

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106
Tuesday, February 18, 2025
1:10 p.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILMAN ISAIAH THOMAS, CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN RUE LANDAU, VICE-CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN QUETCY M. LOZADA
COUNCILMAN ANTHONY PHILLIPS
COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA
COUNCILMAN JEFFREY YOUNG, JR.

RESOLUTION: 240700

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2 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Good
3 afternoon, everybody. Today is
4 Tuesday, February 18, 2025. This
5 is the Committee on Legislative
6 Oversight. I want to welcome
7 everybody to Philadelphia City
8 Council and the Committee on
9 Legislative Oversight.

10 I note that the hour has
11 come. Before we get started, I
12 just want to take a moment of
13 privilege to say thank you to the
14 Clerk for today, Mr. Ben Wilcox.
15 If you don't know, Ben is somebody
16 who is a strong advocate for issues
17 related to Vision Zero, and he
18 helped lead this effort in my
19 office. And so, I want to publicly
20 thank him and let him know I also
21 appreciate him clerking today's
22 hearing.

23 So with that being said,
24 Mr. Wilcox, will you please call

1 the roll to take attendance.

2 THE CLERK: Vice-Chair

3 Landau.

4 (No response.)

5 THE CLERK: Member

6 Lozada.

7 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA:

8 Present.

9 THE CLERK: Member

10 Phillips.

11 (No response.)

12 THE CLERK: Member

13 Squilla.

14 (No response.)

15 THE CLERK: Member

16 Young.

17 (No response.)

18 THE CLERK: And, Chair

19 Thomas.

20 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

21 Present. A quorum is not present

22 at today's hearing, but for the

23 record we do not need a quorum

24 present to start today's hearing

1 because we will not be taking a
2 vote on any legislation today.

3 So with that being said,
4 as the Chair of the Committee I now
5 note that the hearing has started.
6 This is the public hearing of the
7 Committee of Legislative Oversight
8 on Resolution No. 240700.

9 Mr. Wilcox, will you
10 please read the title of the
11 hearing resolution to be heard
12 today.

13 THE CLERK: Resolution
14 No. 240700, authorizing the
15 Committee on Legislative Oversight
16 to hold hearings investigating the
17 City's progress towards achieving
18 its Vision Zero goals, and
19 examining opportunities to increase
20 safety measures for pedestrians and
21 cyclists.

22 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:
23 Thank you. I'm not going to make
24 any comments before the start of

1 the hearing. Colleagues wouldn't
2 like to make any comments as well
3 either.

4 So with that being said,
5 we look forward to a robust and
6 important dialogue. This is a
7 series of conversations that we've
8 had since I've been on City
9 Council. As it relates to Vision
10 Zero, we've seen some level of
11 improvement but we still have more
12 work to do. And so, today's
13 conversation is about figuring out
14 exactly what that work is and how
15 we make Philadelphia a safer place
16 for all.

17 Mr. Wilcox, will you
18 please call the first panel to come
19 testify before us today.

20 THE CLERK: Yes,
21 Mr. Chair. First, we'll hear from
22 Chris Puchalsky, Director of Policy
23 and Strategic Initiatives in the
24 Office of Transportation and

1 Infrastructure Systems. After
2 that, we'll hear from Rich Lazer,
3 Executive Director of the
4 Philadelphia Parking Authority.

5 (Witnesses approached
6 Witness table.)

7 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Good
8 afternoon to you both. I'll ask
9 that you please -- of course you
10 guys are professional. State your
11 name for the record and proceed
12 with your testimony. We will not
13 ask any questions until the entire
14 panel is finished.

15 And that'll be our
16 instruction for today. We'll allow
17 each panel to testify. And after
18 the panel was complete, we'll open
19 it up for questions for members of
20 the Committee.

21 MR. PUCHALSKY: Great.
22 Good afternoon, Chair Thomas, Vice-
23 Chair Landau, Councilmember Lozada
24 and other members of the

1 Legislative Oversight Committee.
2 Thank you for inviting me to
3 testify regarding Resolution
4 240700. My name is Christopher
5 Puchalsky. I'm the Director of
6 Policy and Strategic Initiatives at
7 OTIS. That's the Office of
8 Transportation and Infrastructure
9 Systems. I'm here today to offer
10 testimony on the City's progress on
11 the Vision Zero initiative, which
12 aims to eliminate traffic deaths in
13 the city of Philadelphia.

14 In March of '24, Mayor
15 Parker issued an executive order
16 recommending recommitting
17 Philadelphia to achieve zero deaths
18 on our roads. The order introduced
19 key initiatives that the City will
20 pursue over the next five years,
21 including programming safety
22 improvements on every mile of the
23 High Injury Network by 2030,
24 ensuring that every capital project

1 is designated, designed to improve
2 safety for all road users, ensuring
3 that every child is taught about
4 traffic safety in the classroom and
5 issuing a new five-year action plan
6 by October 31, 2025.

7 The executive order
8 directs the Vision Zero Task Force
9 and the Office of Multimodal
10 Planning to carry out these
11 initiatives in the first year of
12 the Parker Administration. Vision
13 Zero secured key wins on a number
14 of fronts, including partnering
15 with City Council to expand
16 automated enforcement to Broad
17 Street and Route 13, with
18 additional corridors and school
19 zones yet to be determined coming
20 soon.

21 Advancing proven safety
22 countermeasures through roadway
23 projects like Penrose Roundabout, a
24 proven safety countermeasure. We

1 expect to see an 80 percent
2 reduction in injured crashes at the
3 previously dangerous intersection
4 of 20th Penrose, Moyamensing and
5 Packer.

6 Partnering with City
7 Council to pass the no stopping in
8 the bike lane bill, continuing to
9 work towards Vision Zero through
10 our Complete Streets project, which
11 redesigned high crash roadways with
12 safety and access as top
13 priorities. On roads where we
14 finished Complete Streets projects,
15 we've seen an average of a 20
16 percent decrease in injury crashes
17 compared to trends in the High
18 Injury Network.

19 We also look to new
20 technologies to achieve Vision
21 Zero. The Philadelphia Police
22 Department Crash Investigation
23 Division has started to utilize
24 data from cell phone towers and

1 automatic license plate readers to
2 solve hit-and-run cases. We
3 welcome these new methods and are
4 optimistic they'll help us curb
5 crashes in Philadelphia.

6 And I want to thank all
7 members of Council for your
8 critical support of these and many
9 other bills over the last year.
10 And just note in my testimony, I
11 said Vision Zero. Vision Zero is
12 an all-of-government approach.
13 That includes both OTIS but also
14 the Streets Department and many
15 other departments and partners like
16 the Parking Authority here with me
17 today.

18 Despite our progress,
19 traffic deaths in Philadelphia
20 remain high. Since 2020, the City
21 has experienced over 120 traffic
22 deaths each year, a rate that's
23 significantly higher than the
24 City's pre-COVID average. To

1 deviate just slightly from my
2 written remarks, those aren't just
3 numbers. Those are people. And I
4 see here in front of us, there's
5 posters of people, you know, names
6 like Jayana and Pablo and Jorge.
7 Every number that we're talking
8 about here is an actual person, an
9 actual family that's been impacted.

10 Though traffic deaths
11 have increased nationwide since the
12 onset of the COVID 19 pandemic, we
13 still see more annual deaths in our
14 peer cities with a rate of 8
15 traffic deaths per 100,000
16 citizens. That rate is higher than
17 Chicago, Washington, Los Angeles,
18 and nearly triple the rate of New
19 York.

20 The burden of traffic
21 death does not weigh evenly on
22 everyone in our city. From 2019 to
23 2023, hospitalization rates for
24 Black Philadelphians who experience

1 a crash was 59 percent higher than
2 their White neighbors. For Black
3 motorists, the hospitalization rate
4 was 104 percent higher according to
5 research from the Department of
6 Public Health.

7 OTIS is hard at work
8 developing the next five-year plan
9 to address these challenges. The
10 state system approach is a
11 federally-recommended framework for
12 (inaudible) to address severe
13 crashes by aligning seemingly
14 disparate areas of government
15 around the shared goal of
16 eliminating traffic deaths. Using
17 this approach, OTIS is working with
18 departments across City government
19 and key outside agencies like
20 PennDOT, the Philadelphia Parking
21 Authority and the School District
22 to craft action items that focus
23 our resources on Vision Zero goals
24 identified by the Mayor in her

1 executive order.

2 Community feedback will
3 inform the next action plan. OTIS
4 has a robust plan for the action
5 plan, including an online phone
6 bank and inperson surveys tabling
7 at community events and targeted
8 outreach efforts through stipend-
9 paid Vision Zero ambassadors.

10 OTIS is also holding
11 focus group-style roundtables with
12 community groups around the city.
13 We ask anyone who is interested in
14 participating as an ambassador,
15 hosting a roundtable or just
16 learning more to head to
17 visionzeroPHL -- all one word --
18 .com and fill out the interest
19 form.

20 We are also expanding
21 our Complete Streets projects to
22 ensure that our city's
23 infrastructure supports safe
24 behaviors. The Office of

1 Multimodal Planning has nearly 100
2 projects in various stages of
3 development throughout the city.
4 Continuing to ramp up this work is
5 how we will meet the Mayor's
6 directive to program safety on
7 every mile of the High Injury
8 Network by 2030. Vision Zero must
9 be a citywide effort.

10 To be successful, we
11 need the support of leaders
12 representing every corner of the
13 city to bring Philadelphia together
14 around the goal of making travel
15 safe for everyone. So please,
16 please tell your constituents about
17 the opportunity to be part of this
18 work. Thank you again for the
19 opportunity to appear before you
20 today. I'd be happy to answer any
21 questions you have.

22 MR. LAZER: Mr. --

23 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Good
24 afternoon. Let me say for the

1 record before you start that
2 Councilmember Rue Landau and
3 Councilmember Anthony Phillips are
4 present.

5 MR. LAZER: Thank you.
6 Good afternoon, Chair Thomas and
7 other members of the Committee. My
8 name is Rich Lazer, Executive
9 Director of the Philadelphia
10 Parking Authority. I want to thank
11 you all for allowing me this
12 opportunity to talk today about the
13 PPA's new more proactive Vision
14 Zero-based approach to partnering
15 with the Parker administration,
16 City Council and advocates on a
17 number of public safety initiatives
18 and neighborhood quality-of-life
19 issues.

20 I've been the Executive
21 Director for a little over two
22 years now. And during that time,
23 I've seen firsthand how hard our
24 employees work and how dedicated

1 they are to serving the people of
2 our great city. I'm very proud of
3 our workers and honored to join
4 them in trying to do the best job
5 we can for the people of
6 Philadelphia.

7 Over the past two years,
8 the PPA has enhanced and expanded
9 some of our existing public safety
10 programs. Working closely with
11 City Council and the Mayor's Office
12 and OTIS, we are embracing new
13 technologies to help us save lives
14 and improve the quality of life in
15 Philadelphia. In the coming months
16 we will be implementing several new
17 lifesaving and quality-of-life
18 initiatives.

19 We're set to begin our
20 Bustling Camera Enforcement program
21 in late spring or early summer,
22 along with utilizing new smart
23 loading zone enforcement technology
24 to help alleviate congestion in our

1 downtown commercial districts. We
2 will also be expanding our
3 lifesaving Automated Speed Camera
4 Enforcement program to Broad Street
5 with cameras stretching from the
6 Navy Yard to the Boulevard.

7 Our speed cameras along
8 Roosevelt Boulevard have reduced
9 speeding by a dramatic 93 percent
10 and reduced crashes by 36 percent.
11 We're hoping for similar results on
12 Broad Street. Between 2018 and
13 2022 we tragically lost 165 lives
14 due to speeding. Our Red Light
15 Camera program has been reducing
16 accidents and saving lives
17 throughout the city since 2005.

