

**WESTERN QUEENS**

**STREET**

**SAFETY**

**PLAN**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Traffic violence is one of the leading causes of death in New York City. In 2022, traffic-related deaths were on par with gun-related deaths in New York City, yet the media and political focus is on the latter much more than the former. 2023 has been no better, in fact the first half of the year was one of the worst since the onset of Vision Zero in 2014. Traffic fatalities are up 43% in Queens compared to last year, and in Western Queens specifically, this year has been particularly tragic.

Between January 1st and November 21st 2023, there have been 924 crashes involving a cyclist or pedestrian in Western Queens (defined as the neighborhoods of Long Island City, Astoria, East Elmhurst, Elmhurst, Sunnyside, Woodside, Corona, Jackson Heights, and Maspeth). These crashes resulted in 13 deaths and 939 cyclist or pedestrian injuries:

- Hamdan Almatore, 46 years old
- Tamara Chuchi Kao, 62 years old
- Luis Cayancela Paredes, 55 years old
- Dolma Naadhun, 7 years old
- Jayden McLaurin, 16 years old
- Mauro Chimbay, 43 years old
- Name unknown, age unknown
- Name unknown, 36 years old
- Darryl Younger, 58 years old
- Name unknown, 33 years old
- Eleanor Neri, 76 years old
- Linda Lee Hirsh, 77 years old
- Francis Ortega, 50 years old

Even one death is too many, and these thirteen tragedies have had a major impact on Western Queens residents. Local advocacy and organizing for improved street safety measures increases following each death, and advocates have become consistent and vocal in their support of neighborhood-wide changes. In response, street safety advocacy groups and Western Queens elected officials wrote a letter to the New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) demanding the agency be more proactive in developing a neighborhood-wide street safety plan. It has never been acceptable for DOT to simply respond to each death with limited improvements for the specific area in which the death occurred, but that is too often the agency's reactive approach.

In 2014, NYC launched Vision Zero with the goal of achieving zero traffic-related deaths. The City unfortunately has a long way to go, and must make substantial investments in order to deliver on its commitment to Vision Zero. This plan lays out legislative and infrastructural recommendations, to guide livable streets improvements in service of a safer Western Queens. It is an ambitious plan, but if it saves lives, it is worth doing. And it will save lives.



Tiffany Cabán  
Council Member  
City Council District 22



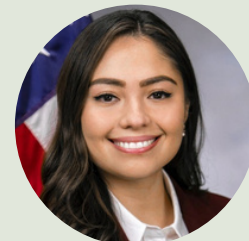
Zohran Mamdani  
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Assemblymember  
34th Assembly District

