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VISION ZERO: NEW YORK CITY LOWERS SPEED LIMITS BY 5 MPH ON NINE MAJOR STREETS CITYWIDE

Speed cameras now active in all 750 school zones citywide – the largest network in the world

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio announced today that speed limits will be reduced by 5 MPH on 25 miles of major streets with some the highest rates of crashes across the five boroughs. The City also announced that the Department of Transportation (DOT) has reached its goal of activating cameras in all 750 school zones – the largest speed camera network in the world. These efforts, combined with stepped up NYPD speeding enforcement, are part of a coordinated effort, as reduced vehicular traffic has led to dangerous driving during the COVID-19 crisis.

“New York City’s children deserve safe, livable communities – and Vision Zero’s groundbreaking work will protect them in their streets,” said **Mayor de Blasio**. “Slower speed limits, speed cameras, and increased enforcement will save lives and keep New York City the safest big city in America for the next generation.”

“Through years of progress, Vision Zero has made New York City’s streets safer across all five boroughs, yet there is still work to be done,” said **Deputy Mayor Laura Anglin**. “We know speeding is one the leading causes of traffic fatalities and by lowering speed limits - combined with our vast network of speed-cameras - we are focusing on those who put New Yorkers in danger.”

“Speeding is a leading cause of traffic fatalities. Even under COVID-19, this administration has maintained our commitment to keep our streets safe for the all users, especially the most vulnerable,” said **DOT Commissioner Polly Trottenberg**. “We are reducing speed limits on some of the city’s most crash-prone corridors, and growing our speed camera program at a rate that will make our system the largest in the world. With more cameras installed in 2020 than in the first six years of the program combined, DOT is continuously working to make our streets safer for everyone.”

“The DOT’s speed-limit efforts and speed-camera program play a vital role in ensuring the safety of all who use our city streets, particularly some of our most vulnerable New Yorkers: schoolchildren, pedestrians and bicyclists,” said **NYPD Chief of Transportation Nilda Hofmann**. “These cameras, combined with the everyday speed enforcement initiatives conducted by the NYPD’s Highway Patrol officers and precinct personnel serve to more effectively accomplish the goals of Vision Zero: Saving Lives.”

Lower Speed Limits:

In the last year, DOT has lowered the speed limit along Manhattan’s West Street as well as along 3rd Avenue and Hamilton Avenue, two major streets under Brooklyn’s Gowanus Expressway. The nine newly targeted streets, more than 25 miles citywide, are largely arterial roadways that are also heavily used by pedestrians and cyclists.

Street locations and mileage are as follows:

Brooklyn:

- Flatbush Ave from Grand Army Plaza to Empire Boulevard*, .8 mile (30 MPH to 25 MPH)
- Shore Parkway Service Road from Bay 8th Street to Plumb 3rd Street, 4.8 miles (30 MPH to 25 MPH)
- Dahlgren Place from 86th Street to 92nd Street, .3 miles (30 MPH to 25 MPH)

***Earlier this summer, DOT installed new protected bicycle lanes along this roadway.**

Manhattan:

- Riverside Drive from 165th Street to 181st Street, .8 mile (30 MPH to 25 MPH)

Bronx:

- Bruckner Blvd from East 135th Street to Pelham Bay Park, 6.5 miles (30 MPH to 25 MPH)
- Webster Ave from East 233 Street to East Gun Hill Road, 1.2 miles (30 MPH to 25 MPH)

Queens:

- Rockaway Blvd from 150th Ave to 3rd Street (Nassau County border), 2.5 miles (40 MPH to 35 MPH)
- Northern Blvd from 114th Street to Glenwood Street (Nassau County border), 7 miles (30 MPH to 25 MPH)

Staten Island:

- Targee Street from West Fingerboard Rd to Broad St, 1.8 miles (30 MPH to 25 MPH)

All of the speed limits will go into effect as DOT posts new speed-limit signage over the next 4-6 weeks. Speed cameras located along any of these streets will be reprogrammed and will only issue warnings for the first 60 days after new signage is posted.

Speed Camera Installations:

DOT announced that this summer, it had reached the maximum number of 750 school zones allowed under a state law that took effect in the summer of 2019. After passage of that expanded speed-camera law in Albany, Mayor de Blasio had announced a commitment that over two years, DOT would rapidly scale up its speed-camera program, activating new school speed zones citywide at a rate of about 40 per month through 2019, and 60 per month in 2020. A grand total of over 950 speed cameras are now active, with a goal of 2,000 total active cameras by the end of 2021 (zones are permitted to have multiple cameras).

