



Seven Steps for New York State's Leaders to Transform Our Streets

*Transportation Alternatives and Families for
Safe Streets' Policy Platform for Governor Kathy
Hochul and the New York State Legislature*

January 5, 2023

Introduction

In 2006, the State of New York laid out an ambitious multimodal agenda for solving the public health, environmental, and mobility problems created by New York's aging and car-centric transportation infrastructure. [*Strategies for a New Age: New York State's Transportation Master Plan for 2030*](#) sought to reduce traffic deaths and carbon emissions by establishing a seamless multimodal transportation network that shifted trips out of cars and furthered the goals of the state.

Since 2006, progress on this plan has been limited. In the 17 years that followed, traffic crashes killed more than [17,000](#) people on New York State highways, the vast majority of commuters continued to [drive alone to work](#), transportation-related emissions [grew 16%](#), and transit [fare integration](#) remained scant across the region.

The State of New York is not on track to complete the objectives it laid out for 2030, and we are running out of time to change course. Meanwhile, the recently passed federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law represents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for New York State to direct an influx of federal funding to transformative transportation projects. The path is clear: **New York State must seize this moment by seeking every opportunity to shift trips away from cars and towards public transit, walking, and biking.**

Seven Steps for New York State's Leaders to Transform New York City's Streets is a policy platform for Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature to ensure that our state puts people, not cars, first. By converting car space into space for people, Governor Hochul and the New York State Legislature can dramatically improve public health — reducing traffic fatalities, air pollution, and asthma rates, while advancing environmental resilience and providing New Yorkers with faster and more reliable transit, safer streets, and new open space.

Why the focus on New York City?

While the 2006 Transportation Master Plan had a statewide focus, many of the policy recommendations below are targeted on improving street safety and transit in New York City. The city's density and existing transportation infrastructure make it a fertile ground for the State of New York both to take leaps toward its 2030 goals, and to set precedent for adoption in other

municipalities. Transportation Alternatives and Families for Safe Streets recognize that both statewide and more localized targeted action by the Governor and legislature are critical to wide-scale change.

Step One: Create Streets for People

The well-being of any place can be measured by the number of people who bike, walk, and take public transit, because car traffic directly correlates with harm to the health, access to opportunity, quality of life, and environment.

Policy decisions that prioritize car traffic over the well-being of people create cities and towns where low-income communities and communities of color are stuck in cycles of poverty, where air and noise pollution are endemic, where traffic fatalities are a daily occurrence, and where the majority of public spaces are used not for parks or recreation, but for the storage and moving of cars. By adopting policies that convert car space into space for people, Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature can counteract the long-term harmful effects of car-first policies.

NYC Voter Support for Street Space Reallocation

A 2020 Siena College poll found that NYC voters overwhelmingly want more space for people in their neighborhoods – even if it results in fewer parking spots.

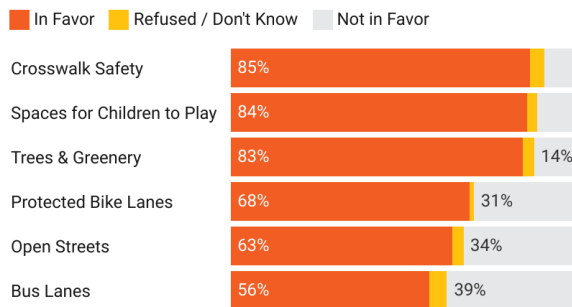


Chart: Transportation Alternatives • Created with Datawrapper

1. **Mandatory Multimodality:** Enact a law that requires new New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) projects to include ADA accessibility, bike lanes, bus lanes, bus shelters, crosswalks, and transit-priority infrastructure [by default](#). Street design should first prioritize pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transportation users, followed by freight and services, and lastly personal vehicles.
2. **Move People, Not Cars:** Enact legislation requiring New York State to implement a “People Level of Service” policy to measure the effectiveness of all state-owned roads in relation to the state’s goals for mode-shift, climate resilience, and traffic-related harm reduction. Where traditional “Level of Service” measurements evaluate all streets based on the number of vehicles moved per hour, “People Level of Service” accounts for [the number of people moved](#), including pedestrians, bus riders, vehicle passengers, and cyclists.

3. **Complete the Streets:** Require the inclusion of complete street design features in more state and federally-funded transportation projects, as directed in the Climate Action Council’s December Scoping Plan Report, by enacting Senate bills [S5130](#) and [S8394](#).
4. **Legalize Housing:** Set a statewide target for building new affordable housing along regional and local transit lines and stations and work with localities to address red tape and local zoning barriers. Addressing New York’s housing crisis is vital to the state’s COVID recovery and building new equitable housing along transit lines reduces emissions and improves access to jobs, neighborhood wellbeing and commuting.

Focus: New York City

5. **In the Zone:** Enact legislation enabling the creation of “low emissions zones” in neighborhoods with high air pollution levels and low tree cover, which dedicates funding to transit-focused infrastructure such as bus and bike lanes, prioritizes the placement of electric Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) buses, requires secure bike parking near MTA stops, creates curb extensions, and requires the conversion of 10% of all parking spots in the neighborhood into space for tree planting.
6. **Repeal Robert Moses:** Use federal funding to cap and tear down aging New York City highway infrastructure such as the [Cross-Bronx Expressway](#) and the [Brooklyn-Queens Expressway](#) with the goal of converting highway space into space for people.
7. **Streets for People, Not Proving Grounds:** Enact legislation banning autonomous vehicle testing in New York City. New Yorkers are not lab rats, and the most pedestrian-dense city in America is no place to try out unproven and potentially dangerous technology.