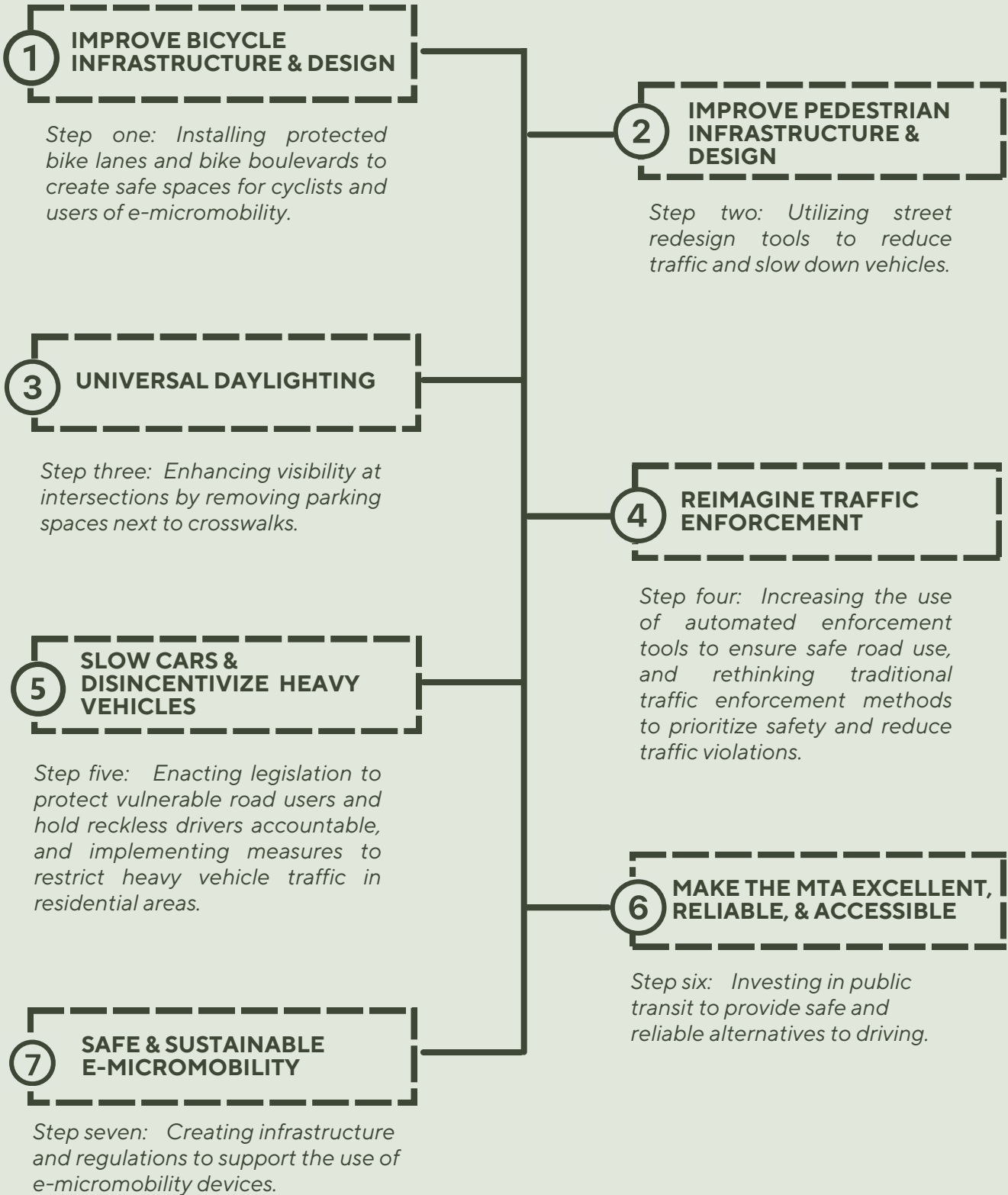


Kristen Gonzalez  
NY State Senator  
59th Senate District



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Improvements and investments in the following areas by DOT, the Mayor, the New York State Legislature, and the New York City Council would reduce traffic violence and improve safety outcomes.



# **IMPROVE BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE & DESIGN**

## **PROTECTED BIKE LANES**

Protected bike lanes (PBLs) are associated with a 34% reduction in crash risk, and even up to 60% on some streets. They also have been shown to improve street safety for all road users. Drivers frequently drive through or stop in conventional unprotected bike lanes, forcing cyclists to ride either into oncoming traffic or on the sidewalk. Additionally, many Vision Zero era cyclist fatalities have occurred on unprotected bike lanes - Tamara Kao and Jayden McLaurin in 2023, Xing Long Lin on 35th Street in 2021, and Xellea Samonte on 23rd Avenue and 35th Street in 2018. This will not stop unless cars are physically prevented from entering bike lanes, which has been most successfully done by installing jersey barriers.

NYC has recently started adding double-wide bike lanes, the same width as a typical car lane, the first of which is being built on 10th Avenue in Manhattan. These lanes provide additional space for increased micromobility volume, particularly with riders of e-bikes and cargo bikes traveling alongside traditional cyclists.

The NYC Streets Plan requires the City to install at least 50 miles of protected bike lanes in 2023 and 250 miles in the five years from 2022 to 2026, but fewer than 15 miles have been installed in 2023 as of October.

Western Queens currently has protected bike lanes along 20th Avenue, Shore Boulevard, Vernon Boulevard, and Crescent Street, but this is nowhere near enough. The area lacks a more central East/West PBL as well as connections between schools, commercial corridors, parks, bike share docks, libraries, Open Streets, and other points of interest. DOT should aim to meet and exceed its targets by focusing on bike lane connections to ensure that cyclists can safely access everything they need.

## **BIKE BOULEVARDS**

Bike boulevards are extensions of the Open Streets program that use innovative designs for bicycle and pedestrian priority corridors, essentially reprioritizing street users so that cyclists are a top priority. They are meant to be calm corridors that still allow local car traffic, but at slow speeds and with pavement markings specifically for cyclists. Bike boulevards are also a key component of low-stress bike networks, and must be routed in a way that connects to other protected bike lanes, greenways, or bike paths.

Currently, Western Queens contains bike boulevards on 34th Avenue in Jackson Heights and 39th Avenue in Sunnyside. DOT has proposed a bike boulevard on 31st Avenue, but should create others to build out the bike network and maintain calm streets in residential areas.

