deterred from speeding by one or two camera violations, there is a group of recidivist speeders who continue to drive unsafely despite receiving multiple notices of liability. These habitual speeders will require a stronger penalty in order to change their dangerous driving behavior. The City of New York supports a change to State law that would allow for escalating fines with subsequent notices of liability in order to address this population.

Repeat Violators, 2020 Only



Source: New York City Department of Transportation

Repeat Violators, 2014–2020



Following the passage of Local Law 36 of 2020, the New York City Department of Transportation has been authorized to create a Dangerous Vehicle Abatement Program. Under this law, registered owners of vehicles that received 15 or more finally adjudicated speed camera tickets or five or more finally adjudicated red light camera tickets within a twelve-month period could be required to take a safe driving class or else risk having their vehicles impounded. While initially delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, these classes are scheduled to begin in autumn of 2021.

Adjudication of Speed Camera Violations

All individuals receiving a Notice of Liability are entitled to request a hearing by mail or in person to contest a violation believed to be issued in error. The Notice itself provides instructions as to how to request a hearing. From 2014-2020, 2.3 percent of NOLs led to requests for a hearing, and the other 97.7 percent were issued to drivers who declined the opportunity and accepted the violation after the NOL was issued.

Pursuant to Section 1180-B of the New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law and through its Parking Violations Bureau, the New York City Department of Finance (NYC DOF) is authorized to conduct hearings, either by mail or in person, in any of its five Borough Business Centers. When and if the Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) determines the NOL presents a prima facie case, the ALJ will conduct a hearing on the merits of any defense presented. The ALJ reviews witness statements as well as other types of documentary evidence to afford the recipient of the NOL the opportunity to refute the prima facie case and establish a meritorious defense. An ALJ is permitted to consider hearsay evidence, and other evidence which may not be admissible in a traditional

court of law, in order to provide the individual with an opportunity to refute the NOL.

At hearing, 95.1 percent of contested NOLs have been upheld. In other words, considering how few NOLs are contested, this means only about one-tenth of one percent of total speed camera violations issued between 2014 and 2020 were overturned by an ALJ.

The goal of the speed camera program is to deter and reduce speeding. The rapid expansion of the number of school speed zones with cameras led to a large increase in the number of notices of liability issued citywide, followed by a steady decrease over several months as drivers receive the notices and change their behavior. Because the maximum 750 zones all have at least one camera, further installations within these zones may not see the same initial high numbers of violations as the first cameras did because speeding has already been deterred in the area by the existing cameras, and the locations with the highest incidence of speeding have already received treatments.

Adjudication Results

	Total	Percent of Total Violations Issued
Speed Camera NOL Issued, 2014–2020	7,518,018	100%
Hearings Requested, 2014–2020	174,788	2.3%
Outcome of NOL Hearings	Total	Percent of Challenged NOLs
NOL Upheld at Hearing	166,717	95.4%
NOL Overturned at Hearing	8,071	4.6%

Source: New York City Department of Finance

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Revenue and Expenses

Speed Camera Program Summary (Fiscal Year 2014–2020)

Operating Costs	\$155,779,314
.....	
Capital Costs	\$94,588,548
.....	
Total Costs	\$250,367,862
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Speed Camera Revenue	\$385,248,085
.....	
Net Revenue	\$134,880,223
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Vision Zero Program Summary, City of New York (Fiscal Year 2014–2020)

Expense Costs	\$436,521,000
.....	
Capital Costs	\$1,029,651,275
.....	
Total Costs	\$1,466,172,275
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In total, from January 2014 through June 2024, the City of New York has spent or committed to spend almost \$2.9 billion in capital and expense funds in furtherance of Vision Zero.

In calendar year 2020, the City of New York collected \$187,432,526.43 in fines from 3,588,304 speed camera notices of liability. This includes violations from previous years that were paid in 2020, and does not include violations from 2020 which had not yet been paid by the end of the year.

Appendix

Aggregate Numbers in School Speed Zones

(All school speed zones throughout the City, defined as ¼ of a mile from a school)

Year	Injuries	Fatalities	Injury Crashes	Property Damage Crashes	Pedestrian Injuries	Bicycle Injuries	MV Occupant Injuries	Severity A Injuries	Severity B Injuries	Severity C Injuries
2011	47,161	157	32,526	12,191	8,530	2,820	35,811	2,598	4,372	39,231
2012	43,968	179	30,800	11,230	8,498	2,791	32,679	2,573	4,479	36,011
2013	45,459	199	31,933	10,932	8,894	3,066	33,499	2,531	4,489	37,564
2014	42,350	161	29,885	11,067	7,970	2,823	31,557	2,249	4,219	35,076
2015	41,653	157	29,307	10,695	7,560	2,800	31,293	2,297	3,812	34,698
2016	41,797	147	30,530	10,599	7,784	3,100	30,913	2,088	4,011	34,948
2017	44,606	134	32,866	16,827	8,713	3,211	32,682	2,029	4,188	37,725
2018	44,815	139	33,146	51,508*	8,720	3,098	32,997	1,960	3,874	38,385
2019	44,220	138	32,849	49,021	8,698	3,125	32,397	2,477	4,515	36,570

Aggregate Numbers in School Speed Zones with Cameras

(School speed zones, defined above, with cameras installed prior to 2019)

Year	Injuries	Fatalities	Injury Crashes	Property Damage Crashes	Pedestrian Injuries	Bicycle Injuries	MV Occupant Injuries	Severity A Injuries	Severity B Injuries	Severity C Injuries
2011	12,886	43	8,661	2,909	2,060	634	10,192	646	1,041	10,960
2012	11,763	38	8,083	2,773	2,017	636	9,110	636	1,148	9,753
2013	12,064	56	8,335	2,579	2,189	656	9,219	602	1,081	10,124
2014	11,818	35	8,023	2,687	1,956	682	9,180	590	1,017	9,954
2015	10,980	46	7,635	2,494	1,787	602	8,591	548	845	9,377
2016	11,114	43	7,937	2,526	1,835	643	8,636	539	941	9,430
2017	11,841	29	8,583	4,103	2,197	675	8,969	490	998	10,208
2018	11,918	41	8,599	12,645*	2,076	674	9,168	477	935	10,343
2019	11,814	40	8,627	11,967	2,121	677	9,016	637	1,052	9,917

Class A severe injuries include skull fractures, internal injuries, broken or distorted limbs, unconsciousness when taken from the crash scene, severe lacerations, and inability to leave the scene without assistance.

Class B moderate injuries include visible injuries such as a lump on the head, abrasions, and minor lacerations.

Class C slight injuries include complaints of pain without visible signs injury, momentary loss of consciousness, limping, and nausea.

* Higher number reflects change in measurement of property damage crashes between NYPD and NYS DOT