What To Do First

Pilot car-free days in New York State municipalities and measure quantitative impacts, including air and noise pollution and traffic violence. Car-free days [around the world](#) have significantly reduced PM 2.5 emissions, congestion, and ambient street noise while promoting physical activity for hundreds of thousands.

Step Two: Make New York a Vision Zero State

Vision Zero principles dictate that the design of transportation systems should prioritize human life over efficiency or convenience of drivers. Nations and municipalities that have succeeded in saving lives have done so by [adopting redundant traffic-calming street design elements](#) that reduce the likelihood of harm in a traffic crash and prioritize the movement of people over the movement of cars. Cities that design for pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transit riders experience [the least traffic violence](#).

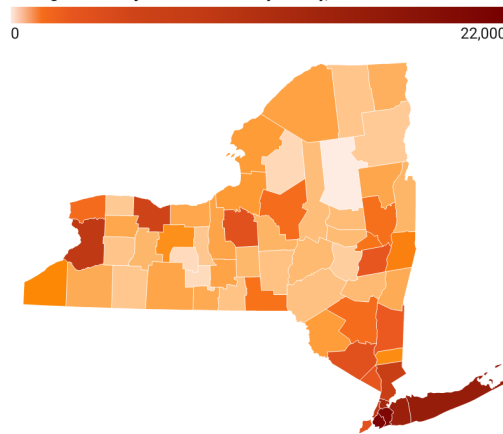
Governor Hochul and the New York State Legislature should implement Vision Zero priorities statewide. To jump start this program, using the infusion of federal funds made available through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Governor and legislature should allocate state budget funding to incentivize and fund traffic calming and roadway safety infrastructure statewide.

1. **Statewide Vision:** Within the first 100 days in office, commit New York State to a goal of zero traffic deaths by 2050. Adopt a vision that sets annual statewide goals for reducing traffic fatalities and serious injuries, and that prioritizes traffic-related harm reduction and road re-engineering as the route to those goals.
2. **Rights for Crash Victims:** Pass and sign the Crash Victims Bill of Rights, [S8152/A9152](#), to guarantee similar rights granted to other crime victims to the victims of traffic crashes, as well as a voice for crash victims and their loved ones in legal proceedings. This should also include financial and other support systems created for survivors, similar to those created by the Crime Victims Bill of Rights.

An Epidemic of Dangerous Streets

Traffic violence kills or injures around 170,000 people in New York every year. There is currently no statewide policy to address this.

Average Annual Injuries & Fatalities by County, 2016 - 2021



Map: Transportation Alternatives • Created with Datawrapper

3. **86 the 85th:** Enact legislation mandating that the New York State Department of Transportation end the [dangerous and unsubstantiated](#) practice of setting speed limits using the 85th Percentile Rule, which incorrectly assumes that individual drivers, rather than engineers, are the best judges of the safe speed of a street.
4. **Rate Risk:** Enact legislation creating a consumer safety rating for all vehicles sold in New York State based on the danger they pose to those outside of the vehicle, including [pedestrians](#).
5. **Guarantee Safe Passage:** Holds drivers liable in the event of a crash relating to passing a cyclist with less than three feet of clearance by passing and signing [S4529/A547](#).
6. **Teach the Benefits:** Reimagine traffic safety education campaigns to focus on educating the public on the benefits of lifesaving street designs and policies instead of [ineffective attempts](#) to correct individual driver behavior.
7. **Study the Source:** Create a New York State Vehicle Review Board empowered to work with city and state agencies and academic institutions to research how vehicle design harms New Yorkers, and to develop vehicle design standards which dictate which vehicles are safe for those inside and outside, especially vulnerable street users, and permissible for sale in the state.
8. **Open Access:** Create a statewide open data portal and mapping application with up-to-date information on when and where traffic crashes are happening across New York State, modeled on New York City's [Vision Zero View](#).

What to Do First

Dedicate funding in the Executive budget to meet New York's Vision Zero street re-engineering goals, with a focus on redesigning New York State's most deadly roads.

Step Three: Make Our Streets Fair

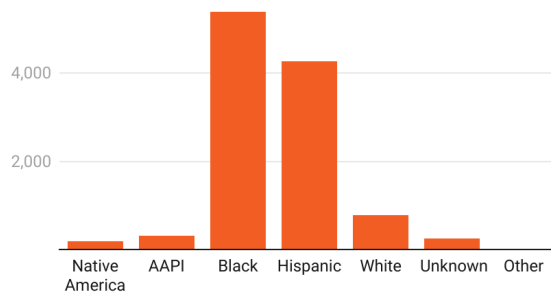
In New York State, health, environmental resilience, and mobility are directly tied to race, economic class, and how streets are designed and used. Car-centric infrastructure exacerbates inequities by exposing communities of color and higher-poverty communities to more air and noise pollution, extreme heat, and traffic violence while limiting access to jobs and green space — even while people in those communities are [less likely to own or drive cars](#).

This inequity is particularly stark in New York City. The average New York City resident has access to [five times as many jobs](#) by car than by bus, subway, or train. Compared to the city's whitest neighborhoods, neighborhoods with the largest populations of people of color have dramatically [higher asthma rates](#), fewer streets with protected bike lanes and bus lanes, and higher traffic injury rates. By adopting mobility policies that respond to disparities in health, environmental resilience, mobility, and economic opportunity, Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature can correct the unfairness of our streets.