# **IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE & DESIGN**

Improving infrastructure and design can create streets that are essentially self-enforcing, meaning the design itself maintains drivers' compliance with traffic laws, reducing need for enforcement. DOT has a variety of street redesign tools currently at its disposal that can and should be used throughout Western Queens to both reduce the amount of traffic on streets and slow traffic. Some options are laid out below, and DOT's [Street Design Manual](#) provides a thorough overview of all the options in their toolkit. DOT has already proposed, completed, or is in the process of completing projects that include some of these tools and others, including First Avenue, Fifth Avenue, and Third Avenue in Manhattan, and Crescent Street, 21st Street, and 31st Avenue in Western Queens. These are a great start, but nearly every corridor in Western Queens, and likely citywide, could benefit from significant infrastructure improvements.

## **PERMANENT PEDESTRIAN PLAZAS**

Pedestrian plazas transform road areas into safe, vibrant spaces for the community to gather and host events. This makes intersections safer, shorter, and easier for pedestrians to cross, slows traffic speeds to [reduce injuries](#), and serves as a "third space" to build community. There is also [data](#) that shows pedestrian plazas are often helpful to businesses in the area, increasing sales and decreasing commercial vacancies.

The 21st Street Improvement Project that was completed in 2022 created small pedestrian plazas at the intersection of

Astoria Boulevard and 21st Street, but other areas of Western Queens could be activated into vibrant, community-centered spaces if turned into pedestrian plazas. Locations around [slip lanes](#) in particular should be converted into pedestrian plazas, as they are dangerous to cyclists and pedestrians and are largely more confusing to drivers than useful.

## **EXPAND & FUND OPEN STREETS**

DOT started the Open Streets program in May 2020 as a way to provide public outdoor space during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, and boost businesses at a time when so many were struggling. Three years later, Open Streets are still thriving throughout the city, though Western Queens is one area that is lacking. 31st Avenue in Astoria and 34th Avenue in Jackson Heights are the primary Open Streets in the area, both of which are thriving community spaces that bring people together and improve safety. Open Streets [reduce cyclist, motorist, and pedestrian injuries](#), and [boost business](#) along the corridor.

The Open Streets program also includes streets around schools that are closed to car traffic to support drop off/pick up operations, recess, and outdoor learning. New York City streets around schools have [significantly higher rates of crashes and injuries](#) when school is in session, so reclaiming these streets would keep students safer. Currently, there are a few school streets in Jackson Heights and Elmhurst, but given the school density in Western Queens, the area could benefit from many more.

DOT currently requires Open Streets to be maintained and monitored by community groups, typically made up of volunteers,

which means that low-income neighborhoods often lack resources to operate Open Streets. For school streets, maintenance often falls to teachers or school administrators, who already have enough important work. While DOT did allocate some funding for this, Open Streets citywide should be publicly operated and maintained to ensure that all neighborhoods can have equitable access to these community spaces.



*Caption: Open Street on 31st Avenue  
Photo by: 31st Avenue Open Street*

## **OTHER TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES**

Other traffic calming measures include lane narrowing and reduction, curb extensions, traffic diverters, median barriers, chicanes, raised crossings, loading zones, and curb cuts. These are all described in detail in DOT’s Street Design Manual, and can be used alongside other infrastructure and design improvements or on their own. There are many benefits to implementing these measures, but most importantly they force drivers to drive slowly and with increased awareness. Many of these traffic calming measures also provide an opportunity for street beautification by adding street art, planters, bioswales, and more, which can themselves aid in speed reduction.

# **IMPLEMENT UNIVERSAL DAYLIGHTING**

Daylighting, or removing the parking spots closest to an intersection, increases visibility for drivers and makes intersections safer. Current New York State law prohibits parking within 20 feet of a crosswalk at an intersection, but New York City overrides this law, prioritizing parking over pedestrian and cyclist safety.

Hoboken, one of the most densely populated cities in the country, has had zero pedestrian deaths in over 4 years. They have achieved this through inexpensive intersection design changes, including nearly universal daylighting and installing leading pedestrian intervals. In the year after implementing these changes, Hoboken had a 35% drop in pedestrians struck by vehicles, an 11% drop in bicyclists struck by vehicles, and a 27% drop in the number of vehicle collisions.

The National Association of City Transportation Officials recommends daylighting intersections by removing parking within 20-25 feet of intersections, and Queens Community Board 1 recently passed a resolution recommending that DOT install daylighting measures in all intersections where possible. The City Council also passed Intro. 0854-2022, which requires DOT to daylight at least 100 intersections per year beginning in 2025. However, NYC has over 40,000 intersections, so this change will only have a small impact.