18 We've reduced red light-
19 running by 43 percent and reduced
20 repeat red light offenders by 80
21 percent. We've also expanded our
22 bike lane enforcement with the
23 creation of our new Bike Lane
24 Enforcement Unit, where we have

1 officers riding bikes throughout
2 the city. With that group, we've
3 issued over 10,000 violations since
4 the unit hit the streets back in
5 March of 2023.

6 We're continuing to
7 implement our ADA Mobility Access
8 Initiative to help eliminate
9 onstreet barriers that impede the
10 ability of our disabled community
11 to navigate our city. Our ADA
12 Initiative is a dual public
13 education and onstreet enforcement
14 component aimed at reducing illegal
15 parking on sidewalks and blocking
16 curb cuts and crosswalks, all of
17 which create dangerous situations
18 that block access and the free
19 movement of pedestrians and people
20 with disabilities.

21 Since initiating this
22 program, we have issued over
23 140,000 mobility-related violations
24 and are noticeably changing

1 behavior, issuing fewer tickets for
2 parking on sidewalks. Enforcing
3 neighborhood quality-of-life issues
4 is now one of our top priorities.

5 Working with Mayor
6 Parker and the Office of Clean and
7 Green, we've towed over 870 ghost
8 vehicles and over 4000 unregistered
9 nuisance vehicles from city
10 streets. We removed another 1000
11 trucks and tractor trailers as
12 well.

13 The Philadelphia Parking
14 Authority stands ready to continue
15 helping where and when needed. We
16 will continue to do our part
17 working with this Administration
18 and City Council to improve the
19 quality of life in Philadelphia and
20 help save lives. Thank you for
21 this opportunity to talk on behalf
22 of the Authority, and I'll have any
23 questions I can answer at this
24 time.

1 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

2 Thank you both for your testimony.

3 Thank you for being here today.

4 Before I open up the questions for

5 members of the Committee, when the

6 Mayor and the executive team

7 decided to sign the executive order

8 as it relates to Vision Zero, the

9 vision was moved from 2030 to 2050.

10 Does that sound correct?

11 MR. PUCHALSKY: I think

12 we moved our goal from -- so it's

13 the regional goal that's 2050. It

14 was moved back. There was a 2030

15 goal which now we have the goal to

16 at least program improvements on

17 every mile of the High Injury

18 Network by 2030.

19 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: So

20 help us understand that timeline.

21 Like how do we get to the point --

22 because I thought we were on a

23 trajectory to meet our 2030 goals

24 so why are we now pushing it back?

1 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yeah.

2 We were not on a trajectory to meet
3 our 2030 goals. If we look at the
4 crash trends, we were not,
5 definitely not. Even before the
6 pandemic, we were not on a
7 trajectory to meet the 2030 goals.
8 In hindsight, that was probably an
9 overly ambitious goal to try to get
10 zero fatalities by 2030.

11 There's no time other
12 than today that is the right time
13 to stop traffic fatalities. But if
14 we're talking about a goal and
15 trying to set targets against it,
16 being able to program every mile
17 off the High Injury Network, that's
18 something that we can definitely
19 control.

20 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: So
21 you're saying that the goal was
22 pushed back because we weren't on a
23 trajectory to reach the goal and we
24 needed to add another 20 years to

1 put us in a position to feel like
2 we're on the right timeline?

3 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yeah. I
4 don't think I'm saying that 2030
5 was probably never a realistic goal
6 to eliminate traffic fatalities --

7 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: So
8 is 2050 a realistic goal or are we
9 just throwing numbers out?

10 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yeah, I
11 think it's impossible to make
12 significant improvements to the
13 High Injury Network and to reduce
14 traffic fatalities. I think if
15 we -- I don't think it's an easy
16 goal by any stretch of the
17 imagination. I think it will be a
18 challenging goal to get to zero by
19 2050 or to get meaningfully close
20 to zero by 2050.

21 So I think it takes all
22 of our working together to meet
23 that goal, both to make engineering
24 improvements to roads, to continue

1 to work on equitable enforcement
2 like automated speed enforcement
3 and to make educational
4 improvements such as educating our
5 kids on how to walk, bike, drive
6 and take transit safely.

7 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: How
8 many fatalities did we have the
9 last couple years? So we know that
10 in 2020 we spiked to an all-time
11 record high --

12 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yeah.

13 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: --
14 as it relates to fatalities. What
15 have we done since 2020 over the
16 last five years?

17 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yeah.
18 We've been flat for the last two to
19 three years --

20 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: I'm
21 sorry. Can you repeat that?

22 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yeah.
23 We've been flat for the last two to
24 three years at about 120

1 fatalities.

2 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

3 Before the last two to three years,
4 help the listening audience
5 understand where we were.

6 MR. PUCHALSKY: Before
7 the pandemic, we were at 80 to 90
8 fatalities a year. I think it went
9 to something like 150-ish during
10 the pandemic per year. And then it
11 went down to 120, but it stayed at
12 around 120 for the last several
13 years.

14 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: So
15 why haven't we seen a decrease over
16 the last several years? What has
17 happened over the last several
18 years that's made us become flat,
19 specifically on this issue of
20 hit-and-runs -- or I shouldn't even
21 say hit-and-runs, or fatalities
22 involving a vehicle?

23 MR. PUCHALSKY: You
24 know, I think a few things are

1 happening, Councilmember, that
2 we've seen all across the country,
3 but particularly here in
4 Philadelphia. I think there was
5 great social dislocation that
6 happened during the pandemic and
7 that there was a decreased
8 adherence to certain social norms,
9 like driving in a respectful way.

10 During the height of the
11 pandemic when there was a lot of
12 stay-at-home orders and there
13 wasn't a lot of people on the
14 street, folks got used to driving
15 in an uncongested environment as
16 fast as they can. And
17 unfortunately, it's, you know,
18 putting that genie back in the
19 bottle where people respect social
20 norms is difficult.

21 When I was walking from
22 MSB to this hearing today, I nearly
23 saw two pedestrians getting hit
24 crossing the Penn Square here by

1 motorists that was just driving
2 completely irresponsibly. So I
3 think re-establishing those social
4 norms is going to be a huge part of
5 getting a handle on those traffic
6 fatalities.

7 I think the other part
8 is making engineering improvements
9 on our streets. Like I mentioned,
10 we've got over 100 projects that
11 are in some state of development,
12 capital improvements on our
13 roadway. I think the work that the
14 Streets Department has done in
15 installing speed cushions around
16 schools, around rec centers and
17 other places in the city, I think
18 that is going to have an enormous
19 impact in slowing people down. And
20 I think the work that the Parking
21 Authority and that the Philadelphia
22 Police Department are doing, you
23 know, it's been impactful and needs
24 to continue if we're going to get

1 back on a downward trajectory.

2 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: So
3 there was a time when I sat in a
4 similar chair, had a similar
5 hearing. And in that hearing I
6 vividly remember Captain Overwise
7 talking about investment in
8 infrastructure. Captain Overwise
9 told us that 80 percent of the car
10 accidents happen on 20 percent of
11 the roads, which is what we call a
12 High Injury Network, and we're
13 pretty much hearing the same thing
14 today.

15 So over the last couple
16 years when we're talking about
17 capital investment in
18 infrastructure, why haven't we seen
19 capital investment in
20 infrastructure, specifically
21 looking at the 20 percent of the
22 roads that produce 80 percent of
23 the car accidents?

24 Out of that 20 percent

1 of those roads that we talked
2 about, we've been talking about for
3 years, what infrastructure
4 investment have we seen? Have we
5 gone from 20 percent to 15 percent?
6 Can we identify specific areas in
7 the city of Philadelphia where it
8 was a High Injury Network but
9 because of capital investment,
10 that's no longer the case? Can you
11 help us with that one?

12 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yeah, we
13 can get you that analysis. We can
14 get you those facilities. But as I
15 mentioned in my testimony, we've
16 got a project right now underway in
17 South Philly, the
18 Penrose/Moyamensing/20th Street
19 roundabout that the Streets
20 Department is working on,
21 completing a project like that's
22 going to make an enormous
23 difference.

24 We saw that where we

1 were able to make capital
2 improvements, we saw a 20 percent
3 decrease in serious injury crashes
4 on those facilities. So where we
5 are able to make capital
6 improvements, we are definitely
7 seeing a difference and where we
8 are able to put in automated
9 enforcement, we are seeing a
10 difference at those locations.

11 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: So
12 we agree 100 percent. I think the
13 concern is that that is not
14 happening fast enough, right. So
15 when we're talking about using
16 technology, we had a whole hearing
17 around using technology to improve
18 traffic safety, traffic conditions.
19 When you talk about advocacy around
20 speed cameras and things of that,
21 red light cameras, I mean we fought
22 for all of that stuff. So we're
23 fans of it.

24 I think the concern that

1 we have from the legislative branch
2 is why the needle is moving so slow
3 when we recognize that we have
4 tools that work but we flatlined
5 ourselves at around 120 fatalities
6 a year. Do you think that if we
7 seen expedited investment in some
8 of the solutions that you've
9 communicated today, those numbers
10 would drop?

11 MR. PUCHALSKY: I mean,
12 more improvements are going to
13 make, you know, more of the things
14 that work, that we know work will
15 make more of a difference. We know
16 that for sure. Capital
17 improvements do have a lifetime.
18 There's community engagement that
19 needs to happen. And we talked to
20 you and your colleagues all the
21 time about what community
22 engagement do you want to see. It
23 does sometimes take a while to get
24 everybody on board in the

1 neighborhood to decide what
2 individual improvements we want to
3 make.

4 So we don't want to
5 short-change that process and that
6 does take a while. And then the
7 engineering and construction that
8 needs to happen afterwards, you
9 know, that doesn't happen
10 overnight. So we do see, let's
11 say, a three-to-five-year time
12 frame for any capital project is
13 pretty typical to allow all those
14 important activities to happen.
15 But, yeah, if we do more of what
16 works, we'll see more of a
17 difference.

18 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: So a
19 couple more things. Then I want to
20 open it up to my colleagues. I
21 want to acknowledge the presence of
22 our Council President, Council
23 President Johnson, as well as
24 Councilmember Nicolas O'Rourke.

1 The irony of Council
2 President Johnson walking in,
3 Council President Johnson recently
4 passed a bill that looks at bike
5 lanes and encouraging vehicles not
6 to be parked in bike lanes, and
7 this is for either one. Where are
8 we as it relates to enforcement of
9 that legislation? And is there any
10 intention to look at this from an
11 infrastructure issue as it relates
12 to where we have loading zones, if
13 they're in the right place and
14 things of that capacity, so the
15 loading zones directly correlated
16 to people wanting to park in the
17 bike lanes because the loading
18 zones don't exist.

19 I'm wondering where we
20 are as it relates to enforcement
21 around the new legislation and how
22 can we look at what's going on with
23 loading zones, double parking,
24 things of that capacity, so we can

1 make sure that it's not happening
2 in the bike lanes and people are
3 following the law that City Council
4 passed?

5 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yeah.
6 Since that law was passed on, I'd
7 like to thank Council President for
8 his leadership on this issue, for
9 passing that legislation. It's
10 been enormously, you know, even
11 though it hasn't been fully
12 implemented yet, because of that
13 legislation we're able to set
14 wheels in motion that I think are
15 going to have a significant impact.
16 And so, I appreciate your
17 leadership.

18 We've been working since
19 it was passed to talk to residents,
20 to community members along the
21 streets where they'd like to see
22 loading zones. So we have been
23 working on it. And I'll pass it to
24 Richie to say more.

1 MR. LAZER: Thank you.
2 So we're working with the City now.
3 Where the signs are ordered, the
4 change will happen probably by the
5 spring. Once the loading zones are
6 installed and then this signage
7 will be changed. We are enforcing
8 it now as in when our bike patrols
9 are out there, we're moving people
10 along and if the car is in no
11 parking and unattended for 20
12 minutes, we're then ticketing it.
13 But once the signs are
14 changed, they will be ticketed on
15 the spot unless there's somebody in
16 the car. And then the officer will
17 tell that vehicle they have to move
18 out of the lane. But we are
19 changing all the signs on Pine and
20 Spruce. The rest of the signs
21 citywide for bike enforcement is
22 already at no stopping, so they're
23 being enforced on the spot
24 currently.