1. **Sending Out an SOS:** Declare automobile-related harms to be a public health crisis and direct the New York State Department of Health and New York State Department of Transportation to allocate new funding to holistically address transportation-related air and noise pollution, extreme heat, traffic violence, job access, and access to green space, with a focus on racial, environmental, and public health disparities.
2. **Road Work Ahead:** Enact legislation requiring that the New York State DOT and the MTA prioritize projects that [lower greenhouse gas emissions](#).

Data Show Inequitable Traffic Stop Impacts

We know Black and Hispanic residents are disproportionately arrested during NYC traffic stops. We have no comparable data to understand racial disparities at the state level.



NYPD Vehicle Reporting, Arrests, Q1 - Q3 2022

Chart: Transportation Alternatives • Created with Datawrapper

3. **VMT for You & Me:** Enact legislation to require a reduction of the annual vehicle miles traveled within the state by 30% by 2035, [following other state models](#), and create a [Vehicle Mileage Tax](#) to supplement the current state gas tax and more accurately capture vehicle wear and tear on roads as electric vehicles proliferate.
4. **Right-Size Fines:** Pass and sign a law requiring the Department of Motor Vehicles to create an income-graduated [fine program](#) for all traffic-related offenses to dissuade high-income people from repeatedly offending and to reduce the harm of traffic fines on low-income New Yorkers.
5. **Root Out the Rot:** Develop an action plan for working with other governors to address [rising fraud in car registration and insurance](#), and ask the State Comptroller to report on the effects of fake license plates as well as registration and insurance fraud and make recommendations to the Attorney General to crack down on the problem.
6. **Transparency on Traffic Stops:** Pass and sign a law requiring New York State to make demographic information about residents involved in police traffic stops publicly accessible in order to assess disproportionate impacts on vulnerable communities.

What To Do First

Following the model of New York municipalities including [Albany](#), [Saugerties](#), [Village of Liberty](#), and [Suffolk County](#), enact legislation requiring municipal police officers, state troopers, and highway patrols to distribute coupons instead of fines for minor mechanical vehicle violations such as broken tail lights.

Step Four: Build Self-Enforcing Streets

Traffic crashes are the [leading cause](#) of injury-related death for New York State residents. The solution is streets that are designed to proactively discourage dangerous driving and monitored by automated traffic safety cameras. Traffic calming redesigns [have been shown to reduce crashes, fatalities, and injuries](#), as well as moderate behaviors such as driver speeding and [cyclists riding on the sidewalk](#). Automated enforcement has been shown to control reckless driving in New York City, reducing both [traffic injuries and fatalities](#) and speeding [recidivism](#), and most New York City voters [prefer camera enforcement](#) to police enforcement.

With traffic-calming road designs, safe speed limits, and automated enforcement, Governor Hochul and the New York State Legislature can create “self-enforcing” streets that address reckless driving without the need for constant, costly and potentially biased police presence.

Wider Lanes, Faster Speeds

For every extra foot in the width of a travel lane, vehicle speeds increase by about 3 mph.

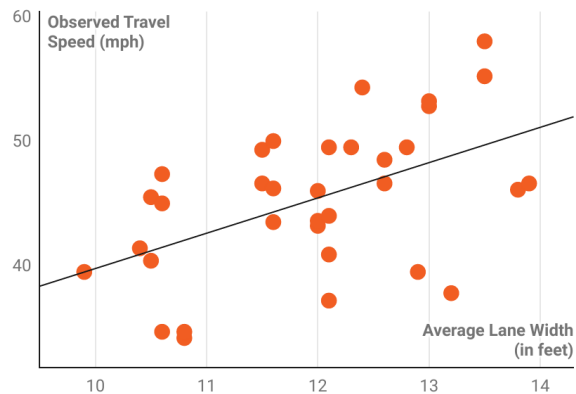


Chart: Transportation Alternatives • Created with Datawrapper

1. **The Limit Does Exist:** Pass and sign legislation requiring the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles to set safety standards for all new vehicles sold in New York State, including requirements for [speed governor technology](#) and [direct vision standards](#).
2. **Greenlight a Right on Red Ban:** Pass and sign legislation mandating a statewide ban on right turns at red lights, including the more than [330 signalized intersections](#) in New York City that still permit right turns at red lights, following the model of the District of Columbia which recently voted to [ban the practice](#).
3. **Require Re-timing:** Pass and sign legislation requiring the re-timing of all traffic signals to the local speed limit as a statewide standard in order to prevent speeding, tickets, and crashes, as speeding is a major factor in about [80% of car crashes that kill people in cars](#) in New York City.

Focus: New York City

4. **Less is More:** Require the New York State DOT to narrow state roads in New York City, which has been proven to reduce speeding and save lives.
5. **Let There Be Light:** Direct the New York State Power Authority to expand the [Smart Street Lighting NY](#) program in New York City, and empower the authority to coordinate with New York City DOT to target lighting improvements to pedestrian-crash prone areas and to couple new lighting with leading pedestrian intervals and raised crosswalk installations.
6. **Keep It Automated, Keep It Safe:** Enact legislation expanding the use of [bus lane cameras](#), and authorizing the use of new automated enforcement cameras to protect [school buses letting off children](#), crosswalks, and [bike lanes](#), including “failure to yield” cameras that protect pedestrians in the crosswalk and “blocking the box” cameras that deter motor vehicles from clogging intersections.
7. **Scale Red Light Cameras:** Pass and sign a law authorizing the increase in the percentage of New York City intersections with red light cameras from 1% to 10% by 2025.
8. **Slow Down:** Lower the speed limit to 40 mph on all state highways in New York City that are still speed-limited to 50 mph.
9. **Open Up:** Enact legislation authorizing a [5 mph speed limit on New York City’s Open Streets](#).