DOT must implement universal daylighting, installing structures that physically prevent or discourage parking in these spaces wherever possible. These physical barriers could include curb bulb outs, bollards, bike racks, and more. DOT has already daylighted hundreds of intersections in the city, but now it must prioritize pedestrian and cyclist safety and install daylighting measures universally. Western Queens can and should lead the way.



*Depiction of daylighting, the process of removing parking spaces closest to crosswalks to improve visibility. On the left without daylighting, drivers cannot see the pedestrian crossing. On the right with daylighting, the pedestrian is visible and the intersection is much safer.*

*Credit: Transportation Alternatives*



# **REIMAGINE TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT**

## **EXPAND AUTOMATED ENFORCEMENT**

Automated enforcement provides the opportunity to both eliminate some need for in-person enforcement, and reduce the racial bias that is all too common in police stops. In conjunction with the other improvements laid out in this plan, the city should expand its automated enforcement efforts in Western Queens and citywide. For automated enforcement to remain bias-free, the city must ensure that cameras are placed and repaired citywide, that there is not a heavier concentration in Black and brown or low-income neighborhoods, and that investments in traffic calming are prioritized in Black and brown or low-income neighborhoods.

With any of the forms of automated enforcement described below, the city must be careful with how it collects and uses data. The Surveillance Technology Oversight Project (S.T.O.P.) has issued guidance for cities looking to expand transit or transportation technology, which New York City should follow as it implements any of these automated enforcement measures. Notably, the city should only use collected data for transit or transportation purposes, announce publicly any data they collect, store, or use, and only collect the data it needs to meet specified transportation goals. Any legislative text or agency policy should specifically outline how data is to be used and stored, and who has access to that data.

New York City launched the nation's first

red light camera program in 1994, which has been incredibly successful in deterring drivers from running red lights - the average daily number of red light violations issued at camera locations has declined 77% since the program launch. The current program, which gives NYC the authority to operate no more than 150 locations citywide, expires in December 2024. The State Legislature must reauthorize this program and expand it to allow cameras at all hotspot locations, even if that number exceeds 150 locations.

Last year, New York City expanded its speed camera program to operate 24/7, doubling the hours that cameras operate. In the first month after this change, speed tickets went up by 70%, and by February 2023, tickets decreased substantially. These preliminary results indicate that the expansion was successful. Drivers have learned that if they speed, they'll be ticketed. In order to build on this success and improve safety in other areas, the city should expand the use of speed cameras, particularly close to schools and in high traffic areas.

Other methods of automated enforcement include bus and bike lane cameras. With the leadership of Western Queens elected officials, the New York State Legislature successfully expanded bus lane cameras this year, so they will now capture cars parked in bus stops, bike lanes, crosswalks, intersections, and truck loading zones when buses pass those areas. Another state-level bill (S1398/A10446) would implement automated bike lane enforcement in protected bike lanes throughout the city, ensuring that motorists who drive into protected bike lanes (PBLs) are ticketed without needing to interact with the police. NYC currently only captures about 1% of bike lane violations, so this expansion is sorely needed. Yet another form of automated

enforcement is Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA), a system of automatically limiting the speed of a vehicle that is now mandatory for new vehicles in Europe. NYC has also started a pilot program in a small subset of city vehicles, preventing them from accelerating beyond the appropriate speed limit. The city announced preliminary results showing that vehicles with the ISA technology successfully drove within the speed limit 99% of the time, and there was a 36% reduction in hard braking events after installing the technology. Building on the success of this pilot, the city is seeking federal grant funding to install this technology in 7,500 of nearly 30,000 city-owned vehicles. A state bill (S7621/A7979), introduced by State Senator Andrew Gounardes and Assemblymember Emily Gallagher, would require installation of this ISA technology for any drivers with at least six speeding tickets in a single year. The state legislature should pass this bill, as it would significantly reduce traffic deaths.