1 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: As
2 you begin to modify things, can you
3 please make sure that you notify my
4 office, other members of City
5 Council, so that we can make sure
6 constituents are aware of where we
7 are as it relates to the progress
8 of this legislation and future
9 enforcement that they can
10 anticipate happening? That'll
11 definitely be very beneficial.

12 Mr. Lazer, while I have
13 you a little bit about the fake
14 tags issue. Where are we at with
15 the fake tags? What progress are
16 we making? Then how can we be even
17 more effective at enforcement on a
18 lot of those vehicles?

19 MR. LAZER: Definitely.
20 So as I said, the ghost vehicle
21 enforcement has drastically
22 dropped. That was where -- it's
23 not a fake tag issue but it's where
24 people were taking their plates off

1 totally and covering the VIN. The
2 complaints for those have dropped
3 dramatically because we've heavily
4 enforced on that and taken the car,
5 towed right on the street.

6 We have been working
7 with L&I and the police department
8 to do these PPL, Parking Authority
9 police and license inspection,
10 going out in neighborhoods where
11 there's these vehicles with temp
12 tags, fake tags, no tags, busted-up
13 vehicles, and we've been handling
14 those issues and tackling those
15 50-, 60-plus cars at a time.

16 The one thing that we're
17 having issues with is every state
18 handles tags differently. So
19 Delaware handles their tags
20 differently, New Jersey. And when
21 we have to run them, there's
22 different processes to run tags
23 depending on the state and what VIN
24 it is. So we are working with

1 police and trying to work with our
2 states, Delaware and Jersey,
3 because a lot of them are coming
4 from Delaware and New Jersey where
5 the temp tags are. So we're trying
6 to work together and try to figure
7 out a way to better attack that
8 issue.

9 But I think by us going
10 after illegal body shops with L&I
11 and police by taking a lot of these
12 vehicles off the street that we're
13 seeing in neighborhoods, we're
14 doing a lot of sweeps in the 7th.
15 We're doing a lot of sweeps in the
16 2nd in Southwest and in West Philly
17 as well, and it's been really
18 helpful. Neighbors love it, and
19 it's like a concentrated effort.
20 So I think by continuing to do
21 those, that's been cutting down on
22 it as well.

23 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

24 Thank you for the update. We

1 appreciate it.

2 Did you want to add
3 anything?

4 MR. PUCHALSKY:
5 (Gestured).

6 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:
7 Okay. Thank you.

8 Council President, did
9 you -- okay.

10 So as I close out, one
11 of the things that has been really
12 popular as it relates to advocacy
13 is protected bike lanes, not just
14 bike lanes but protected bike
15 lanes. What is the appetite of the
16 Admin for protected bike lanes
17 specifically?

18 Is there an appetite to
19 essentially look at some bike lanes
20 that already exist and provide
21 those protected barriers or is
22 there only an appetite to provide
23 the barriers for future bike lanes?

24 MR. PUCHALSKY: No.

1 We've continued -- as those 100
2 projects, a lot of them are looking
3 at adding protected bike lanes
4 where possible. So it's --

5 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: How
6 do you prioritize what
7 neighborhoods get the protected
8 bike lanes compared to which ones
9 that don't?

10 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yeah.
11 First of all, we look at the
12 PennDOT paving list so we see what
13 projects are going to get repaved
14 this year by PennDOT and what
15 streets are going to get repaved
16 this year by the Streets
17 Department. And then we look to
18 see can we put a protected bike
19 lane in on those streets.

20 And, you know, we've
21 been talking to some of your
22 colleagues such as Councilmember
23 Young introducing legislation
24 recently on some bike lanes. But

1 the first thing we do that the City
2 actually put out by the Planning
3 Commission, has a bike and
4 pedestrian plan where we set the
5 long-term vision for bike lanes
6 throughout the city with the goal
7 of having every community, every
8 resident, no more than a quarter
9 mile away from a high quality bike
10 lane.

11 We've recently been
12 doing work -- we know that not
13 every street can fit a protected
14 bike lane. A lot of really small
15 neighborhood streets are only wide
16 enough for one travel lane for
17 cars. So in those neighborhoods,
18 we say how can we slow down traffic
19 enough so that, you know, people
20 from 8 to 80 would feel comfortable
21 riding a bike then. So we've been
22 recently working with neighbors in
23 Germantown and in Fishtown to see
24 where we can put neighborhood

1 bikeways, you know, sitting down
2 around a table with neighbors
3 looking at them and saying, you
4 tell us what you think are the good
5 streets for cyclists to come.

6 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: How
7 much do they cost?

8 MR. PUCHALSKY: How much
9 would what cost?

10 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: The
11 protected bike lanes, how much do
12 they cost compared to regular bike
13 lanes?

14 MR. PUCHALSKY: It
15 depends on the treatment --

16 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: On
17 average. I know it's going to be
18 different compared to the street
19 and all that. But on average?

20 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yeah.
21 It can -- I'm not going to say a
22 number off the top of my head and be
23 wrong. But --

24 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: When

1 we get ready for budget, can you
2 prepare that number for Council
3 President? Would that be good for
4 us?

5 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yes,
6 absolutely. There's a wide range
7 from a flex post, those plastic
8 posts that, you know, those are the
9 cheapest option. They also
10 probably have the most maintenance
11 issues. The highest quality option
12 are concrete, and you can easily be
13 over \$1 million a mile for actually
14 concrete curb separated.

15 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: When
16 we go into budget, can you give us
17 the entire menu --

18 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yes,
19 sir.

20 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: --
21 so we can see exactly what the
22 options are, what we're
23 entertaining and fiscally what it
24 will cost us to do something

1 different moving forward. I'll
2 stop right there.

3 Council President, did
4 you want to be recognized?

5 Chair recognizes Council
6 President. Then after that, I will
7 recognize Councilmember Phillips.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT

9 JOHNSON: Thank you, Chairman
10 Thomas. And I applaud you for your
11 leadership to really elevate the
12 issue of traffic violence here in
13 the city of Philadelphia and really
14 taking a leadership role and
15 educating people around the issue
16 of traffic violence in the city of
17 Philadelphia.

18 And I also want to
19 acknowledge Councilmember Phillips
20 for also advocating around making
21 sure that we have speed bumps
22 around our schools all throughout
23 the city of Philadelphia protecting
24 our young people. And so, I want

1 to thank my members for always
2 being on the forefront of making
3 sure we address this for traffic
4 violence and safety as well.

5 I'll also acknowledge
6 you, Chris and Richie Lazer, for
7 working with me and my team
8 regarding what we call No Stopping
9 in the Bike Lane legislation that's
10 not only in the 2nd Councilmanic
11 District, but it's all throughout
12 the city of Philadelphia. And I
13 thank all my colleagues who are
14 District members for signing on to
15 make this a citywide policy. And
16 so, I do thank you.

17 I just had a couple
18 questions. In terms of -- well,
19 let me back up. First, I was up
20 New York this past weekend. And I
21 look at the New York
22 infrastructure, right. Their
23 blocks are like three times the
24 size of our blocks, right. And

1 you'll have a protected bike lane
2 and then you'll still have three
3 additional lanes going in one
4 direction.

5 But one thing I did see
6 that was very, very interesting was
7 there was a traffic light that was
8 red, yellow and it was a spot for a
9 bicycle, right. Why don't we have
10 those in the city of Philadelphia?
11 And I actually was like okay.

12 And what happens is if
13 you're in this lane and you're
14 making a left, right, it makes the
15 bicyclist aware when you're looking
16 at the traffic light that there's a
17 specific light dedicated to
18 bicyclists. Have we ever --

19 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yes,
20 sir.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT
22 JOHNSON: -- thought about
23 implementing those in the city of
24 Philadelphia?

1 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yes,
2 sir, we have looked at implementing
3 them. In fact, we do have several
4 bike signals in the city of
5 Philadelphia. We have one at 16th
6 and Market here to signal when it
7 is time for the cyclist to take a
8 straight or left movement versus
9 that left-hand turn that happens
10 from Market onto 16th, and we have
11 them at a number of other
12 locations --

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT
14 JOHNSON: Are we going to scale
15 because I haven't seen them in
16 South Philly or the Southwest
17 Philadelphia part of my District,
18 so I just was wondering if we're
19 going to be on the cusp of
20 technology when it comes to bicycle
21 safety? Would that be something we
22 consider taking to scale?

23 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yes,
24 sir. We've not yet looked at

1 putting them at every single
2 intersection where a bike lane
3 exists. Normally, the cyclists
4 follow the regular green light.
5 They're particularly useful and in
6 some cases even required by the
7 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control
8 Devices for whenever there's a
9 conflicting movement between
10 cyclists and the motorists. So
11 that's where you see them the most,
12 is when we don't want to get
13 cyclists and motorists confused
14 when there's a conflicting
15 movement.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT
17 JOHNSON: Okay. And then also just
18 following up on what Councilmember
19 Thomas talked about, I know there
20 is a movement for support for
21 concrete bike barriers as opposed
22 to the flex posts. And just give
23 me an idea -- I know my team are
24 working with you and your team

1 regarding Spruce and Pine Streets
2 in working and engaging with the
3 community. Where are we in terms
4 of concrete barrier proposals?

5 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yeah.

6 So we had a public meeting last
7 year where we put several different
8 proposals to the public. We had
9 several 100 people attend that
10 meeting. We recently published a
11 post showing the results from the
12 surveys we did at that meeting that
13 did show support, overall support,
14 for the concrete separation.

15 At this point, we're
16 continuing to work with the
17 neighborhood RCOs and advocate
18 groups. We want everybody to bring
19 their ideas to the table. As you
20 know, there's some advocacy groups
21 that have recently emerged to
22 oppose the concrete separation on
23 Spruce and Pine. So we're trying
24 to get everybody to the table to

1 talk through their issues,
2 everybody bring them, and hopefully
3 come up with a consensus solution
4 for the configuration on Spruce and
5 Pine.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT

7 JOHNSON: Right. And the last
8 question and, one, I want to
9 acknowledge the advocacy work of
10 the Bicycle Coalition, Philly Bike
11 Action and the Pediatric Advocates
12 for Transportation and Health for
13 Barbara, who was one of my
14 constituents that passed away as it
15 relates to traffic violence.

16 In terms of your
17 upcoming budget proposal, are you
18 requesting -- and I'm not going to
19 say if we're requesting as a
20 legislative branch -- are you
21 requesting the \$5 million to be
22 restored to Vision Zero as a part
23 of your budget proposal to the
24 Administration?

1 MR. PUCHALSKY: I'm
2 going to defer that budget question
3 to the Mayor's Office and Finance.

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT
5 JOHNSON: Okay. I just wanted to
6 go on the record. Let me reframe
7 it.

8 (Applause.)

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT
10 JOHNSON: I'm just asking a frank
11 question. So with the additional
12 \$5 million restored to Vision Zero,
13 what would that be used for? As
14 you being the head over there
15 working with Michael Carroll, what
16 would it be used for in terms of
17 expanding Vision Zero?

18 MR. PUCHALSKY: I can
19 tell you what \$5 million could pay
20 for. So \$5 million could pay for
21 two neighborhood slow zones. It
22 could pay for, you know, I don't
23 know the specific number, but a lot
24 of speed cushions. It could fund,

1 you know, continued concrete
2 separation or maintenance of
3 existing bike lanes.

4 So we don't have a
5 spending plan for \$5 million at
6 this point. But that's --

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT

8 JOHNSON: Let me ask you this: If
9 you don't have a spending plan,
10 right, help me out. All right.
11 Every department, Streets, L&I,
12 Parks & Rec, they will submit a
13 budget to members of Council and we
14 will legislate that budget, right,
15 process.

16 So you're not going to
17 ask for the 5 million? You're
18 going to wait until the
19 Administration says this is how
20 much you're allowed to ask for? I
21 don't know. I'm trying to figure
22 out how that works.