What To Do First

Pass and sign Sammy’s Law, Senate bill [S524A](#), to permit the City of New York to independently establish and lower speed limits in New York City. Speeding is a major factor in [80% of all fatal car crashes](#) that kill people in cars in New York City. Fatal crashes decrease [17% for every one mile-per-hour reduction](#) in driving speed.

Step Five: Reduce the Number and Size of Cars in New York

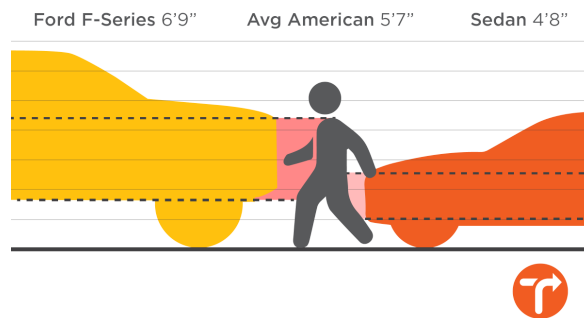
Across New York State, car dependence is hurting our communities, our health, and our environment. The harm caused by cars in New York City in particular is substantial, and requires action on the state level to alleviate. The New York City DOT estimates the annual cost of all traffic crashes in New York City at [\\$4.29 billion](#). Simply put, there are too many cars in New York City, and as a result of car-centric planning, free and ample parking, limited tolls, no limits on vehicle use, size, design, and other policies that promote driving and car ownership, the problem is only getting worse.

New car purchases [rose 37%](#) in Manhattan, Brooklyn, the Bronx, and Queens between fall 2019 and fall 2020. At the same time, new vehicles are growing larger in size and weight as SUVs and light trucks make up a larger road share than ever before. By adopting policies that incentivize walking, biking, micromobility, and transit, and disincentivizing driving, Governor Hochul and the New York State Legislature can help make New York City the model of a car-lite city.

BIGGER VEHICLES = MORE PEOPLE KILLED

Automakers build bigger vehicles every year. Taller front-ends increase likelihood of head or chest impact and of falling under the vehicle instead of on the hood. Plus, more power required to power larger vehicles means a harder strike.

It doesn't have to be this way. In Japan and Europe, government regulations force automakers to make vehicles safe in shape and size. Fatalities are in decline there while on the rise in the U.S.



1. **Green Commuter Cash-Out:** Pass and sign legislation establishing a statewide [Commuter Cash-Out Benefit](#) to financially incentivize employees to take transit, bike, or walk to work.
2. **Ready the Region:** Coordinate transit agencies in the tri-state area to create a [Regional Rail Plan](#) to streamline rail system payments and connections across the New York City metro region. Expand the \$5 CityTicket to peak-hour trips and incorporate free transfers between commuter rail and local transit (as a first step toward a “one city, one fare” policy), and increase frequency on Metro-North and LIRR to make them more useful for trips within New York City.

3. **e-Cargo:** Pass and sign legislation to legalize [electric-assist cargo bikes](#) so that companies can legally deliver by e-bike, and dedicate state funding to the creation of electric-assist cargo bike delivery hubs where goods can be transferred from truck to bike, reducing congestion, pollution, and traffic violence.
4. **Big Car, Big Tax:** Pass and sign legislation creating a [weight-based vehicle tax](#) to disincentivize the use of dangerous oversized vehicles on dense urban streets, following the successful model of the District of Columbia.
5. **Tunnel Vision:** Use federal funding to build a [cross-harbor freight tunnel](#) connecting New York City to New Jersey in order to reduce truck deliveries on our streets.

Focus: New York City

6. **Unlock the Grid for All:** Ensure that [congestion pricing](#) is instituted with [no additional carve-outs](#) and without further delay.

7. **Cut the Concrete:** Pass a law eliminating mandatory [minimum parking requirements](#) on new developments, including near trains, subways, buses, and ferries, acknowledging that parking minimums [cause](#) car dependency, congestion, pollution, and [higher housing costs](#).



8. **On Track to Graduate:** Pass and sign a law [expanding the hours](#) that New York City student MetroCards are valid, and allow the MTA to [partner with other mass transit entities](#) to provide City University of New York and State

University of New York student discounts for the Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North Railroad.

9. **Express the Express:** Accelerate the building of the Interborough Express and extend the initial route buildout to include the Bronx, allowing New Yorkers to shift trips out of cars in communities where a lack of transit access would otherwise make such shifts impossible.

What To Do First

Ensure that all new state procurement processes prioritize awards that reduce fleet and vehicle size and weight as New York State rolls over current state-owned vehicle fleets, and ensure approved vehicles are built and equipped to protect vulnerable road users.

Step Six: Put Bus Riders First

In New York City, people who ride the bus have [substantially lower median incomes](#) than those who ride the subway or who drive, and are less likely to have a bachelor's degree, more likely to be a single parent, more likely to be foreign-born, more likely to be a person of color, and more likely to have a child at home. These New Yorkers suffer from the slowest bus system in the U.S. This inequity is in part because there are too many private cars in New York City, and in part because the design of streets is extraordinarily imbalanced toward moving those cars, primarily serving the transportation needs of those who on the whole are wealthier. Governor Hochul and the New York State legislature should put bus riders first, not only improving quality of life for bus riders but improving the efficiency of streets as a whole.

