



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 26, 2017

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**VISION ZERO: DE BLASIO ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES RETURN OF “DUSK
AND DARKNESS” SAFETY CAMPAIGN**

Starting today, New York City will aggressively address the traditional upturn in pedestrian-involved crashes normally associated with darker fall and winter evenings; in its second year, the Dusk and Darkness campaign will combine increased enforcement with education and engineering

Brooklyn —Mayor Bill de Blasio today announced that as New York City enters what has traditionally been the deadliest time of year for pedestrians, it would once again conduct its trailblazing Dusk and Darkness campaign as part of Vision Zero. Standing at Brooklyn Borough Hall during City Hall in Your Borough, de Blasio Administration officials outlined the new and returning elements of the campaign, reminding drivers that in the months ahead, they should continue to obey the speed limit, slow down, yield to pedestrians when turning and expect heightened enforcement – especially in the dusk and evening hours -- over the next several months.

“Our success at Vision Zero these last three years – driving down crashes here in New York City while traffic fatalities nationally are on the rise – does not mean we can rest on our past successes,” said **Mayor de Blasio**. “Last year’s Dusk and Darkness campaign was very promising, as we proved that a data-driven approach to time and seasonality could help actually prevent traffic fatalities – and literally save lives. But one death is one too many and there's still so much more we can do. This year Dusk and Darkness campaign will build on last year’s effort with different elements, including new TV and radio advertising and even more focused NYPD enforcement.”

Before the first Dusk and Darkness campaign launched in October 2016, DOT conducted close analyses of year-over-year crash trends – and had observed the following:

- The earlier onset of darkness in the fall and winter is highly correlated to an increase in traffic injuries and fatalities (see “[heat map](#)”). Prior to last year, severe crashes involving

pedestrians increased by nearly 40 percent in the early evening hours compared to crashes outside the fall and winter.

- Lower visibility during the dark hours of the colder months leads to twice as many crashes involving turns.
- In 2015, 57 pedestrian fatalities occurred after October 1st, 41 percent of that year's total. The enforcement and education efforts in last year's Dusk and Darkness campaign together helped contribute to a dramatic 25 percent decrease – 43 pedestrian fatalities in the last quarter, 29 percent of 2016's total.

“Where Vision Zero is concerned, the Mayor has charged his agencies to keep innovating – and our success in driving down the traditional upsurge in pedestrian fatalities last fall and winter guaranteed the Dusk and Darkness campaign would return this year,” said **DOT Commissioner Polly Trottenberg**. “We had seen that as the days shorten and the weather gets colder, crashes on our streets involving pedestrians increase. Using the data-driven strategies we employed last year -- education and enforcement with our sister agencies, ensuring that every driver learns about the limited visibility of this season and the dangers of fast turns, especially in the evening hours – we are working to make Dusk and Darkness 2.0 an even greater success.”

“The Dusk to Darkness Campaign is a crucial part of the Vision Zero initiative,” said **Police Commissioner James P. O’Neill**. “Raising awareness about the dangers that accompany reduced daylight and the onset of cold weather makes both pedestrians and motorists safer. Throughout the campaign, the NYPD will be conducting focused enforcement in areas that have experienced fatalities, ensuring everyone is adhering to the traffic rules. Together, we seek to build on the previous successes of this campaign, as we work to reduce traffic fatalities even further.”

“With heightened attention to traffic safety during dusk and nighttime, professional drivers can play a major role in preventing traffic fatalities and injuries in New York City, bringing us closer to Vision Zero,” said **TLC Commissioner and Chair Meera Joshi**. “We particularly appreciate the vigilance and safety efforts of TLC-licensed drivers during the dark hours of the colder months, when there is less visibility on the road.”

“It is important for New Yorkers to keep their neighborhoods safe for all pedestrians – especially vulnerable older adults who may have limited mobility, slower reflexes and low vision. There is enough room for all of us, drivers and pedestrians alike,” said **Department for the Aging Commissioner Donna Corrado**. “This city that never sleeps also includes older adults, and it is imperative that they also feel safe walking at night.”