23 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yeah.

24 Thanks, Council President. I mean,

1 we're following the normal budget
2 process where all the departments
3 submit requests up through the
4 Administration.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT

6 JOHNSON: Okay.

7 MR. PUCHALSKY: And I
8 mean, it's like every department.
9 You know, I'm sure every department
10 can do more with more money in the
11 city, and it's you guys and the
12 Mayor who are balancing that out.

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT

14 JOHNSON: No, we're just trying to
15 go through the process. And Leader
16 Thomas has also asked the question.
17 I wanted to follow up on it because
18 it's something we've been reviewing
19 ourselves on our end, but we also
20 want to get the sentiments of OTIS
21 and the work that you're doing as
22 we continue to make this a
23 priority.

24 And for me, it's really

1 about just changing the culture in
2 our city in terms of just slowing
3 down but also respecting
4 individuals in general. And one
5 way we can do that is also making
6 sure that our budgetary priorities,
7 we're putting them forward to show
8 that it's a priority in the city.
9 So that's all I have. And again, I
10 commend Councilmember Thomas for
11 stepping up and making sure this is
12 a priority.

13 And again, Chris, we've
14 worked together. So thank you for
15 your leadership. And to the good
16 gentleman from South Philadelphia,
17 Richie Lazer who has taken probably
18 one of the most hated institutions
19 or organizations and flipped it to
20 become the beloved Parking
21 Authority, we appreciate you for
22 your leadership, Richie, for really
23 flipping it and really making sure
24 the Parking Authority is something

1 that's not just focused on giving
2 people tickets but really in all
3 seriousness taking a comprehensive
4 approach and integrating it. And
5 you play a lead role around the
6 issue of bicycle safety, right, and
7 making sure that individuals are
8 safe. So thank you, Richie. You
9 keep up the good work.

10 That's all I have.

11 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

13 Thank you, Council President. I'm
14 going to recognize Councilmember
15 Phillips in a second.

16 Let me just follow up
17 and just put something on the
18 record. Chris, first of all, this
19 is your second hearing today,
20 right? I'm told this is your
21 second one.

22 MR. PUCHALSKY: No,
23 it's --

24 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

1 Okay. All right. You're doing an
2 excellent job. We appreciate you.
3 And I know it's a little taxing to
4 be able to have to answer these
5 questions and not necessarily be
6 able to make all the decisions.

7 But let me just put
8 something on the record real quick.
9 So in last year's budget, one of
10 the things that we advocated for
11 was more funding for Vision Zero,
12 right. This Council President,
13 this leadership team, that was a
14 real thing we advocated for.

15 That advocacy was not
16 necessarily met with open arms.
17 Now, we're in a different position
18 because we've seen a number of
19 catastrophes. We've all been doing
20 this for a year right now. And on
21 top of that, you've just testified
22 on the record that things have
23 flatlined, right. So I think what
24 we want to do is just put on the

1 record that we are challenging and
2 pushing to see more funding,
3 specifically for Vision Zero.

4 We put in 50 million for
5 street paving. So clearly, we have
6 an appetite to do things as it
7 relates to the infrastructure and
8 infrastructure-related issues in
9 the city of Philadelphia. I think
10 overall the goal is to make sure
11 that the Admin understand that we
12 really want to see a different
13 appetite in this year's budget
14 specifically related to funding for
15 Vision Zero.

16 And I just want to put
17 that on the record because I heard
18 everything Council President said.
19 I agree with everything that was
20 said. And I was one of the members
21 who advocated, along with the
22 Council President, for funding for
23 Vision Zero, and that advocacy was
24 not met with welcomed arms.

1 With that being said,
2 Chair recognizes Councilmember
3 Phillips.

4 (Applause.)

5 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: I'm
6 sorry. I have to also acknowledge
7 Councilmember Mark Squilla and
8 Councilmember Jeffrey Young have
9 joined today's hearing.

10 Chair recognizes
11 Councilmember Phillips.

12 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS:
13 Thank you, Chairman.

14 I just want to say thank
15 you for putting this hearing
16 together. It is very important to
17 our city. I'm still taken aback by
18 the tragic death that took place on
19 Kelly Drive this past summer with a
20 gentleman who was in an Uber. And
21 it still bothers me today so I can
22 see the importance of this.

23 Just a quick follow-up
24 question to what Chairman Thomas

1 said about the execution of
2 division. Chris, you mentioned
3 that it's going to take three to
4 five years to engineer, I believe,
5 cameras. And then you also said it
6 takes a while to do community
7 meetings.

8 I'm more interested in
9 learning do you have a detailed
10 timeline on when all of these goals
11 that the Administration says that
12 they're going to be implementing,
13 from program safety improvements,
14 capital projects, traffic safety in
15 classroom, is it laid out so we
16 could be a little bit more in a
17 goal like every single month, which
18 I was appreciative of Rich, Rich
19 Lazer, because he's only been doing
20 this for about a year or so now,
21 couple years at this point. And
22 immediately, we already got a bus
23 lane camera program happening in
24 the spring. So I'm trying to

1 figure out why they move so quickly
2 compared to your office?

3 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yeah.

4 So it takes three to five years to
5 move a capital project. It doesn't
6 take three years to do cameras.
7 And I will say that our office
8 working with the Parking Authority
9 and SEPTA is the one who drove that
10 camera-aided bus lane bill through
11 Council.

12 We appreciate
13 Councilmember Mark Squilla in
14 sponsoring that bill, but it was
15 our office who led the push. We
16 probably had worked for five years
17 to get that bill passed and we are
18 really grateful for City Council to
19 pass it at the end of 2023, but we
20 did provide the leadership for that
21 bus lane bill that you mentioned.

22 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS:

23 Okay. Thanks for clarifying that.

24 And as the person who's also the

1 Vice-Chair working along with
2 Chairman Thomas of Education, I'm
3 interested in the Child Safety
4 program in the classroom, the
5 Traffic Safety program that's going
6 to be taught in classrooms, how is
7 that going to be implemented and
8 when do we see that beginning?

9 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yeah.

10 It's now. It has been. So we work
11 with the schools and the School
12 District to get the curriculum.
13 We've developed modules that are on
14 our website. We work with
15 educators to try to get them into
16 classroom. We have an elementary
17 school curriculum. We're now
18 working on a middle school
19 curriculum and we've got a
20 curriculum for high school
21 students. So that's ongoing.

22 There's I think over --
23 yeah, there's over 20 schools that
24 we have regularly engaged with.

1 And whether that's leading walking,
2 school buses or just making sure
3 they're using the curriculum in the
4 classroom so kids can learn to walk
5 and bike to school safely.

6 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS: Is
7 this a part of a regular class
8 safety pro -- is this like a
9 traditional classroom? Is it part
10 of an English class? Is it
11 something that's just an add-on and
12 when is it going to be at every
13 school? And what grades is it
14 going to start at?

15 MR. PUCHALSKY: I'd like
16 to call Marco Gorini who's our
17 Vision Zero Program Manager to come
18 up and answer your question.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT
20 JOHNSON: Okay. So, Marco, just a
21 reminder we're just asking when is
22 it going to be at every school?
23 What grades is it? And
24 currently -- yeah, I'm just curious

1 about that.

2 MR. GORINI: Sure.

3 Yeah. So Safe Routes Philly is our
4 Safe Routes to School program. And
5 we have curriculum for kindergarten
6 through 5th grade. Like Chris was
7 saying, we're working on 6th
8 through 8th. And right now it's --
9 well, it's based on a train-to-
10 trainer model. So we go to
11 schools. We work with sort of
12 traffic safety champions at each
13 school.

14 Often it's through a
15 health class or PE and we set them
16 up to be able to run this program
17 at the school itself. There is a
18 challenge there where schools are
19 stretched thin. There's only so
20 much capacity. So some schools are
21 able to really take this on and
22 adopt it. Other schools, it's more
23 of a challenge. They need a little
24 bit more support so --

1 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS: Is
2 this by request by the school?

3 MR. GORINI: So we do a
4 lot of outreach to inform schools
5 about this opportunity. You know,
6 schools come to us different ways.
7 Sometimes they're requesting some
8 help from the Streets Department
9 and they get connected to us or
10 otherwise looking just for where
11 are our safe routes, kind of
12 resources available.

13 And then we also do a
14 lot of kind of independent
15 outreach. We try to identify
16 schools that we know could benefit
17 the most, right, because we're
18 seeing higher rates of child
19 pedestrian crashes nearby and
20 things like that.

21 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS: So
22 I say that because if you're trying
23 to ensure that every child is
24 taught about traffic and safety in

1 the classroom, that goes back to
2 what I was talking to Chris about,
3 like where is the detailed timeline
4 to actually achieve that goal
5 within five years?

6 It seems like you're
7 just pitching it as opposed to
8 making it a formal program that's
9 going to be here to stay. And I
10 think it's a great goal, but I just
11 want to see how we're going to make
12 sure it's achievable. So I
13 think -- because it sounds great
14 and it's good that you're making
15 some -- but I need, you know, is
16 there details about the impact?
17 Are things changing?

18 These are important
19 things because it is important to
20 change the future. Because, you
21 know, my grandmother used to say,
22 look at the stop sign. That was
23 important. But this generation is
24 not there so we got to do some

1 innovative stuff, right. Their
2 grandmothers are not there like our
3 grandmothers. So can we get a more
4 detailed timeline on how we're
5 going to implement it for every
6 kid?

7 MR. GORINI: Yeah. I
8 think we can provide you definitely
9 some more information about sort of
10 how we see this rolling out. A lot
11 of it does kind of rely on sort of
12 taking the groundwork that we've
13 done in developing those lesson
14 plans and sort of doing some proof
15 of concept and then trying to
16 identify kind of how does this
17 scale up to get to that goal of
18 2030. But, yeah, we can
19 definitely --

20 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS:
21 And I just have one more question
22 and then I'm going return it to my
23 colleagues. It's not for you. I
24 just want to make sure that for the

1 Bus Lane Camera Enforcement program
2 in late spring, Rich, will this be
3 every bus lane in the city of
4 Philadelphia?

5 MR. LAZER: It'll be all
6 trolley lanes. It'll be all
7 trolleys in the city. And then
8 there's a box in the legislation
9 that creates where the bus
10 enforcement will be.

11 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS:
12 Okay. And then how does the new
13 smart loading zone work for
14 enforcement technology? Is it
15 using the cameras in every loading
16 zone in the city of Philadelphia?

17 MR. LAZER: Yeah. So we
18 looked at -- we worked with OTIS
19 back about a year or so ago on a
20 different smart loading zone pilot
21 that was not camera-enforced. Now,
22 we're working with a camera-
23 enforced program. There's 25
24 loading zones. Most of them are

1 Walnut, Spruce, Chestnut, from
2 probably 8th to probably somewhere
3 around Rittenhouse. There's 25
4 total, probably 80 cameras.

5 What it is, it's almost
6 like an E-ZPass type system.

7 Vehicle pulls into the loading zone
8 and then the camera -- after three
9 minutes the camera will then start
10 to charge \$0.10 a minute on the
11 plate. A majority of the fleets
12 that use the loading zone, the
13 UPSes, Amazons, they're already in
14 the PPA fleet program, but there'll
15 be a wide roll-out. There'll be a
16 grace period and there'll be an
17 education outreach for those
18 loading zones.

19 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS:

20 Okay.

21 MR. LAZER: Because most
22 loading zones are done. These will
23 be charge loading zones. Majority
24 loading zones are not charged.

1 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS:

2 Okay. I got it. All right. Well,
3 thank you so much, Rich. Again,
4 Rich Lazer has done a phenomenal
5 job and we're looking forward to
6 continue working with you. But I
7 am concerned about that school
8 program so hopefully we can get
9 some serious work on it. It looks
10 cute, but it needs to be top notch.