1. **It's Electric:** Require transit agencies statewide to jumpstart the electrification process to convert to an all electric bus fleet by passing and signing [S7349/S8548](#).

2. **Be Prepared:** Prepare a statewide car-free transportation protocol to be enacted during service outages as well as state or federal emergency declarations and evacuation orders. In New York City this would include mandated pop-up bus lanes for shuttles between stations during track work or other subway outages. In other municipalities, this would include mandated car-free bus lanes on highways, bridges, and major arterials during emergency declarations.

Focus: New York City

1. **Six Minute Service:** Direct the MTA to mandate and budget for [six-minute service](#) on all subway routes and the top 100 bus routes in New

Lincoln Tunnel Traffic

Buses make up fewer than 15% of the vehicles traveling the Lincoln Tunnel, but carry over three-quarters of commuters.

■ Cars ■ Buses

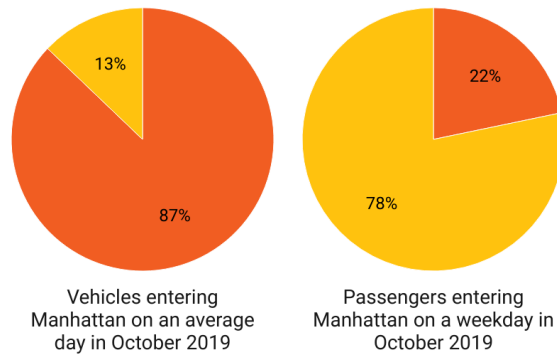


Chart: Transportation Alternatives • Created with Datawrapper

York City. With the implementation of congestion pricing, investing in better transit now is critical to help incentivize a shift to fewer car trips.

3. **Avoid the Cliff:** Public transit is a public good and individual fare revenue should not be expected to close the MTA's budget gap. Increase state funding for the MTA to meet the service needs of millions of New Yorkers and use [federal highway funds](#) to fill New York State public transit gaps.
4. **Take a Free Ride:** Fund buses as a free essential service [phased in over four years](#).
5. **Fairer Fair Fares:** Advocate for New York City to expand eligibility for [Fair Fares NYC](#) up to 200% of the federal poverty level to provide discounted transit fares for more low-income New Yorkers.
6. **Proven Paratransit:** Expand the MTAs [on-demand E-Hail program](#) to give New Yorkers with disabilities more travel flexibility and better service.
7. **All A-Doored:** Institute all-door boarding on all MTA buses.
8. **X-pand the XBL:** Call on the Port Authority to [convert a second lane](#) of the Lincoln Tunnel into a bus-only lane, and make the current Exclusive Bus Lane (XBL) operable 24/7.

What To Do First

Dedicate more of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) budget toward bus transit. NYS [currently dedicates 7%](#) of highway budget toward transit projects, but more should be appropriated for the rail, bus, and subway projects that serve half of commuters in the state.

Step Seven: Get More Butts on Bikes

Biking is a proven sustainable alternative to driving, particularly in dense cities. More people on bikes means less congestion, less heart disease, less diabetes, and more clean air. Biking also saves money – for the individual, in reducing public infrastructure costs, and through wear and tear on the roads. By encouraging biking, Governor Hochul and the New York State legislature can make strides to improve public health and alleviate car dependence.

- 1. Money Back for Micromobility:** Launch a [“Ride Clean Rebate Program”](#) offering a rebate on the purchase of a bike, scooter, e-bike, or e-scooter and prioritizing low-income residents in transit deserts and purchases by local small businesses for cargo e-bikes. Direct the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) to create an e-mobility access program to address greenhouse gas emissions.
- 2. Plan Ahead:** Direct the New York State Department of Transportation to review and coordinate municipal bicycle efforts to establish a comprehensive statewide bicycle network plan. New York has not updated its bicycle plan since [1997](#), while municipalities continue to make independent bicycle plans without any coordination.
- 3. Idaho Stop:** Enact legislation allowing bicyclists to treat stop signs as yield signs, a change which can encourage ridership, reduce [racist policing](#), and [reduce crashes by up to 23%](#).
- 4. Park It:** Enact legislation requiring the MTA and other transit agencies to install secure bike parking at local and regional bus and transit stations, and on state property, including in state parks and vacant lots.

Bicycling on NYC Bridges

Bike trips on bridges have increased by 27% since 2018.

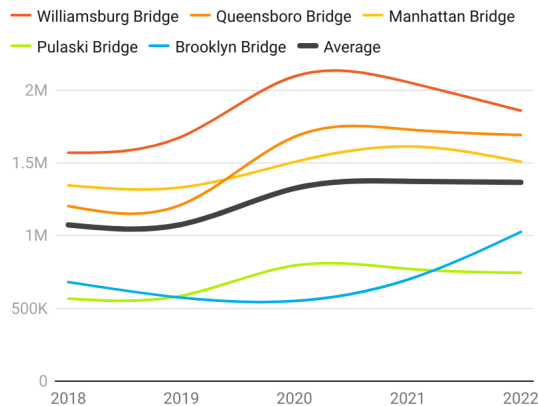


Chart: Transportation Alternatives • Created with Datawrapper

5. **Beacon Ban:** Enact legislation preemptively banning cyclist and pedestrian [beaconization](#), or the requirement that some road users wear transponders that communicate with autonomous vehicles.