“With nights getting longer and darkness settling in earlier, we must be extra vigilant to ensure the safety of all New Yorkers as they walk our city streets,” said **Youth and Community Development Commissioner Bill Chong**. “I applaud Mayor de Blasio, Commissioner Trottenberg and the NYPD for protecting students leaving afterschool programs. I am encouraged by the progress of the Dusk and Darkness campaign in reducing fatalities and making the streets safer for young people and their families, and look forward to continued improvement.”

Starting early Thursday morning, DOT and NYPD street teams will engage in a Citywide “Day

of Awareness,” distributing more than a million palm cards to educate drivers and other New Yorkers at high-priority Vision Zero target areas across all five boroughs. The palm cards underscore a pre-enforcement message about speeding, failure to yield and the dangers posed by increasing darkness in the fall – reminding drivers that with less sunlight, they will have less time to react to the unexpected.

The following are the new and returning multi-agency Vision Zero initiatives being pursued over the next several months of Dusk and Darkness:

Enforcement

- **Increased Evening/ Nighttime Enforcement:** As it did last year, NYPD will focus enforcement resources on the most hazardous violations (speeding and failure-to-yield to pedestrians), with precincts increasing their on-street presence around sunset hours when data show serious pedestrian crashes increase.
- **Focus on Priority Locations:** NYPD will again deploy Traffic Safety personnel to provide coverage at intersections and corridors with high rates of pedestrian injuries and fatal crashes during key dusk and darkness hours.
- **Focused Initiatives Cracking Down on Dangerous Driving Behaviors:** In October, November and December the NYPD will launch a series of initiatives to promote concentrated enforcement on speeding, cellphone/texting, failure to yield to pedestrians, blocked bicycle lanes, and other hazardous violations.
- **Drunk or Impaired Driving:** NYPD will also focus resources on drunk-driving efforts, as the evening and nighttime hours in the fall and winter have historically been when the incidence of DWI also increases.
- **Taxis and For-Hire Vehicles:** TLC inspectors will conduct speed enforcement to deter speeding among TLC-licensed drivers, as well as targeted enforcement of distracted drivers. The TLC will also continue its expanded deployment of inspectors, focused on safety summonses during early morning and evening hours.

Education

- **“Day of Awareness:”** NYPD and DOT street teams will today be educating and engaging drivers and other New Yorkers at different Vision Zero priority areas in all five boroughs, including at: Brooklyn Borough Hall; Penn Station; Grand Central Station,; the Hub in the Bronx; Main Street in Flushing, Queens; St. George Ferry Terminal on Staten Island; and at Flatbush Junction in Brooklyn.
- **“Signs” – New Vision Zero public safety campaign for Drivers to Obey Speed Limit and Yield to Pedestrians:** The award-winning Vision Zero campaigns will be updated this fall with completely fresh content. In the new campaign, real New Yorkers hold up street signs to powerfully illustrate the underlying safety message. Radio advertisements timed to air specifically around sunset hours will educate drivers to the correlation between darkness and crashes – and remind them to lower their speeds and turn slowly.
- **Daylight Saving Awareness:** As it has done in the spring when clocks “spring forward,” DOT will lead a public-awareness campaign around the end of Daylight Saving Time, when DOT statistics from 2010-2014 show that serious collisions in early evening increase by

approximately 40 percent. This year, Daylight Savings Time will end at 1:00 AM on Sunday, November 5 when clocks “fall back.”

- **Youth Education and After-school Programming:** DOT’s Safety Educators and the DOE will be continuing teaching Cross This Way curriculum in NYC schools, noting the dangers of dusk to our most vulnerable pedestrians. The Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) also notes that more than 150,000 students are currently involved in after-school programming in public schools that put them on streets during dusk hours.
- **Senior Center Outreach:** Older adults who attend DFTA’s network of senior centers have received education and outreach focused on improving safety conditions in their neighborhoods and sharing tips for getting around safely, presented by NYC DOT and NYPD.
- **TLC-Licensed Driver Outreach:** TLC will provide outreach to the city’s 170,000 taxi and for-hire vehicle drivers on the need to be cautious during dusk hours through text messages, postcards, and other channels. In addition, Vision Zero ads will run on Taxi TV, providing another opportunity to reach the broader public.