## **SHIFT ON-THE-GROUND ENFORCEMENT**

Traffic stops are currently among the most common ways people interact with police, and the city often frames police enforcement of traffic laws as the solution to traffic violence. Police traffic stops, however, tend to be problematic in that they contribute to the police violence, criminalization, and mass incarceration epidemics. First, there are stark racial disparities in these traffic stops. According to a New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU) analysis of NYPD vehicle stop data, nearly 60% of people stopped and 90% of those searched and arrested in NYPD vehicle stops were Black or Latine. In comparison, Black and Latine New Yorkers make up 47% of the NYC adult population. These traffic stops also tend to lead to violence, as we've seen with the police killings of Tyre Nichols, Daunte Wright, and Philando Castile, to name a few. According to the Mapping Police Violence project, there were 58 police killings across the country between January and August 2023 that originated from a traffic stop. Finally, while some police traffic stops occur because of reckless driving or other legitimate safety concerns, many are pretextual stops, in which police stop a driver for minor traffic infractions in order to investigate them for an unrelated offense. Pretextual stops disproportionately affect people of color: Black and Latine drivers are more likely to be stopped, but very few of these stops result in discovery of a weapon or contraband. For all these reasons and more, police should be removed from conducting traffic enforcement.

Removing police from conducting traffic stops would eliminate a high-risk area of police-civilian interaction. The city should invest in other methods of traffic response, including teams of experts trained in de-escalation, auto mechanics, and first aid provision, to handle roadway emergencies. Additionally, New York should emulate Philadelphia, Virginia, and Oregon in eliminating pretextual stops. Traffic stops for certain minor, non-dangerous infractions should be presumed to be pretextual. Though on-the-ground traffic enforcement will likely continue to play a role in promoting safe streets for some time, there is much further to go in eliminating policing from transportation safety, which is the best way to save lives and maintain safe streets.

While working toward investments in non-police traffic safety, the city should authorize traffic agents to issue tickets for equipment violations in addition to parking violations and expired stickers. NYPD would continue to enforce moving violations, particularly those that are misdemeanors and that present immediate concerns for public safety. Traffic infractions that do not present immediate safety concerns would be enforced by cameras, Traffic Control Officers, and DOT. This would also permit DOT to focus more on reducing vehicular traffic, achieving Vision Zero, and expanding the use of alternate transportation. Further, a dedicated bicycle safety unit within DOT could enforce the traffic rules for cyclists and collect data on bike safety.

# **SLOW CARS & DISINCENTIVIZE HEAVY VEHICLES**

## **SLOW CARS**

Right now, New York City is unable to lower the speed limit on its own streets, only the State has the power to do so. This means that even if a street is known to be dangerous, the City has little ability to make it safer by lowering the speed limit. A New York State law commonly known as Sammy's Law ([S2422A/A7266](#)), introduced by State Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal and Assemblymember Linda Rosenthal would change this.

Sammy's Law is named after 12-year-old Sammy Cohen Eckstein, who was killed by a reckless driver in Brooklyn in 2013. [Data shows](#) that lower speed limits substantially reduce the risk of serious injuries. A car traveling at 30 miles per hour has a 45% chance of seriously injuring a pedestrian, but at 20 miles per hour, that risk drops to 5%. Since Sammy's death, there have been [over 1500 cyclist and pedestrian fatalities citywide](#), and [24 in Western Queens](#). Lowering the speed limit to 20 miles per hour, in combination with the expanded automated enforcement described above and the other tactics described in this plan, will help ensure there are no more cyclist and pedestrian deaths in Western Queens and NYC.

## **DISINCENTIVIZE HEAVY VEHICLES**

More than half of the thirteen cyclist and pedestrian deaths in Western Queens this year occurred due to heavy vehicles. The proportion of deaths

due to heavy vehicles is [consistently increasing](#), while the car industry continues to push selling those same vehicles. In 2022, 80% of children killed on the streets in NYC were struck by SUVs or other large vehicles.

In an attempt to curb this traffic violence due to heavy vehicles, State Senator Andrew Gounardes and Assemblymember Zohran Mamdani introduced legislation ([S6657A / A7978](#)) at the state level that would impose additional registration fees on oversize personal vehicles. While fees do currently increase based on weight, they do not increase proportional to the impact that the increased weight has on pedestrians or cyclists in a crash. This bill would assign fees using a specific calculation based on scientific data on how weight affects death and injuries in a crash. The state legislature should pass this bill to disincentivize the ownership and use of heavy vehicles in New York State, and ultimately reduce death and injuries due to crashes.

*More than half of the 13 cyclist and pedestrian deaths in Western Queens this year occurred due to heavy vehicles.*

*The proportion of deaths due to heavy vehicles is consistently increasing.*

## **MAKE THE MTA EXCELLENT, RELIABLE & UNIVERSALLY ACCESSIBLE**

Investing in public transit can drastically improve overall street safety, and taking public transportation is safer for individuals than traveling by car. Buses in particular can replace short car trips, and when more people take buses there are fewer cars on the road, less traffic, and overall safer streets. Assemblymember Zohran Mamdani, alongside Western Queens state elected officials, spearheaded the Fix the MTA campaign, which successfully added \$35 million to the NY State budget for more [frequent subway service](#) and a [free bus pilot program](#). While these were major wins, the city has a long way to go to create a public transit system with reliable and excellent service that works for everyone.