The new speed-camera law that took effect last July expanded the maximum number of school zones from 140 to 750, doubled speed camera hours to 6am until 10pm year-round, and expanded cameras' permitted distance to a ¼ mile radius from a school, rather than the previous restriction that the camera be no more than a ¼ mile of a school along an abutting street. Fines for speed-camera violations remain \$50, issued to those who exceed posted speed limits by more than 10 MPH.

The City's speed camera program has deterred speeding in school zones by over 60% although many cameras installed in July 2019 showed decreases in speeding violations of over 70 percent by the end of the year. Studies have repeatedly proven that speed is a critical factor in severe injuries and traffic fatalities. 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.

NYPD Enforcement:

The valuable data provided by the Department of Transportation's speed cameras enable the New York City Police Department to focus its enforcement efforts on our local streets in the specific areas where most speed violations actually occur. This "precision policing" as it pertains to addressing traffic violations is viewed as being more effective in accomplishing the goals of Vision Zero: saving lives.

Despite a spike in motor vehicle and motorcycle fatalities, traffic fatalities overall are down 6.9% in 2020. While motor vehicle and motorcycle fatalities have increased this year, injury collisions involving these modes are down. Motor vehicle occupant injuries are down 34% year to date and motorcycle injuries are down 9% year to date. In recent months, the NYPD has conducted targeted operations focused on keeping motorcyclists safe through enforcement and education. Taken together, the NYPD's approach to traffic safety is an integral part of New York City's life-saving Vision Zero efforts.

The NYPD will continue its enforcement of speed violations – both on the highways and the local streets – to protect all road users including our school children, and our essential and emergency workers as they continue serving our city.

"The Business Integrity Commission fully supports the reduction of the speed limits in these dangerous corridors. Excessive speed, especially when driving a large waste-hauling truck, makes the streets less safe for everyone who shares them. The heavier the truck, the longer it will take to stop. All private waste hauling companies, their management, drivers, and helpers must inform themselves and abide by the new speed limits on these corridors," said **Noah D. Genel, Commissioner and Chair of the Business Integrity Commission.**

"I commend Mayor de Blasio and city officials on the continued success of Vision Zero to help improve traffic and pedestrian safety throughout New York City," said **Congressman Adriano Espaillat.** "As we move forward with lower speed limits and safety cameras within district school zones, we must ensure continued engagement with residents throughout the community to ensure strengthened safety measures within close proximity of schools as well as in areas of high pedestrian traffic. We are united in our overall mission to improve preventative measures, safety standards and operations to guide traffic, protect individuals, and potentially save lives."

"I applaud the DOT on this much needed change to the speed limits on some of our most trafficked thoroughfares. We have seen too many people die at the hands of reckless drivers and bicyclists to wait any longer to implement this necessary change. Even a small change of 5 MPH will have untold benefits in the number of lives saved in accidents avoided. I for one know that I will sleep more soundly knowing that everyone on our streets will be navigating roads safer for us all," said **Congresswoman Yvette D. Clarke.**

"Traffic collisions remain one of the worst and most preventable causes of death in New York City. It's crucial that we continue to take steps to build on the life-saving School Zone Speed Camera Program expansion we passed through the legislature last year and work towards a future where no family ever loses a loved one due to traffic violence," said **State Senator Andrew Gounardes.**

"Speed kills and reducing speed limits will make New York safer for all New Yorkers and visitors," said **Assembly Member Deborah J. Glick.** "Ensuring that new speed limits are properly respected will require enforcement. Speed cameras are an effective tool in recording cars that exceed the speed limit and have demonstrated that their use reduces recidivism. Thanks to the Administration and Commissioner Trottenberg, New York's streets have been made consistently safer."

“Over the past few weeks we have worked together on implementing a safety plan for our students return to school during COVID-19. One critically important measure – that we must not forget - is keeping our roadways, in and around our schools safe,” said **Assembly Member Charles D. Fall**. “Over the past couple years, we have passed state legislation to expand the school camera program and install safety cameras on our school buses. In the next couple weeks and throughout the year, let’s make a concerted effort to keep our roadways safe for pedestrians and students.”

“All streets are shared streets. I applaud the DOT for activating cameras in 750 school zones and for slowing traffic as we prepare for the school year. The safety of our children should be our first concern,” said **Assembly Member Mathylde Frontus**.