11 MR. LAZER: Mr. Chair, I
12 just wanted to reiterate something.
13 So with all the enforcement
14 programs, red light, speed, bus
15 camera, it really is a
16 collaborative effort with the
17 Philadelphia Park Authority,
18 Streets Department and the Office
19 of Transportation and PennDOT.
20 There's a lot of meetings that go
21 in. We do walkthroughs with staff
22 on all the different groups and a
23 lot of data is given.

24 So it really is a very

1 indepth look at where these cameras
2 go, and it's a team effort amongst
3 all the parties involved to really
4 lay out the program to make sure
5 that it works effectively and
6 efficient and the goal to lower
7 traffic deaths.

8 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS:

9 Thank you. I just also don't think
10 the community meeting process
11 should be that long either. We all
12 can put on quick community meetings
13 to get it together, so I don't know
14 why that was a big deal about
15 putting community meetings
16 together.

17 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

18 Chair recognizes Councilmember
19 Landau. Before Councilmember
20 Landau goes, I just want to
21 acknowledge all of the high school
22 students who are working in City
23 Council. If you don't know, high
24 school students in a lot of schools

1 across the city of Philadelphia are
2 required to do an internship to
3 graduate from the City of
4 Philadelphia, actually in the
5 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

6 And myself and my
7 colleagues, we always open our
8 doors to the high school students
9 who need an internship requirement.
10 So I just want to take a moment to
11 give them a round of applause and
12 thank them for being here today.

13 (Applause.)

14 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

15 Chair recognizes Councilmember
16 Landau followed by Councilmember
17 Squilla.

18 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:

19 Thank you so much, and thank you
20 for being here and for your
21 testimony. I had a couple of
22 follow-up questions and sorry if
23 you answered my first one already.
24 Got started very promptly. We're

1 only a couple minutes behind coming
2 from a different meeting. But I am
3 deeply concerned about the fact
4 that our traffic fatality rate has
5 remained constant for so many years
6 and I feel the urgency of us here
7 and what we can do to remedy this.

8 So my first question is
9 my concern that the rate of traffic
10 deaths in Philadelphia is so much
11 higher than in Chicago, D.C., LA,
12 and nearly three times as high as
13 New York. What are they doing
14 differently than what we're doing
15 here where we can implement
16 something to reduce our rate
17 quickly?

18 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yeah, I
19 think there's a few things. The
20 one in New York they've -- and
21 especially in D.C., they've had
22 much larger automated enforcement
23 programs for a much longer amount
24 of time. So it's tremendous that

1 the state authorized us to expand
2 our automated speed enforcement,
3 but I think we're still limited to
4 the Boulevard five corridors and
5 five school zones. I think New
6 York is school zone citywide. So
7 that's a big change.

8 Another barrier that we
9 have is it's very hard to reduce
10 speed limits in the city of
11 Philadelphia or anywhere in the
12 Commonwealth. There's a very
13 onerous process. And so, we would
14 like to work with City Council and
15 members of the local delegation to
16 work on legislative or other
17 solutions for us to be able to
18 bring speed limits down. Because
19 right now, the state Motor Vehicle
20 Code essentially says you have to
21 do a speed study and set it at the
22 85th percentile, so that encourages
23 speeding. It makes it very hard if
24 you have speeding on a road to

1 reduce the speed limit and then put
2 an engineering solutions so that
3 the street is engineered or
4 designed for that lower speed. And
5 the others, you know, there's been
6 significant investments in those
7 other cities on infrastructure.

8 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:

9 Not everybody who faces violence by
10 cars dies. Have you done a full
11 study on these crashes in general
12 to see what is it? Is it speeding?
13 Is it not following traffic signs?
14 Is it, you know, not having a bike
15 lane in a certain area? Have you
16 really granularly dug down to find
17 out exactly what is happening and
18 not just about fatalities?

19 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yeah. I
20 think speed is the number one
21 thing. So controlling speed is the
22 number one thing that we can do to
23 reduce traffic fatalities and
24 actually even to reduce serious

1 injury crashes. Speed not only
2 determines how deadly a crash will
3 be, but in some ways it even
4 determines how likely a crash is to
5 happen.

6 Because if two vehicles
7 or a vehicle and a pedestrian, if
8 the vehicle is traveling at a
9 slower speed, that's more reaction
10 time for the motorist to identify
11 the issue and then take corrective
12 action. So speed is the number one
13 thing that we want to control.
14 It's not the only thing. Certainly
15 we want to -- distracted driving or
16 intoxicated driving, reducing the
17 number of conflict points where two
18 different movements can conflict
19 with each other, improving
20 visibility so that motorists and
21 pedestrians and cyclists, all road
22 users can see each other. Those
23 are all important, but the number
24 one thing is reducing speed.

1 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:

2 And would this \$5 million
3 investment we're talking about
4 assist you in increasing speed
5 zones in the city?

6 MR. PUCHALSKY: I'll
7 just say that the infrastructure,
8 almost every infrastructure project
9 that we do has some way of
10 controlling speed. Whether it's
11 reducing the number of lanes, which
12 is often contentious, which is why
13 the community engagement process
14 takes a while and why the
15 institutional engagement is
16 important or if there's --
17 sometimes there's parking in order
18 to make a street safer such as in
19 order to bump out the sidewalk at
20 the corner.

21 Speed bumps, speed
22 cushions, those devices all reduce
23 speeding, narrowing the -- even if
24 it's the same number of lanes,

1 often narrowing the lanes can have
2 an effect on reducing speed.
3 There's a long list of
4 interventions that we can use.
5 Improving the visibility of traffic
6 signals, which is why we're always
7 looking for more funding also to
8 improve our traffic signals around
9 the city.

10 Tying in the traffic
11 signals to the Traffic and Control
12 Center so that we can monitor and
13 adjust the synchronization of the
14 signal so that we can have a
15 progression that is safe so that
16 the signal timing tends to induce
17 driving at a safe speed. These are
18 all things that we can do with
19 investments to improve traffic
20 safety outcomes.

21 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:
22 Thank you. And another area of
23 questioning I want to just ask
24 about is basic maintenance of our

1 streets. I'm a big proponent of
2 people with disabilities and also
3 making sure all of our streets are
4 easily accessible.

5 So each year City
6 Council has asked for more money
7 for the paving budget and a third
8 paving crew. And even with an
9 increase in funds, the City is
10 still paving only 60 miles a year
11 and the goal is 131. The City has
12 not yet hired this third paving
13 crew that we talked about; am I
14 right? And why not?

15 MR. PUCHALSKY: I think
16 my colleague Michelle Brisbon from
17 the Streets Department is here.

18 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:
19 Thank you.

20 (Witness approached
21 Witness table.)

22 MS. BRISBON: Good
23 afternoon.

24 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:

1 Good afternoon.

2 MS. BRISBON: I'm
3 Michelle Brisbon. I'm the Chief of
4 Staff for the Streets Department.
5 Can you repeat the question,
6 Councilperson?

7 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:
8 The question is about the third
9 paving crew, whether or not the
10 City is still only paving 60 miles
11 and the goal was 131 miles? And
12 has the City hired a third paving
13 crew? And if not, why not?

14 MS. BRISBON: So, no, we
15 have not hired a third paving crew.
16 This past season we just finished
17 hiring fully for the second paving
18 crew. And so, we're looking to
19 start hiring for the third paving
20 crew this spring.

21 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:
22 Are there any administrative
23 barriers to making this happen?

24 MS. BRISBON: Several.

1 So the pool of candidates for the
2 asphalt paving machine, the roller
3 operator, the asphalt rakers and
4 then the drivers as well.

5 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: So
6 you're still trying to fill
7 positions?

8 MS. BRISBON: Correct.

9 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:
10 Okay. And the paving is done
11 inhouse, correct, with the City of
12 Philadelphia?

13 MS. BRISBON: So we have
14 paving crews that do it inhouse,
15 but then we also contract out some.

16 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:
17 And what about the milling of the
18 street?

19 MS. BRISBON: So the
20 milling is contracted out. We
21 don't have the resources to do
22 that.

23 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:
24 What --

1 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

2 Point of information while the
3 Councilmember is taking a breath.
4 Why is it that -- so I'm listening
5 to this paving crew and I'm
6 thinking about some of the
7 workforce development stuff that
8 we've encouraged to happen.

9 I'm specifically
10 thinking about Mural Arts. I'm on
11 the Board of Mural Arts. One of
12 the things that we asked is there
13 to be a pipeline between programs
14 like Mural Arts and people being
15 able to house these jobs. Why is
16 that not still happening?

17 To listen to the type of
18 jobs that you're telling us is
19 vacant, to me -- and looking at the
20 text messages I get in my phone of
21 people saying that they need a job,
22 how does this disconnect still
23 exist?

24 MS. BRISBON: So paving

1 is a skilled job that they have to
2 at least come in with six months of
3 general laboring experience and
4 then we train them. But the
5 candidates that we're getting,
6 we've opened up the exams I would
7 say at least three times over the
8 last three years and we may get 20
9 candidates on each list.

10 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: So
11 why don't we create a direct
12 pipeline between programs like
13 Mural Arts? I just listened to the
14 folks at the Same Day Pay program,
15 right. If someone's in the Same
16 Day Pay program, how can we create
17 a pipeline between people who are
18 in the Same Day Pay program so that
19 they could be put in a position to
20 be able to have some type of
21 apprenticeship program so they can
22 take these jobs?

23 My thing is, and then
24 I'm going to pass it back to the

1 Councilmember, the appetite for
2 people to work is clearly there.
3 And the type of jobs that you're
4 saying need to be filled, we have
5 the demographic who could fill
6 them. What are we doing to connect
7 the jobs? I think that's what I'm
8 asking.

9 MS. BRISBON: So I'm not
10 familiar with the Mural Arts.
11 Streets Department, we work with
12 the Future Track Program and we
13 funnel the Future Track Program
14 into the paving program.

15 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Same
16 concept. Sorry, Councilwoman. Go
17 ahead. I apologize.

18 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:
19 No, it's similar -- I'm about to
20 get to a really similar question.
21 Why doesn't the City have the
22 six-month apprenticeship program,
23 so when people pass the
24 apprenticeship program they can get

1 right into the City job?

2 MS. BRISBON: So which
3 apprenticeship program?

4 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:
5 Well, you -- I'm sorry. You said
6 someone has to come with six months
7 of experience.

8 MS. BRISBON: So
9 normally the six months semi-
10 skilled experience or general
11 laboring experience.

12 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:
13 Someone else isn't going to take
14 folks on -- the City of
15 Philadelphia has historically been
16 the place that fills the gap for
17 people who need a job. This is
18 basic workforce development. A
19 private company is likely not going
20 to take anybody with no experience
21 also. They're going to say you
22 need six months of experience. And
23 you've got people walking around
24 the city who can't get the six

1 months experience but want the job.

2 Why doesn't the City
3 just start an apprenticeship
4 workforce program that puts people
5 through a six-month apprenticeship
6 and then they're prepared for the
7 job? They've got the experience.

8 MS. BRISBON: Well, we
9 can definitely talk with Central
10 personnel to see what we would have
11 to do to be able to look into that
12 program.

13 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:
14 Thank you. And I have another one
15 too. I want to ultimately also
16 talk about bringing milling
17 inhouse. We wait for the outside
18 contractors to do the milling and
19 then we're doing the paving on top.
20 And if we could do all of these
21 parts of the project, we could get
22 our streets paved faster and I
23 think more efficiently. Has there
24 been any thought of bringing

1 milling inhouse?

2 MS. BRISBON: So years
3 ago and under previous
4 administrations they looked into
5 it. And part of the issue was with
6 air quality and being -- where we
7 would sort of, I guess, house that
8 operation at. But we haven't
9 looked at it in recent years. But
10 that was part of the issue, was the
11 air quality.

12 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:
13 Thank you. I would love to look
14 into that more with you.

15 And then the final
16 question, because this is another
17 workforce development thing that I
18 believe we contract out and I
19 believe we could do inhouse
20 quicker, faster, easier, is the
21 tactile paving when we do the curb
22 cut.