Currently, buses run too infrequently and are too often behind schedule due to traffic. The [NYC Streets Plan](#) requires that the city install 50 miles of new bus lanes by the end of 2023, and 150 by the end of 2025. So far, only about [7 miles have been created](#), half of which are from the successful 21st Street improvement project in Western Queens. MTA and DOT should work together to create an expanded network of bus lanes in Western Queens and citywide so that every major bus line has a dedicated lane.

## **PROVIDE FOR SAFE & SUSTAINABLE E-MICROMOBILITY**

The growth of e-micromobility, meaning electric-powered bikes, scooters, and cargo bikes, is making getting around New York City more convenient. Transportation Alternatives [laid out a plan](#) to build an e-micromobility future, including creating more space and improving street design to accommodate more users, providing incentives to transition to e-micromobility, and providing resources for safe use.

Mopeds, however, are [considered motorcycles](#) and do not fall within this category. While the city should provide more space and resources for people to use e-micromobility, there should also be an incentive to reduce the use of mopeds. Mopeds are more dangerous than e-micromobility, largely because they are much heavier and can be driven faster. Moped drivers often ride in bike lanes, both on streets and over bridges, which creates a dangerous environment for cyclists and e-micromobility users.

Many moped users are food delivery workers who turn to mopeds because they [do not have anywhere to charge an e-bike battery](#). Delivery workers also often haven't registered their mopeds as they are required to do, and do not have insurance. Rather than increase enforcement of an already vulnerable population, the city should provide grants to delivery workers to purchase e-bikes with safe, high quality batteries. A bill ([A275/S314](#)) introduced by Assemblymember Robert Carroll and State Senator Julia Salazar in the NY State Legislature would accomplish this by creating a program that provides an immediate 50% rebate to anyone buying an e-bike. In addition, the city should expand the [Deliveristas Hubs pilot program](#) to create spaces around the city for delivery workers to charge their e-bike batteries, repair their e-bikes as needed, and rest in between deliveries.

# PUTTING THIS PLAN TO WORK

There are many ways DOT can and should improve traffic safety, the following is a suggested roadmap to a safer Western Queens by 2030. This list is not exhaustive, but it represents the highest priority areas for improvements in Western Queens.

## PROJECTS AT GLANCE:

2024

- Queensboro Bridge Bike Path
- 31st Avenue Bike Boulevard
- The Young Women’s Leadership School Open Street

2025

- Newtown Road Open Street
- Traffic calming on 20th and 21st Avenues between Steinway & 19th Street
- Traffic Calming on Steinway Street between Astoria Boulevard & 34th Avenue
- North/South PBL

2026

- Western Queens Waterfront Greenway
- Traffic calming on 33rd Street between Northern Boulevard & Astoria Boulevard

2027

- Newtown Plaza
- Traffic calming on 21st Street North of Astoria Boulevard
- Pedestrian plaza on 30th Ave by Two Coves Community Garden
- Traffic calming on Astoria Boulevard between 82nd & 103rd Streets

2028

- Traffic calming on Astoria Boulevard North & South & Hoyt Avenue South

2029

- Traffic calming on Hoyt Avenue **N** between 29th Street & 19th Street
- Pedestrian plaza on 34th Avenue near Dwyer Square
- Robert F. Kennedy (RFK) Bridge Bike and Pedestrian Path

## QUEENSBORO BRIDGE BIKE PATH

DOT plans to convert the South Outer Roadway (SOR) to a pedestrian-only path, leaving the North Outer Roadway to cyclists only, but this conversion has been pushed back two years.

The agency currently aims to have this completed by mid-2024, but in the meantime there are record numbers of pedestrians and cyclists crossing the bridge. DOT must expedite the opening of the SOR to pedestrians to prevent another crash from occurring. **We recommend that DOT complete this project by the end of 2023.**

## NEWTOWN ROAD OPEN STREET

Newtown Road is a diagonal road that runs through Astoria and is known to be dangerous. 7-year-old Dolma Naadhun was killed in February 2023 by a driver at 45th Street and Newtown Road. There have been five crashes this year along Newtown Road, and 114 crashes in the last five years, demonstrating the clear need for major safety improvements. Transforming the entire corridor, from Northern Blvd to 30th Avenue, into an Open Street would vastly improve street safety, and would provide a community space that connects multiple commercial corridors, parks, and schools. **We recommend that DOT work with local community members and elected officials to pilot this open street through one-off events (block parties, Trick or Streets, Easter, street fairs, etc.) in spring and summer 2024, and facilitate fully opening this Open Street by spring 2025.**