“We are less than 2 weeks away from the start of the school year. It is crucial that we have all the proper safety measures in place before students, teachers, and school staff return to school. Speed cameras will help increase the level of safety in the areas surrounding school zones,” said **Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez, Chair of the Transportation Committee**. “I am glad to see all of the work being done by DOT Commissioner Polly Trottenberg and the NYPD to ensure we keep our students and teachers safe this academic school.”

“For pedestrians and motorists, alike, there’s no debate on-street safety begins with lower speed limits and increased traffic enforcement,” stated **Council Member Rafael Salamanca**. “Despite several community-driven campaigns, Bruckner Boulevard has unfortunately seen too many preventable tragedies. While I applaud the administration’s continued commitment to Vision Zero in the South Bronx, I implore New Yorkers to show greater respect to their fellow pedestrians and motorists on our roadways.”

“With today’s announcement of reduced speed limits at the most unsafe intersections, including the Shore Parkway Service Road corridor in my district, coordinated with the full implementation of activating all speed cameras near schools, students, families, and school staff will have more safeguards in place to curb reckless driving. Data has proven that speed cameras near schools reduce speeding and therefore reduce the number of traffic crashes and fatalities. By providing speed cameras near schools we decrease dangerous driving and hold those bad actors accountable to provide safer streets for all,” said **Council Member Mark Treyger, Chair of the Committee on Education**.

“Bike New York is grateful to everyone at DOT and NYPD who have worked hard to install the next generation of speed enforcement cameras and to identify key school zone locations for further speed limit reduction,” said **Ken Podziba, President and CEO of Bike New York**. “The first wave of speed cameras led to historic safety gains a few years ago, and we as a city need to strive to do even better. Vision Zero is about making streets safe and welcoming for everyone in the city, whether they are on foot, in motor vehicles or among the fast-growing set of New Yorkers using bikes to get around town. Thanks to Commissioner Trottenberg and Chief Hoffman for these important steps. We look forward to working with the State Legislature on broadening the application of life-saving speed cameras even further in the future.”

“I know the difference five miles per hour makes. In October 2013 my son, Sammy Cohen Eckstein, was struck by a reckless speeding driver. My son died. A year later another boy was struck by a driver on the same road at nearly the exact same location. By then the speed limit had been lowered on that road. This boy, thankfully, survived. And as announced today we also have life-saving speed safety cameras protecting kids throughout the city -- something that Families for Safe Streets fought for. Although I wish, ever so dearly, that these life-saving measures had been in place to save the life of my son, I am grateful that they will help save others, and on behalf of Families for Safe Streets I thank Mayor de Blasio, NYPD Chief Hofmann and DOT Commissioner Trottenberg for these changes,” said **Amy Cohen, co-founder, Families for Safe Streets**.

“During the COVID-19 pandemic we have experienced disturbing trends of speeding drivers, and speeding has been a pandemic onto itself as a key factor in the hundreds of lives lost every year in traffic crashes in New York City. I want to thank Mayor de Blasio, NYPD Chief Hofmann and NYCDOT Commissioner Trottenberg for implementing these life-saving equitable measures. Installing speed safety cameras at 750 school locations is historic and NYCDOT has been exemplary stewards of this life-saving program. Lower speed limits save lives; speed safety cameras save lives; and as our city struggles through multiple pandemics these changes are needed today for a safer and more humane New York City,” said **Marco Conner DiAqui, Deputy Director, Transportation Alternatives**.

“We are pleased that reduced speed limits and new speed cameras are being activated. After months of noticeable improvements in air quality due to fewer cars on the road, our city is already experiencing a sharp uptick in car traffic,” said **Julie Tighe, President of the New York League of Conservation Voters**. “Speed cameras make streets safer for families which will encourage more New Yorkers to walk and bike, helping to slash congestion and pollution. That’s why this policy was one of our top priorities for many years. We thank DOT Commissioner Trottenberg for her leadership on this issue.”

“Speed cameras and lower speed limits are both proven, effective means of slowing down drivers, and we’re especially happy to see that the speed-camera program will be in place in the maximum number of school zones by the start of this school year,” said **Eric McClure, Executive Director of StreetsPAC**. “With all that the city’s school kids have had to face in 2020, improving the safety of the streets around their schools is hugely important, and something all New Yorkers should be able to get behind. And bringing the speed limits on these nine dangerous road segments into line with the citywide 25 mph limit should help significantly in reducing serious crashes.”

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 declined more than 25 percent — bucking national fatality trends, which have increased 15 percent 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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