23 When a curb is rebuilt,
24 there's tactile paving that's

1 supposed to be installed to help
2 people with vision impairment cross
3 the street safely. How do we
4 install those now and are those
5 done inhouse or by a City contract?

6 MS. BRISBON: No.
7 They're contracted out, yes.

8 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:
9 Has there been any discussion of
10 bringing that inhouse?

11 MS. BRISBON: Yes, we
12 have had that discussion and we're
13 continuing to have those
14 discussions.

15 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:
16 Okay. I'm coming back to you guys
17 with all of this when it comes to
18 budget. I want this inhouse.
19 These are great workforce
20 development opportunities. It
21 would make it so much faster and
22 streamline everything that we're
23 doing in the city. And most
24 importantly just to be clear, we

1 won't have the process where an
2 outside company did the milling.
3 There's now a 3-inch drop or 4- or
4 5-inch drop from the curb. That is
5 very dangerous to people for a
6 whole lot of levels. While we're
7 waiting for the paving because
8 we've got two different entities
9 trying to coordinate, we can do
10 this all inhouse. I believe it can
11 happen. Thank you so much.

12 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

13 Thank you, colleague. I appreciate
14 that line of questioning. I think
15 it's extremely important.

16 And thank you for taking
17 the time to answer the questions to
18 the best of your ability. We
19 definitely appreciate it.

20 Chair recognizes
21 Councilmember Mark Squilla followed
22 by Councilmember Jeffrey Jay Young.

23 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:

24 Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

1 And, Chris, we talked
2 about the money for Vision Zero.
3 And the Vision Zero budget for, I
4 guess, operations, what would be
5 the budget for Vision Zero
6 operations without money that we
7 know we need for the actual work
8 that would be done as far as speed
9 cushions, daylighting, bike lanes
10 infrastructure and stuff like that?

11 MR. PUCHALSKY: Can you
12 repeat the question, Councilmember?
13 I don't think I quite grasp what
14 you're asking.

15 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:
16 Vision Zero was a \$5 million
17 request, right?

18 MR. PUCHALSKY: Per
19 capita -- I think -- well, as I
20 understand -- sorry. Go ahead.

21 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:
22 What is the operating cost to keep
23 the office of Vision Zero moving?

24 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yeah.

1 So let me try to answer what I
2 think you're asking me. Right now
3 we're working on a study. We hope
4 to finish it this calendar year on
5 the life cycle cost of certain
6 elements like a speed cushion or
7 like one of those white flex posts
8 because we know they're an enormous
9 maintenance issue to be able to
10 maintain them.

11 The durability hasn't
12 always been what we would have
13 hoped or what the manufacturers
14 have promised it would be. So we
15 are working on a full-like life
16 cycle cost analysis for certain
17 traffic safety improvements that we
18 do hope to have completed this
19 year.

20 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: All
21 right. Staffing for Vision Zero.
22 I know it's under OTIS, right. Is
23 it all the OTIS folks working on
24 Vision Zero or do you have certain

1 folks that work just on the Vision
2 Zero planning process?

3 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yeah.

4 So we house a lot of the planning
5 and programmatic management for
6 Vision Zero, but the Streets
7 Department has staff who are
8 working on traffic safety
9 improvements every day, whether
10 it's installing speed cushions or
11 maintaining traffic signals.

12 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: The
13 reason why I'm asking is because
14 when we have a budget request for
15 Vision Zero, it seems to get
16 convoluted or where's the money
17 going? Is it Vision Zero itself
18 that the money goes in the Vision
19 Zero? It doesn't go for the
20 construction part. That goes to
21 the Streets Department to implement
22 the Vision Zero plan.

23 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yeah.

24 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: So

1 is there a request to keep Vision
2 Zero planning process, to keep the
3 employees that are -- their goal is
4 to put the Vision Zero plan
5 together. Is it just under OTIS?
6 Because a lot of the constituent
7 questions we get is that we're not
8 funding Vision Zero, right.

9 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yeah.

10 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: And
11 so, do we have dedicated people?
12 You're saying it's under OTIS and
13 there's Streets Department folks
14 that are working on the capital
15 side of it. But what is the vision
16 for the city as far as operating
17 costs for Vision Zero, employees,
18 somebody working on the plan,
19 putting our plan together to make
20 sure that then there's a capital
21 ask beside that, right, that would
22 go to the Streets Department. But
23 it seems like it gets lost. When
24 we say all right, we're putting \$5

1 million to Vision Zero, does that
2 just go to OTIS?

3 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yes,
4 thank you for that. So the Vision
5 Zero capital line is within the
6 Streets Department budget as is the
7 separate speed cushion line that
8 was created by Mayor Parker last
9 year. So that's, you know, Mayor
10 Parker has been insistent that the
11 Vision Zero budget was not cut.
12 Even though one line item changed,
13 there was an increase in speed
14 cushions.

15 But beyond the capital
16 funds, there are dedicated staff.
17 Marco has an entire team doing both
18 programmatic planning work and all
19 the engagement in schools. Then
20 the Office of Multimodal Planning
21 has four districts. In each of
22 those districts, there's a
23 dedicated Vision Zero staffer who
24 works on the infrastructure side

1 trying to make -- working on
2 developing some of those 100
3 projects that I mentioned during my
4 testimony that we have in the
5 pipeline doing the early planning
6 and concept work.

7 In each of those four
8 districts, there's a dedicated
9 community engagement person who
10 works on the community meetings.
11 And then there's all the great
12 staff in the Department of Streets,
13 in the Design Division who help
14 take the planning level concepts
15 and put them into specific plans.

16 So as you can see I'm
17 not trying to be evasive,
18 Councilmember, not giving a
19 straight answer but it is --

20 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:
21 It's po -- it sounds like I'm
22 talking to a politician.

23 MR. PUCHALSKY: It is in
24 a number of different departments

1 in a number of different functions,
2 because Vision Zero takes a lot of
3 different parts of government
4 coming together just to deliver an
5 infrastructure project, let alone
6 deliver automated enforcement
7 systems or increased education for
8 our kids.

9 I think if we could try
10 to put together a list of all the
11 different folks who work on Vision
12 Zero, if that's what you're asking
13 for.

14 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:

15 Yes, because when we hear from the
16 advocacy crowd, our residents or
17 people talking about public safety,
18 they believe that there should be a
19 budgetary item for Vision Zero,
20 right. And so again, if we put 1
21 million in here, 1 million there,
22 500,000 there, it doesn't look like
23 we're putting a plan together to
24 address Vision Zero.

1 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yeah.
2 Every time we've been asked how
3 much have you spent on Vision Zero,
4 it's always a difficult process
5 because it's part of so many
6 people's jobs in so many different
7 departments, whether it's OTIS,
8 Streets, MDO, Purchasing, you know,
9 Finance. All the folks that work
10 on Vision Zero are much greater.

11 And I remember years
12 ago, you know, it was not just like
13 the -- back maybe four or five
14 years ago the Vision Zero line
15 item, the capital line item was
16 somewhere around \$1 million. But
17 when we looked at all the Vision
18 Zero spending, it was somewhere of
19 \$30 million, \$40 million when you
20 looked at all the improvements we
21 did with other line items, let
22 alone the outside funding, like the
23 ARLE and ASE funding that we got or
24 federal funding that we got that,

1 that we then used for Vision Zero
2 improvements.

3 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: All
4 right. I mean, I'll ask if we
5 could give something to the Chair
6 that would have a breakdown of what
7 the request is for Vision Zero and
8 the upcoming budget as far as
9 operating costs as far as planning
10 cost, and then what is the capital
11 ask for Vision Zero.

12 Because even we as
13 Council have made some demands on
14 Vision Zero as far as speed
15 cushions around schools,
16 playgrounds and senior centers,
17 right. We know that's going to
18 take several years to fund and
19 build out from capital cost, but we
20 have to know how much that is,
21 where that money is going to and
22 then who's responsible for it. So
23 then at the end of the year we
24 could say, did we spend it.

1 Right now we have no
2 idea how much is spent on Vision
3 Zero. And all we hear is that we
4 took money out of Vision Zero. So
5 I think if you could make that
6 clear for us and for the Chair so
7 they could share with us, and then
8 we have a better idea of what we're
9 doing, how we're doing it and who's
10 in charge of making sure that that
11 gets spent in the proper way.

12 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yeah. I
13 can work with our colleagues in
14 Streets and Finance to try to put
15 together a little bit more
16 comprehensive picture of spending
17 on Vision Zero. And I know we've
18 done that in the past and we can
19 try to replicate that for this
20 current budget.

21 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: All
22 right. Thank you.

23 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS:
24 Thanks, Chairman Thomas.

1 I just want to do a
2 quick point information for Mark
3 Squilla, Councilmember Mark
4 Squilla. Would it be easier or
5 would it be better to make this
6 more effective if Vision Zero had
7 its own department of engineers and
8 Streets people and everything as
9 opposed to you having to go through
10 four or five different departments
11 to get things done? If you had
12 your own people, would that make it
13 easier to get things done?

14 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yeah. I
15 appreciate the sentiment,
16 Councilmember Phillips. But I
17 think that would make it more
18 difficult. I think Vision Zero
19 will be most effective when
20 everybody inside of city government
21 thinks it's part of their job.

22 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS:
23 And that part too needs --

24 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yeah.

1 That's the part -- and we've
2 committed -- one of the parts of
3 the executive order was to ensure
4 that every capital project that
5 touches the street is designed to
6 improve safety. So there's a lot
7 of projects. We don't necessarily
8 think of it as a traffic safety
9 project, but it's an opportunity to
10 increase the safety of the street.

11 And that's the culture
12 change that's been happening over
13 the time that I've been in city
14 government where lots of people who
15 didn't think their job was Vision
16 Zero now know and we have people
17 who their title isn't Vision Zero.
18 Their title might be Engineer 2 or
19 something like that or Construction
20 Engineer 3, but they know that
21 improving traffic safety is part of
22 their mission.

23 I was at a conference in
24 Penn State in December where I

1 heard three Streets Department
2 construction engineers talking
3 about the work on that roundabout
4 that I mentioned in South Philly
5 and how they're improving traffic
6 safety even though construction
7 engineers is their title.

8 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS:

9 Thank you. I just wanted to find a
10 way to get through anything that's
11 bureaucratic that might be holding
12 up the process for it to get done.
13 And I feel like sometimes if one
14 department is not as invested in
15 it, it just becomes a -- goes to
16 the wayside. So I just want to
17 make sure everybody's invested in
18 this in a very efficient way, but
19 thank you.

20 MR. PUCHALSKY: Thank
21 you.

22 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

23 Chair recognizes Councilmember
24 Young.

1 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Thank
2 you so much, Mr. Chair.

3 First, I just want to
4 acknowledge the young people over
5 there. Again, I started out as a
6 high school intern right in these
7 very chambers so you never know
8 where your future is going to take
9 you. So just keep at it, have
10 goals and have the vision.

11 Back to Vision Zero.
12 You mentioned to us that there was
13 a -- you have a community
14 engagement person in the office
15 that goes out and talks to the
16 communities. Can you talk to us
17 about what your engagement efforts
18 are in certain communities where,
19 to be honest, Vision Zero is not a
20 priority for them, right. It's not
21 a goal for them. So what do you
22 do? How do you connect with those
23 people?

24 I can tell you it's a

1 lot of folks in my District, right,
2 where Vision Zero is just not, it's
3 not a priority. I'm not saying
4 they don't care about it, right,
5 but it's just not at the top of
6 their list of things to put their
7 attention to when it comes to
8 safety in this city. So how do
9 you -- what is your message to
10 those communities? How do you
11 reach out to those communities?

12 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yeah.
13 Thank you, Councilmember, for that
14 question. I think one of the first
15 things that we do when we're
16 looking to make improvements, we
17 reach out to the local Council
18 District. And I know you've been
19 extremely helpful in saying, here
20 are the community groups that you
21 should talk to in a particular
22 district.