Focus: New York City

6. **Share the Fare:** Pass and sign a law requiring the MTA, New York City Ferry, Port Authority, and Citi Bike to create a plan for multimodal fare integration in accordance with the [New York State Transportation Plan for 2030](#) objective to create a “seamless system in which travelers can conveniently shift between modes and operators.”
7. **Bridges For People:** Direct the MTA to take action on their bridge study and build bike access on all New York City bridges under state jurisdiction, including the Verrazzano-Narrows Bridge, Robert F. Kennedy Bridge, Throgs Neck Bridge, Whitestone Bridge, Marine Parkway Bridge, and Cross Bay Bridge.
8. **Rack ‘Em:** Direct the MTA to install [bike racks on buses](#), prioritizing routes in transit deserts such as Southeast Queens and the North Bronx, so that commuters have more flexibility in connecting multiple transportation options during their trip.
9. **E-Bike Overdue:** Fund and develop a pilot program with public library systems to offer e-bikes and e-cargo bikes for loan in low-income neighborhoods in New York City.

What To Do First

Empower NYSERDA to partner with Con-Ed and use [make-ready funding](#) to create micromobility charging stations and other electrification infrastructure in New York City. In conjunction with the New York City DOT, ensure that operations savings achieved as a result of system electrification stabilizes end cost for users.

Appendix to Seven Steps for New York State’s Leaders to Transform New York City’s Streets

Research and Citations Supporting Transportation Alternatives and Families for Safe Streets’ Policy Platform for Governor Hochul and the New York State Legislature

Step One: Convert Car Space into Space for People

Mandatory Multimodality: In Massachusetts, a “[controlling criteria](#)” policy, and in Ohio, a “[multimodal design guide](#)”, have both standardized the inclusion of pedestrian and bicyclist features in state road projects, shifting trips away from cars and ensuring safe travel for all road users.

Move People, Not Cars: A single lane of car traffic on a city street can move [600 to 1,600 people per hour](#). A two-way protected bike lane can move 7,500 people per hour. A dedicated bus lane can carry up to 8,000 passengers per hour. A sidewalk can move 9,000 people per hour. A car-free busway transitway lane can move up to 25,000 people per hour in each direction.

Complete the Streets: Complete Street design standards [have proven](#) to reduce traffic injuries and fatalities, increase biking and walking, lower pollution levels, and boost commercial activity along redesigned corridors.

Legalize Housing: The White House recently identified transit-oriented development as a [critical tool to solve the housing crisis](#) while the [New New York Action Plan](#) called for legislation that promotes increased densities around transit. These plans follow zoning reforms by [Oregon](#), [Austin](#), and [Chicago](#) to enable TOD and increase housing supply.

In the Zone: One tree can remove [11,000 miles of car emissions](#) annually, equivalent to \$5.60 in benefits for every dollar that New York City spends planting trees, and a tree-lined street has over 50% fewer indoor particulate pollutants than a street with none.

Repeal Robert Moses: People of color and people living in poverty [are more likely to be forced to live near highways](#) and [as a result, lack public space access](#)

and are [exposed to higher levels of traffic violence](#), [air](#) and [noise](#) pollution, and [extreme heat](#).

Streets for People, Not Proving Grounds: Autonomous vehicles cars have a crash rate [more than twice as high](#) as "conventional" vehicles per million miles traveled.

Step Two: Make New York a Vision Zero State

Statewide Vision: A Vision Zero policy for New York State would follow the models of [Montana](#), [North Dakota](#), [Maryland](#), and [Wisconsin](#), and is especially important at the state level, as [half of all roadway deaths](#) nationwide occur on state roads.

Rights for Crash Victims: Currently, crash victims and their families have unacceptable difficulty getting access to basic documents like police reports, are denied attending and testifying at DMV hearings, and struggle obtaining the support they need after a crash.

86 the 85th: By following the model of Massachusetts in setting [speed limits with the goal of eliminating fatalities and serious injuries](#), and with the understanding that a 35 mph speed limit is [five times as deadly](#) to pedestrians as a 20 mph speed limit, New York State could save thousands of lives. A 2017 National Transportation Safety Board report panned the 85th percentile rule, finding that there was ["no strong evidence" supporting it](#). Similar [findings](#) from a task force in California have led to a review of the Golden State's own speed limit policies.

Rate Risk: Current federal safety rating systems only consider the safety of those inside vehicles, which has led to a nationwide pedestrian safety crisis. SUVs and oversized vehicles receive top safety standards, despite their [greater likelihood](#) to injure and kill people outside the vehicle. New York could model a new system for the nation that highlights the danger of [certain makes and models](#) while helping New York drivers make informed decisions.

Guarantee Safe Passage: Without witnesses outside the driver, fatal traffic crashes involving cyclists are often chalked up to "accidents," leaving the families of the victims without evidence or legal recourse. A three-foot passing law would redefine these fatalities and give victims' families an avenue for recompense.

Teach the Benefits: While education campaigns focused on personal behavior [do little to affect driver behavior](#), reorienting the state’s traffic safety education budget toward teaching the value of road diets, lower speed limits, traffic circles, and automated enforcement could increase community support for these lifesaving interventions.

Study the Source: Following the model of the California Air Review Board, which have successfully implemented [stringent vehicle standards](#) that have significantly reduced air pollution and respiratory disease, standards should consider how fuel economy and engine design affects air and noise pollution.

Open Access: Accessible local crash information will allow local governments to target traffic safety resources with data-driven transparency and provide equitable responses to danger in real time.