## 31ST AVENUE BIKE BOULEVARD

DOT announced in April 2023 that 31st Avenue would become a bike boulevard from Vernon Boulevard to 51st Street, and held a workshop in September 2023 that had over 150 attendees in support. DOT must implement the most bike and pedestrian forward design in this corridor, including multiple multi-block permanent pedestrian plazas (that include the blocks of the current Open Street), ideally with at least one surrounding a school, traffic diversions to slow and reduce traffic, and a fully protected bike lane in any areas that are open to cars. In keeping with DOT's original projections for this project's timeline, **we recommend that DOT complete the bike boulevard by the beginning of Summer 2024.**

*Left: Rendering of pedestrian plaza along 31st Avenue Bike Boulevard. Rendering by Tim Chin.*



*Above: Rendering of potential protected bike lane on 35th Street going North, which would be accompanied by PBL on 36th Street going South. Rendering by Tim Chin.*

## **NORTH/SOUTH PBL**

In order to create a comprehensive protected bike lane network, Western Queens needs a second North/South PBL, ideally East of 31st Street. This lane must extend from Long Island City past Astoria Boulevard to 20th Avenue. One option would be upgrading the existing unprotected bike lanes on 35th and 36th Streets to be protected, though other potential corridors include 31st and 43rd Streets. Additionally, DOT should extend the Crescent Street PBL north of Hoyt Avenue to 20th Avenue. **We recommend that DOT complete this project by the end of 2025.**

## **TRAFFIC CALMING ON 20TH & 21ST AVENUES BETWEEN STEINWAY & 19TH STREET**

These corridors are notorious for speeding, particularly because they do not have as heavy traffic or pedestrian volume, lack speed humps, and encourage drivers to speed all the way down the corridor. 16-year-old Jayden McLaurin was killed while riding a CitiBike on 21st Avenue and 21st Street in April of 2023 by a driver who was going 45-50 miles per hour. Both of these corridors would greatly benefit from a complete redesign with traffic diverters to remove straightaways and other tools like chicanes, preventing drivers from speeding down the corridor. **We recommend that DOT study these corridors in 2024 and prioritize this project for completion by the end of 2025.**

## **TRAFFIC CALMING ON STEINWAY STREET BETWEEN ASTORIA BOULEVARD & 34TH AVENUE**

Steinway Street is a busy commercial corridor and local truck route with heavy vehicle and pedestrian traffic. There have been nearly 100 crashes and nearly 70 injuries along this corridor in 2023 alone. The city should invest in traffic calming improvements here, including but not limited to bulb outs, crosswalk improvements, and daylighting. **We recommend that DOT complete improvements by the end of 2025.**

## **THE YOUNG WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP SCHOOL OPEN STREET**

This school uses space on both sides on Newtown Avenue, so making Newtown from Crescent Street to 21st Street an Open Street would vastly improve students’ safety. **We recommend that DOT open this school street by Spring 2024.**



*Above: Rendering by Tim Chin; open street outside The Young Women’s Leadership School.*

## **DITMARS BOULEVARD OPEN STREET**

Ditmars Boulevard Open Street: Small businesses along Ditmars Boulevard between 33rd and 37th Streets hosted an Open Street through fall of 2022, but have not since had capacity to continue. **We recommend that DOT work with local community members and elected officials to facilitate re-opening this Open Street by spring 2025.**



## **WESTERN QUEENS WATERFRONT GREENWAY**

Western Queens Waterfront Greenway: This greenway would create a seamless path from the Pulaski Bridge in Long Island City to the World's Fair Marina. In October 2023, Mayor Adams announced plans to build a version of this greenway, which would serve as a protected corridor for commuters to safely ride to and from work and school, and also connect parks, commercial corridors, institutions, and other major bike routes. Parts of the greenway already exist, but those segments must be extended or connected by adding new PBLs, adding protection to existing lanes, and ensuring that existing lanes are publicly accessible at all times, such as in the case of the Shore Towers bike path. **We recommend that DOT begin public engagement in early 2024, and complete the project by the end of 2026.**