23 And I know we've got for
24 each of the Councilmember's

1 District, Councilmembers in this
2 office whether it's
3 Councilmember -- or in this room,
4 Lozada or Phillips or Squilla, we
5 try to work through your offices to
6 get a sense of what are the
7 community groups that we should
8 work with when we're trying to do a
9 project so at least we're not
10 making sure that we're
11 inadvertently excluding someone
12 just because we didn't know the lay
13 of the land as well as you do.

14 Often we can only move
15 at the speed of trust, so that
16 takes -- in order to build that
17 trust it takes a lot of different
18 forms. The Vision Zero ambassadors
19 are one way. So having paid safety
20 ambassadors where we work with
21 people to try to get the message
22 out and usually then those people
23 and then the people that they
24 interact with are a great way to

1 make sure that we're reaching a
2 broader set of community members,
3 especially if that community has
4 concerns that are significant such
5 as gun violence or the opioid
6 crisis or economic prosperity. So
7 that's one way we try to break
8 through to have meaningful
9 conversations about traffic
10 violence.

11 We've certainly been
12 there in communities where we show
13 up and we say, hey, we'd like to
14 improve your neighborhood. And, A,
15 they don't believe us, you know,
16 we're from the government. There's
17 a lot of distrust in government
18 those days. And so, it's up to us
19 to move at a speed and communicate
20 in a way that builds a partnership.
21 And I think we've been successful
22 in doing that in a lot of
23 neighborhoods.

24 The other thing that

1 we've been trying to do, and my
2 colleague Lily Reynolds in the
3 office of -- the Infrastructure
4 Solutions team is trying to build
5 more workforce measures into
6 projects, because a lot of time
7 we've shown up at community
8 meetings and like, well, that's
9 great that you're doing that, but
10 what I'd really like is a job for
11 my grandson or my neighbor is
12 needing a job.

13 And so, trying to
14 increase our workforce
15 participation so that whether
16 that's improving the performance,
17 the DBE performance on federally-
18 funded work or putting in
19 initiatives like geographic and
20 economic hiring preferences or
21 working with the trades in order to
22 have more apprenticeship classes,
23 these are all things that don't
24 necessarily seem directly connected

1 with Vision Zero but help to build
2 trust and help to meet other
3 community needs.

4 The other thing we did,
5 and I've got to give credit to my
6 colleague Waffiyyah Murray, who
7 runs our Indigo system, so a
8 program that she has is mini grants
9 so she gives out really small
10 grants I think twice a year to
11 community groups.

12 And it's not for traffic
13 safety work directly. It's maybe
14 buying turkeys, frozen turkeys at
15 Thanksgiving for that community
16 group. And what that does is
17 showing up and saying to the
18 community, listen, we care about
19 what you care about so that when we
20 show up to say, hey, can we talk
21 about traffic safety, they know
22 that they have a partner there
23 who's going to, you know, we're not
24 just here to knock them over and

1 tell them what you need. We're
2 here to listen and work together to
3 solve problems.

4 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Now,
5 what can you tell me or advise me
6 as a District Councilmember when I
7 go to certain communities and they
8 think that any, you know, you
9 mentioned this is to help improve
10 the community, improve their
11 neighborhoods. But how can you
12 help me put that message out here
13 that a lot of folks see that these
14 improvements mean gentrification,
15 mean that their neighborhood is
16 changing, right, meaning that it's
17 not for them, right.

18 So what is that message?
19 How can you help me deliver that
20 message to those constituents who
21 believe that these improvements are
22 to eventually move them out of
23 their community?

24 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yeah. I

1 think one of the first things we
2 did is we wanted to make sure that
3 bike lanes, for example, were not
4 causing gentrification. So we
5 worked with a national group called
6 the Better Bike Share Partnership
7 to fund high-quality research to
8 try to get an impartial answer on
9 do bike lanes have a gentrifying
10 effect on neighborhoods.

11 And the results is --
12 and we can share this with the
13 whole Committee -- that bike lanes
14 do not have a gentrifying effect on
15 neighborhoods. So first of all, we
16 really wanted to go to the
17 substance of the fear that if we
18 build safer transportation
19 infrastructure, is that going to
20 displace me from my neighborhood.
21 And I think the answer was
22 conclusively no.

23 The second thing then is
24 to build partners and champions in

1 those communities. So we say, hey,
2 this infrastructure is for me.
3 That's why when we're doing
4 expansion work with our Indigo
5 system we're funding ambassadors in
6 those neighborhoods that work with
7 the community, try to say this is
8 how you can use this new asset in
9 your system so that this is for
10 you, whether you might not want to
11 ride a bike every day in all kinds
12 of weather, but maybe this is for
13 you for recreation, to try to do
14 health classes.

15 We also tried to bridge
16 the digital divide, so we had a
17 class we were running called
18 Digital Skills and Bicycle Thrills
19 where we paired digital literacy
20 training with learn-to-ride classes
21 so that people could sign up for
22 Indigo. They knew how to sign up
23 for Indigo. And then once they
24 were signed up, they knew how to

1 safely cycle maybe if they had
2 never done it or hadn't done it in
3 a while.

4 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Thank
5 you. And that question came from
6 an idea, conversation I had with
7 Stephanie Ridgeway at Indigo who's
8 in my community who deals with
9 these type of questions all the
10 time from neighborhood folks who
11 say that this creates
12 gentrification.

13 We just want information
14 to give them to show that, no,
15 they're just trying to improve your
16 safety in your neighborhood, not
17 move you out, not displace you from
18 your neighborhood. But sometimes
19 perception is a reality for a lot
20 of folks as they see only in
21 certain places these measures are
22 being in place, and then at the
23 same time come behind that they see
24 the neighborhood changing, right.

1 And so, we have to
2 figure out in what neighborhoods
3 are these like -- let's say solid
4 minority neighborhoods where we
5 know that gentrification isn't
6 happening right now, are these
7 improvements still happening there
8 as well, right. I think that's
9 what the community wants to see,
10 that it's being placed all over and
11 not just in certain areas where
12 they think in their mind that it's
13 being done to just push them out.

14 MR. PUCHALSKY:
15 Councilmember, can I address that
16 question?

17 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Sure.

18 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yeah. I
19 think the sad fact though is that
20 the traffic fatality statistics
21 tell a story that traffic
22 fatalities don't discriminate.
23 They do discriminate in the fact
24 that traffic fatalities hit

1 residents of color worse than White
2 residents. So it's critical that
3 we make these improvements all
4 throughout the city.

5 And when I look at the
6 faces and the names on these
7 graphics in front of me, I see
8 African American residents, I see
9 Hispanic residents in front of me
10 that were unfortunately the victim
11 of traffic violence. So being able
12 to -- I think what's really, really
13 critical is when the advocacy that
14 the families of these members have
15 exhibited over the years where they
16 can tell the story much better than
17 a bureaucrat and with much more
18 trust with the community, that this
19 is why we're making these
20 improvements so a different family
21 doesn't have to go through the same
22 suffering that these families went
23 through.

24 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Thank

1 you for that. And one thing I've
2 noticed is to be honest for me my
3 own recollection is that people
4 nowadays just don't know how to
5 drive, right. They just seem like
6 they forgot the rules of the road.
7 Just the other day with all the
8 wind the traffic lights were out
9 and people were zooming through
10 lights and signals that weren't
11 working. And I'm just like, you
12 don't know that's supposed to be a
13 stop sign.

14 So what is the City
15 doing I guess to educate and inform
16 people on the rules of the road to
17 make it a little bit safer for
18 everyone traveling?

19 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yeah.
20 So as part of -- I'll give you an
21 example. As part of rolling out
22 automated speed enforcement on
23 Broad Street, we've put ads all up
24 and down Broad Street, on buses and

1 on bus shelters. We've also
2 reached out to every single
3 community group along North Broad
4 Street to make sure, hey, can we
5 come talk to you, we want to let
6 you know that this is coming, these
7 are the rules of the road, this is
8 how you can avoid getting a ticket.
9 Because what we're really going for
10 is behavior change.

11 The way that we're going
12 right now is part of the reason why
13 we have the fatality levels we
14 have. Part of that behavior change
15 is redesigning the streets to
16 encourage and reinforce safe
17 driving factors. But the other is
18 the numerous education work we
19 have, whether it's with kids or
20 with adults, to try to get the
21 message out that this is how we all
22 stay safe. This is how we all get
23 home at the end of the day.

24 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Thank

1 you. Yeah, again that was just my
2 own this past weekend anecdote just
3 seeing that people just ignore or
4 just don't know what certain signs
5 are, what certain rules are.

6 Another question that I
7 have is regarding bikers. And
8 again, it's informing people of
9 certain changes because in certain
10 neighborhoods adding these bike
11 lanes is new, and it's a new I
12 guess it would be -- someone's
13 looking right now to look for a
14 biker coming where they never had
15 to before, right.

16 So what can we do to
17 kind of ease folks into these
18 changes for the instincts, right,
19 to kick in to say we always have to
20 look right now when before that was
21 never a part of your driving
22 instincts. We never had to do it
23 when we took our driving exams and
24 things like that. So what can we

1 do to reinforce some of those newer
2 instincts that are needed now, now
3 that the roads are structured a
4 little differently?

5 MR. PUCHALSKY: Yeah.

6 What we try to do when we put in a
7 new piece of infrastructure in the
8 neighborhood that maybe hasn't seen
9 it before, isn't accustomed to it,
10 is we try to do an education
11 campaign. So that's putting like
12 these signs on the infrastructure
13 sometimes saying, you know, this is
14 a protected bike lane, this is how
15 it works, this is where you should
16 park, this is where you shouldn't
17 park. Then we try to do leaflets
18 in those neighborhoods to let
19 everybody know what the rules of
20 the road are.

21 And I think engagement
22 doesn't end with the agreement or
23 the Council ordinance. Education
24 and engagement need to continue all

1 the way through and past
2 construction. I think in some ways
3 that's the most important
4 engagement to do is after the thing
5 is built to listen to people and to
6 see what's working, what's not
7 working.

8 That's why when the
9 Washington Avenue Project happened,
10 part of the enabling ordinance that
11 Councilmember Squilla passed was
12 that we come and do that several
13 years' worth of after reports and
14 make adjustments as we're going
15 through that project to see what's
16 working, what's not working, is it
17 having an effect.

18 We try to do a high-
19 quality before-and-after study for
20 every single infrastructure, major
21 infrastructure project that we do
22 to see what effect it has. And
23 that's how we have the plethora now
24 of data after a few years to say

1 that projects we've done have had
2 on average a 20 percent reduction
3 in serious injury crashes.

4 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Thank
5 you. And, Mr. Chair, I have one
6 more question for Ms. Brisbon. If
7 you can come back up to the table
8 as well.

9 Just a question, just a
10 follow-up regarding the paving and
11 milling and what we're doing as a
12 city to attract people to those
13 particular jobs. You said over
14 three years the exam went out. Can
15 you describe to us or tell us what
16 the exam looks like?

17 And I guess if we're not
18 finding enough qualified people,
19 then what can we do as a Council,
20 as a city, to make sure that the
21 people who are applying for these
22 jobs understand what this exam
23 really is and what it's really
24 catering toward? Because six

1 months of labor experience -- I
2 mean to be a laborer, people can do
3 that work, right, but they may not
4 necessarily have the other skills
5 necessary to pass an exam, right.
6 So can you tell us what that exam
7 looks like and what is needed?

8 MS. BRISBON: Okay. So
9 the three times that we've offered
10 it, one of the times we didn't even
11 have a physical exam. We just did
12 submit it, if you qualify, you were
13 put on the list. The other two
14 times is a performance exam and
15 you're just coming in and just
16 being familiar with the tools that
17 we're using and being able to
18 follow these instructions. And we
19 offered some training prior to the
20 exam was even given.

21 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Were
22 they successful in finding
23 qualified applicants? Were those
24 exams successful?

1 MS. BRISBON: Again, I
2 think we maybe had 20 candidates
3 that was successful on each of
4 those lists. We may have had 80
5 candidates.