Step Three: Make Our Streets Fair

Sending Out an SOS: In New York City, majority-POC districts suffer from [fewer protected bike lanes](#), fewer bus lanes, fewer bike parking spaces, higher traffic injuries, and higher asthma rates. [Spatial equity](#) seeks to understand and correct these outcomes through a redistribution of street space.

Road Work Ahead: Transportation accounts for [28%](#) of greenhouse gas emissions in New York.

VMT for You & Me: The transition to electric vehicles will reduce greenhouse gasses but also reduce contributions to the gas tax, which provides [nearly \\$1 billion](#) in maintenance funds for roadways, bridges, and transit. This law would ensure infrastructure funds remain, and follow the path of Utah and Oregon, which have already passed similar laws, and eight other states already considering [electric vehicle VMT legislation](#).

Right-Size Fines: Income-graduated fines prevent over-punishing low-income people and under-punishing wealthy people. An income-graduated fine pilot program on Staten Island found that revenue collected increased by 25% and [arrest warrants issued for non-payment were cut by half](#).

Root Out the Rot: Fraud unfairly increases costs for those following the law, diverts [millions of dollars annually](#) in fees out-of-state and [from tolls](#), and prevents the City from cracking down on dangerous drivers. A 2010 report on the problem, which has only [gotten worse in recent years](#), found that New York State loses at least \$1 million a year in revenue from fraud in license plate, title certificate, and vehicle registration fees in New York City alone; in 2010, New York City was \$72.7 million in the hole from unpaid parking tickets issued to drivers of out-of-state registered vehicles, a major indicator of insurance rate evasion; some vehicles with out-of-state plates had racked up over \$100,000 in [repeated parking violations](#); and 1,650 vehicles in NYC were registered to just [14 addresses in Pennsylvania](#).

Transparency on Traffic Stops: New York is one of only 29 states with [no comprehensive stop data](#) requirements, despite the State Assembly acknowledging existing [racial disparities](#). In New York City, Black and Hispanic drivers make up [56% of traffic stops](#) but account for 87% of arrests, 93% of use-of-force incidents, 89% of vehicles seized, and 82% of vehicles searched. A [similar pattern exists](#) in counties across New York State.

Step Four: Build Self-Enforcing Streets

The Limit Does Exist: Speeding is a factor in [80% of fatal car crashes](#) that kill people in cars in New York City, and [30% of all fatal car crashes](#) in New York State. The City of New York will start using speed governor technology in its fleet in 2023, and the European Union will start using [this technology](#) in all new vehicles starting in 2024. Speed governors are already used for electric bikes and scooters.

Greenlight a Right on Red Ban: As many as [93%](#) of right turn on red collisions involving pedestrians or bicyclists result in injury. An outright ban could prevent [hundreds of injuries](#) every year.

Require Re-timing: Traffic signals timed to the speed limit will reduce traffic fatalities and injuries by encouraging drivers to take advantage of the “green wave” possibly only by driving the speed limit. In New York City, speeding is a major factor in [four out of every five fatal traffic crashes](#) that kill people in cars.

Less is More: Every one meter expansion of lane width increases average speed by [nearly 10 mph](#).

Let There Be Light: Over [three quarters](#) of pedestrian deaths occur in dark lighting conditions. Measures that promote visibility promote safety: raised crosswalks can reduce pedestrian crashes by [nearly half](#), proper lighting by [42%](#), high-visibility crosswalks by [40%](#), and leading pedestrian intervals by [13%](#).

Keep It Automated, Keep It Safe: Existing bus lane enforcement cameras catch [115 drivers](#) who block bus lanes for each one caught by a police officer.

Scale Red Light Cameras: Red-light running is at an [all-time high](#) in the Vision Zero era. Red light cameras can reduce crashes by as much as [58%](#).

Slow Down: Less than 5% of roadways in New York City are speed limited to 50 mph, but these roads were the location of nearly 20% of traffic fatalities in 2022.

Open Up: Just one year after launch, [pedestrian injuries fell 42%](#), cyclist injuries fell 17%, and motorist injuries fell 50% on New York City's Open Streets. A Siena College poll found that [63% of New York City voters](#) support closing streets to cars to open them to people, including 57% of car owners.

Step Five: Reduce the Number and Size of Cars in New York City

Green Commuter Cash-Out: After California enacted a similar law in 1992, [carpooling increased 64%, transit ridership increased 50%, and walking or biking increased 39%](#).

Ready the Region: Today, [only 22% of workers](#) who commute to jobs in the outer boroughs are using transit, but a pilot study of an all-in-one Long Island Rail Road and Metropolitan Transit Authority discount was popular enough to increase revenue 45% and led to an overall cut travel times by as much as [two-thirds](#).

e-Cargo: Today, companies in New York City deliver 1.5 million packages [a day](#) and [90%](#) of goods are moved by truck. Legalizing environmentally-friendly options for last-mile delivery would reduce the 120,000 trucks that cross in and out of New York City every day.

Big Car, Big Tax: Compared to standard passenger cars, SUVs and pickup trucks are [three times as likely](#) to kill people walking or biking and [eight times as likely](#) to kill children walking or biking. Vehicle weight has accordingly factored into an estimated [28,000 deaths nationwide](#). [Researchers have estimated](#) that, in a strictly economic sense, SUVs would need to cost \$750 more to balance out the social risk they create for pedestrian safety.

Tunnel Vision: [New York City is the only major city in the world](#) that is not directly connected to its national freight rail network.