Street Design

- **Upgraded Corridors and Intersections, with Record Amount of Protected Bike Lanes:** In 2017, DOT has so far completed 66 Safety Improvement Projects around New York City – including expanded pedestrian space, corridor improvements, and intersection treatments -- with 39 of them located in targeted Vision Zero priority geographies. By the end of 2017, DOT expects to complete at least 40 more SIPs, along with a record 25 miles of protected bike lanes.
- **Woodhaven/Cross Bay Boulevard Safety Improvements:** The largest safety project being completed by DOT this year is along Woodhaven and Cross Bay Boulevards in Queens. A Vision Zero Priority Corridor, the 14-mile roadway is among the widest and most crash-prone in all of New York City; between 2011-2015, nearly 3,000 people were injured along this corridor, with 24 people killed. As part of its transformation this fall into a new Select Bus Service route for the Q52 and Q53 MTA buses that travel from Elmhurst to the Rockaways, DOT has started extending curbs, as well as adding pedestrian refuge islands, left-turn bays and dedicated bus lanes – along with a plan for new public art.

In 2017, as part of Vision Zero, DOT has implemented its most aggressive street redesign safety program, with increased investment in street redesign and traffic-calming measures citywide. DOT has improved the safety at a record number of dangerous intersections and thoroughfares, expecting to install more than 25 miles of protected bike lanes along key high-traffic corridors like Queens Boulevard and 111th Street in Queens, 5th Avenue, 7th Avenue and Park Row in Manhattan -- as well as installing a record number of leading pedestrian intervals (LPIs) – more than 700 – to give pedestrians a head start while crossing the street.

Administration officials also shared the latest Vision Zero safety statistics: for 2017 to date, New York City has seen 179 traffic fatalities, compared to 191 on this date in 2016 – a 6 percent decrease. The number of pedestrians struck and killed in 2017 is 85, compared to 118 by this date in 2016, a 28 percent decrease.

"As always, I ask drivers on Brooklyn's highways and byways to put safety first, keeping in mind all of those who use our streets," said **Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams**. "Vision Zero can become a reality when we watch where we go and, when necessary, take it slow. As our clocks 'fall back,' let's not falter in our commitment to safe streets for all."

"Mayor de Blasio's 'Vision Zero Action Plan' has helped reduce injuries and fatalities for pedestrians, motorists, and passengers alike, even while traffic fatalities are on the rise nationwide," said **Assembly Member Richard N. Gottfried**. "By increasing public awareness of the increased risk of accidents during dusk and evening hours, the de Blasio administration will help make New York even safer."

"As the winter approaches, we have to make sure that New Yorkers are educated on the dangers of the day getting darker earlier," said **Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez**, chair of the Council Committee on Transportation. "The 'Dust and Darkness' campaign has shown to be successful. I look forward to working with the DOT to ensuring further success this year." I look forward to working with the DOT to ensuring further success this year."

"What happened to me was not an anomaly, and was by no means unavoidable," said **Cara Cancelmo, a member of Families for Safe Streets who was hit in a crash**. "Every 2 hours a New Yorker is injured in a crash. It was a crash that could have been prevented, a crash that could happen to any New Yorker at any time. We must all fight together to change that stark reality. Those of us who bear this pain know the truth - our city is not safe, and we must all fight together to change that stark reality. We need to address the culture of reckless driving - with widespread use of speed safety cameras to enforce the lower speed limit and redesigned streets that will help cars, bikes and pedestrians share the road to keep everyone safe. It is a matter of life or death."

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



Signs: New Vision Zero public-awareness campaign being introduced this fall

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