## **TRAFFIC CALMING ON 33RD STREET BETWEEN NORTHERN BLVD & ASTORIA BLVD**

This corridor is a two-lane one-direction street, on which cars frequently run red lights. Reducing this street to one lane (by adding a protected bike lane as suggested above) would aid in traffic calming, as would the addition of chicanes or other tools. **We recommend that DOT complete this project by the end of 2026.**

## **NEWTOWN PLAZA (NEWTOWN AVENUE BETWEEN 30TH AVENUE & 31ST STREET)**

This is a short street segment that is underused by cars but confusing for many pedestrians and drivers. Creating a pedestrian plaza here would improve safety, as the surrounding area currently experiences heavy traffic and pedestrian volume. It is also a popular commercial corridor with steady foot traffic, making it a prime area for a pedestrian plaza that would build out amenities and gathering space for commuters and shoppers. **We recommend that DOT open this plaza by the end of 2027.**

## **TRAFFIC CALMING ON 21ST STREET NORTH OF ASTORIA BOULEVARD**

This area was not improved with the rest of 21st Street in the recent DOT redesign, and it remains dangerous. Though DOT did add minimal traffic calming through Hoyt Avenue N, this was only implemented after the death of Karina Lariño, killed while crossing the street at 21st Street and Hoyt Avenue S/Astoria Park S in 2022. DOT should extend the 21st Street redesign north to 20th Avenue. **We recommend that DOT complete this project by the end of 2027.**

## **TRAFFIC CALMING ON ASTORIA BOULEVARD BETWEEN 82ND & 103RD STREETS**

Traffic calming on Astoria Boulevard between 82nd and 103rd Streets: DOT has proposed safety improvements at three intersections along Astoria Boulevard to improve pedestrian and vehicular safety, pedestrian accessibility, and bus stops. The intersections are Astoria Boulevard and 24th Avenue, Astoria Boulevard and 25th Avenue, and Astoria Boulevard and 29th Avenue. **We recommend that DOT complete this project along their projected timeline, finishing by the end of 2027.**



*Above: Rendering of Pedestrian plaza on 30th Avenue by Two Coves Community Garden  
Rendering by Tim Chin.*

## **PEDESTRIAN PLAZA ON 30TH AVE BY TWO COVES COMMUNITY GARDEN**

Extend the triangle across the street from Two Coves Community Garden to meet the entrance to the garden. Currently there are curb extensions there, but they are often either parked in or not used. **We recommend that DOT open this plaza by the end of 2027.**

## **TRAFFIC CALMING ON ASTORIA BOULEVARD NORTH & SOUTH & HOYT AVENUE SOUTH**

This area currently serves as an on- and off-ramp to the Grand Central Parkway, with little to no traffic calming measures. An individual is seriously injured along these roads about every two months. Both sides are two-lane streets, but double parking outside of the 114th Police Precinct and disorder in the 31st Street intersection leads to frequent congestion and aggressive driving. **We recommend that DOT complete this project by the end of 2028.**

## **TRAFFIC CALMING ON HOYT AVENUE NORTH BETWEEN 29TH STREET & 19TH STREET**

Traffic calming on Hoyt Avenue North between 29th Street and 19th Street: This corridor contains a three-lane one-direction street, with parking on both sides and a two-way bike lane. There are also a number of play areas - basketball and volleyball courts, a dog run, and a playground - along this corridor, and heavy pedestrian traffic to and from Astoria Park. In its current state, this corridor functions as a highway, but given the amount of pedestrians in the area, it could and should be made significantly safer with the addition of bioswales, curb extensions, and other traffic calming tools. **We recommend that DOT complete this project by the end of 2029.**

## **PEDESTRIAN PLAZA ON 34TH AVENUE NEAR DWYER SQUARE**

Extend Dwyer Square to create a plaza on 34th Avenue between Northern Boulevard and 47th Street. **We recommend that DOT open tis plaza by the end of 2029.**

## **ROBERT F. KENNEDY (RFK) BRIDGE BIKE & PEDESTRIAN PATH**

Robert F. Kennedy (RFK) Bridge Bike and Pedestrian Path: The RFK Bridge pedestrian path is currently extremely narrow, doesn't allow bicycles, and is not ADA compliant. The MTA does have plans to widen this path, making it ADA compliant and allowing bicycle access, which they estimate to be completed by 2029. The MTA also intends to study the feasibility of creating separate paths for pedestrians and bicyclists, but has no specific timeline. The RFK Bridge is an essential connector between Queens and Upper Manhattan, and will be a popular route for cyclists when these changes are made. **We recommend that MTA complete this project along their projected timeline, by the end of 2029.**



*Photo Courtesy of 31st Ave Open Street*

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