Unlock the Grid for All: In cities from [Singapore](#) to [London](#) to [Stockholm](#) to [Milan](#), congestion tolling plans have reduced car traffic by as much as 73%, reduced greenhouse gas emissions as much as 24%, reduced asthma hospitalizations by as much as 50%, and reduced crashes by as much as 35%. As many as [127,000 car trips currently arriving](#) into Manhattan's congestion pricing zone every day could shift to transit, speeding up the nation's slowest traffic on arterials by 17%.

Cut the Concrete: In New York City, parking construction costs [\\$25,000-50,000 per space on average](#), and the addition of parking leads to 14 to 18% increases in housing costs for residents. Over 40 cities nationwide, along with the states of California and Oregon, have [already abolished](#) minimums. Another 27 cities have parking maximums, including Raleigh, Boston, San Francisco, Portland, and Minneapolis — all of which have higher car ownership rates than New York City. Researchers have found that [parking access directly leads to car-ownership](#), including in New York City, where residential parking supply is [more important than income and demographics](#) in predicting car ownership.

On Track to Graduate: Group discounts [have shown](#) to increase target group ridership by 70%, reduce parking demand, and increase revenues for transit authorities.

Express the Express: In the last decade, Seattle spent the most per capita of large metro areas on new transit projects and accordingly saw the largest decline in the share of people driving alone to work and the largest drop in car ownership. Researchers in San Francisco found that increasing transit access from the level of an outer suburban neighborhood to the citywide median could shift commuter trips from cars to transit by [6.5 percentage points](#).

Step Six: Put Bus Riders First

It's Electric: Transportation is the [second largest source of greenhouse gas emissions](#) in New York. Electric buses emit [60%](#) fewer GHGs than diesel buses. Requiring statewide bus electrification would help the state meet its Climate Act goals of reducing GHG emission 85% by 2050.

Be Prepared: New York City implemented emergency transportation measures ahead of [Hurricane Sandy](#), and other cities [use this method](#) to keep drivers off the road during dangerous conditions.

Six Minute Service: Long travel time is the [most common reason](#) New Yorkers do not take transit. Running trains and buses [more frequently](#) during off-peak and weekend hours is the most immediate way to improve rider experience, increase ridership, and provide more equitable service, and such policy changes would only cost 2% of the Metropolitan Transit Authority budget.

Avoid the Cliff: The long-delayed implementation of congestion pricing and changing post-COVID travel patterns have [changed the MTA's fiscal forecasting](#).

Take a Free Ride: In Kansas City, where buses have been free [since 2019](#), ridership is up, safety is up, and constituents report higher trust in public officials. Following fare free pilots in [Denver](#), [Los Angeles](#), and [Boston](#), D.C. is making the [entire bus system free](#).

Fairer Fair Fares: One in four New York City residents living in poverty [report difficulty](#) affording transit to access jobs, education, and healthcare, but only one-third of eligible residents are enrolled in the program due to funding cuts.

Proven Paratransit: Today, Access-a-Ride paratransit shuttles rides must be scheduled 24 hours in advance — an [unreliable](#) and [antiquated](#) system. The E-Hail program by contrast provides [life-changing](#) on-demand vehicles. Expanding the massively successful pilot program would improve mobility for nearly 170,000 New Yorkers.

All A-Doored: Research by the City of New York found that all-door boarding reduced the time that buses spent at bus stops by [approximately 40%](#).

X-pand the XBL: Today, the XBL carries [75%](#) of all inbound passengers and has a [carrying capacity ten times](#) the typical traffic lane. This change would offer massive capacity expansion immediately and at little or no cost.

Step Seven: Get More Butts on Bikes

Money Back for Micromobility: This would follow the model of successful e-bike exclusive programs launched in [dozens of cities, counties, and states](#) in recent years, including statewide programs in California, Colorado, Hawaii, and Connecticut.

Plan Ahead: New York is [one of just 17 states](#) that has not introduced or updated a statewide bicycle plan in the last 10 years. The Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation found that [85%](#) of surveyed New Yorkers considered it important to fund, expand, and connect greenway trails and 75% would use trails more if there were more trails in their area.

Idaho Stop: In Delaware, [bicyclist crashes decreased](#) by 23% the year after implementation. Federal safety officials are [now recommending](#) the legalization of the Idaho Stop.

Park It: In New York City, access to secure bicycle parking is the number two reason determining whether someone chooses to ride a bike or not, one in four households have had a bicycle stolen, and [95% of cyclists](#) say more bicycle parking is a priority.

Beacon Ban: As the promise of autonomous vehicles falls flat, automakers raise the specter of pedestrian and cyclist beaconization again and again. It is a solution that prioritizes the movement of car traffic over people and places the burden of failed autonomous technology on the most vulnerable road users.

Share the Fare: The [New York State Transportation Plan for 2030](#) calls for systems integration and coordination to address capacity. Fare integration programs were responsible for shifting [5%](#) of drivers to transit in London and [15%](#) of drivers to transit in Madrid.

Bridges For People: After a dedicated bike access lane was opened on the Brooklyn Bridge, ridership doubled without any decline in ridership on other adjacent bridges.

Rack ‘Em: Nationwide, [78%](#) of buses have exterior bike racks, but only [four routes](#) of New York City’s 204 local and 31 express bus routes allow bikes. Following the model of [Portland, Oregon](#), in-vehicle bike hooks allow for further bicycle storage on SBS routes, similar to how [luggage racks](#) on the LaGuardia Link provide convenient storage.

E-Bike Overdue: [Denver, Colorado](#) recently created a similar program, where residents can check out one of 30 e-bikes for personal needs and return it at one of three locations.