6 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Of
7 the 20, how many were hired?

8 MS. BRISBON: We hired
9 all of them that were interested.
10 Everybody that we interviewed we
11 hired.

12 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Okay.
13 Thank you.

14 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Let
15 me -- yep.

16 Councilmember Lozada
17 wants to make a comment.
18 Councilmember Landau has a
19 question.

20 Let me just make sure
21 that we all know our homework
22 assignments so we're on the same
23 page when we come back for budget
24 season. Councilmember Squilla

1 requested and the Council President
2 also echoed that we have specific
3 items related to Vision Zero as it
4 relates to what money you want on
5 the operating side as well as what
6 money you want on the capital side.

7 We want to hear from
8 your department as it relates to
9 issues related to hiring. From the
10 seats that we sit in, we don't
11 understand how these type of
12 skilled jobs, we're not able to
13 fill those positions but yet 20
14 percent of our city is living in
15 poverty. So there's a disconnect
16 there and we need to improve that
17 pipeline very fast.

18 The third thing, and I'm
19 going to add this to the list, in
20 February of 2021 we had our first
21 hearing when I was on Council as it
22 relates to Vision Zero, as it
23 relates to the hit-and-run crisis.

24 Captain Overwise, didn't

1 sit in that seat because we were
2 virtual, told us -- and happy
3 retirement to him -- that
4 infrastructure investment was the
5 best way to fix the issues that we
6 were seeing at that time. When we
7 come back to budget, this body
8 would like to see all of the
9 capital projects that have taken
10 place in the city of Philadelphia,
11 specifically around Vision Zero in
12 the hit-and-run crisis from the
13 first time we were told that in
14 2021 to the spring of 2025.

15 So over four years what
16 have we done to address the
17 hit-and-run crisis, to address the
18 High Injury Network and how have we
19 improved the 20 percent of the
20 roads that produce 80 percent of
21 the car accidents. That's our
22 homework so we're all clear.

23 So when we revisit this
24 conversation in budget, there's no

1 surprises. No one will tell us
2 that they have to get back to us
3 with more information. We'll all
4 have that information readily
5 available because we're asking for
6 it in February.

7 Young people, I hope
8 y'all heard that. Adults get
9 homework too. It's not just for
10 y'all, right. Homework goals even
11 after high school.

12 Chair recognizes
13 Councilmember Landau, then
14 Councilmember Loz -- oh,
15 Councilmember Lozada, then
16 Councilmember Landau. And then
17 we're going to close out this panel
18 because we have two more panels
19 left before we open up for public
20 comment.

21 Councilmember Lozada.

22 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA:

23 Yeah. I just want to recognize the
24 work that I've been able to do in

1 the 7th Council District as a
2 result of the partnership that I
3 have with the Parking Authority.
4 They've actually helped us remove a
5 lot of these vehicles that have
6 been problematic on our streets,
7 either whether they were double
8 parked and have been there for
9 years or they've been vandalized
10 and have been there for years and
11 have been parked in some of our
12 handicapped spaces and folks have
13 reported for a long time and have
14 not been able to get them removed.

15 I just want to recognize
16 their work because we've been in
17 multiple parts of the District and
18 we've been able to remove hundreds
19 of vehicles as a result of that.
20 So wanted to make sure that I put
21 that on the record. But I also
22 wanted to comment on or follow up
23 on Councilmember Young's question
24 and concern as it relates to some

1 of our bike lanes, right, and the
2 outreach when we're looking at
3 those bike lanes or when we're
4 trying to talk to residents about
5 these bike lanes.

6 A lot of community
7 residents associate bike lanes with
8 justification or displacement. And
9 so, I think we need to look at the
10 outreach that we're doing and what
11 is the language. What is the --
12 how are we communicating with some
13 of these community residents that
14 don't understand or don't speak the
15 English language as it relates to
16 the work that we're doing around
17 Vision Zero.

18 You know, how do I go
19 back into my community to talk to
20 them about, listen, these bike
21 lanes are for your safety as well,
22 right, the work that we're doing as
23 it relates to cameras is for your
24 safety as well. We need to do

1 better at sharing that information
2 around the work of Vision Zero in
3 other languages.

4 I have multiple
5 communities in my District that
6 don't speak English, that don't
7 speak Spanish, right, that are
8 Cambodian or that speak a different
9 dialect of the Asian community. We
10 just need to make sure that we are
11 out in these communities when we're
12 having these meetings, that we're
13 offering the information, the
14 outreach information, in languages
15 that are not just in English. We
16 need to do better at that.

17 I'm happy to help with
18 some of that work, but we need to
19 do better when we're out in the
20 community. We're talking about the
21 importance of the work that Vision
22 Zero is offering in our
23 communities.

24 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

1 Thank you, Councilmember.

2 Chair recognizes

3 Councilmember Landau.

4 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:

5 Thank you.

6 I will be quick, but I
7 wanted to follow up on what
8 Councilmember Young was saying
9 about the rules and the norms of
10 the road. It's kind of terrifying
11 to me just now to think that people
12 would go up to an intersection
13 where all the lights are out and
14 the thought that goes through your
15 mind isn't wait, I should slow
16 down, who's going first versus, oh,
17 I could just fly through this.
18 It's a new way of thinking.

19 As somebody who is
20 currently teaching my son to drive,
21 you want to talk about terrifying,
22 that is crazy, especially post-
23 pandemic. While he's practicing,
24 you're teaching him the rules. And

1 then someone does something that
2 completely violates the rules and
3 you have to ex -- he says, well,
4 why did they do that. And it's
5 like, well, you're not allowed to
6 do that. So you're spending your
7 time explaining what the person was
8 supposed to do, what they shouldn't
9 do.

10 And this brings me back
11 to my question. I've talked to a
12 lot of the trades who are very
13 interested in putting driver's ed.
14 back in our schools. Is the city a
15 part of that conversation at all
16 pushing to make sure that we have
17 driver's ed. in our schools so that
18 all of the kids can learn? Thank
19 you.

20 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: So
21 we'll call that another homework
22 assignment, right. I actually had
23 that on my notepad as well too. Do
24 we think teaching driver's ed. to

1 high school students will help deal
2 with the High Injury Network.

3 So, Chris and Rich, we
4 want to say thank you both for
5 taking the time to be here today.
6 Please add that to the homework
7 assignments when we come back and
8 revisit this conversation come
9 budget. These four items will be
10 things that's a part of your
11 comments and your advocacy as it
12 relates to more money. So thank
13 you both and thank you for all you
14 do.

15 We're going to change
16 the agenda a little bit. We know
17 that there are a number of people
18 here for public comment. As you
19 can tell, the members of City
20 Council feel like Vision Zero is a
21 huge part of our job. That's why
22 we're here. That's why we're
23 asking questions. That's why we're
24 advocating. So we apologize if

1 we're a little behind. But in
2 order to help move us along and
3 make sure that we get to public
4 comment, we're going to ask the
5 next two panels to combine.

6 So, Mr. Clerk, if you
7 could call the four members of this
8 next panel, we're going to ask
9 those two members to -- these two
10 panels to combine, and then we're
11 going to save Nicole from the
12 Bicycle Coalition for the last
13 panel.

14 Mr. Clerk.

15 THE CLERK: Yes,
16 Mr. Chair.

17 Could we hear from Erick
18 Guerra, Nora Dowd-Eisenhower --

19 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: We
20 can't hear you. We can hear you
21 right here but everybody can't hear
22 you.

23 THE CLERK: Apologies.

24 Can we hear from Erick Guerra, Nora

1 Dowd-Eisenhower, Jessie Amadio and
2 Norena Lewis.

3 (Witnesses approached
4 Witness table.)

5 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

6 We're going to allow this entire
7 panel to testify like we did the
8 last panel. So you guys can, you
9 know, rock, paper, scissors,
10 however you want. Whoever wants to
11 go first, we just ask that you
12 state your name for the record and
13 then begin with your testimony.
14 And then after you finish,
15 whoever's in proximity, whoever's
16 next to you, allow that person to
17 go immediately after you. So
18 however you want to start, it's up
19 to you.

20 MS. LEWIS: Good
21 afternoon. My name is Noreena
22 Lewis, and thank you for the
23 opportunity to offer a few words
24 with respect to the critical topic

1 before us. I work at the
2 Children's Hospital Philadelphia in
3 our residency program, and I had
4 the absolute pleasure of knowing
5 Dr. Barbara Freides, our beloved
6 Chief resident who was killed by a
7 speeding drunk driver while riding
8 her bike home in the evening of
9 July 17th this past summer.

10 She was doing everything
11 right. She was traveling in the
12 bike lane. She was wearing her
13 helmet and obeying all the traffic
14 laws. The driver hit her,
15 pummeling over the plastic bike
16 lane barriers and he kept going
17 because those barriers were not
18 enough to stop the car.

19 Barbara was my colleague
20 and my friend and brought light
21 into every room she entered. She
22 was a brilliant pediatrician, a
23 dedicated friend and a
24 compassionate colleague. Barbara

1 had a special way of bringing
2 people together and making those
3 around her feel noticed and
4 important. We miss her every day
5 and often reflect together that she
6 did not have to die the way that
7 she did. If that bike lane had
8 been truly protected, she might be
9 alive today.

10 In the aftermath of her
11 death, many of her colleagues,
12 friends and community members came
13 together to ensure that not only is
14 she always remembered but to try to
15 prevent tragic deaths like these
16 from continuing to happen. We
17 formed a group calling ourselves
18 PATHS, Pediatric Advocates for
19 Transportation Health for Barbara.

20 We are dedicated to
21 advocacy and the promotion of
22 evidence-based principles that
23 ultimately reduce injuries and
24 fatalities, resulting from traffic

1 violence and preventable crashes.
2 Our work is grounded in principles
3 of violence prevention. We strive
4 to create meaningful change that
5 results in zero pedestrian and
6 cyclist deaths and serious injuries
7 in Philadelphia.

8 We're committed to
9 creating this change through, one,
10 partnering with our institutions,
11 relevant governmental agencies and
12 appropriate stakeholders to
13 implement evidence-based changes
14 that promote the safety of people
15 who walk and people who bike.

16 Two, advocating for
17 child bike safety, including
18 promoting helmet safety and
19 education through policies endorsed
20 by the American Academy of
21 Pediatrics and by distributing
22 helmets in CHOPS pediatric primary
23 care centers. And, three,
24 encouraging cycling is a viable

1 commuting option by supporting
2 policies that incentivize safe bike
3 use.

4 One of the main ways we
5 believe this change can be
6 accomplished is by the endorsement
7 and financial support of Vision
8 Zero by the City of Philadelphia.
9 In so doing, we can honor Barbara's
10 memory and ensure a safe, more
11 vibrant community for everybody.

12 It's so appropriate that
13 even though Barbara is not
14 physically here with us today, just
15 as she brought people together so
16 easily when she was alive, she is
17 still continuing to do it in her
18 absence. Thank you.

19 (Applause.)

20 DR. GUERRA: Good
21 afternoon. My name is Dr. Erick
22 Guerra and I'm a professor of City
23 and Regional Planning at the
24 University of Pennsylvania where I

1 teach courses in transportation
2 planning and quantitative methods.
3 My research and teaching focus on
4 relationships between urban forum,
5 transportation systems, travel
6 behavior and transportation-related
7 outcomes such as traffic safety,
8 household spending and the cost
9 effectiveness of public transit.

10 Over my career I've
11 written two books on service
12 transportation and published around
13 50 peer-reviewed articles in
14 transportation, public health and
15 city planning journals. As
16 Associate Dean for Research at
17 Penn's Weitzman School of Design, I
18 help oversee funded research on a
19 wide range of topics.

20 I'm also an active
21 consortium member of Safety 21, the
22 U.S. Department of Transportation's
23 National University Transportation
24 Center for Safety. Around a third

1 of my work focuses specifically on
2 traffic safety. Much of it's based
3 in the Philadelphia region. For
4 example, I've studied the
5 effectiveness of Philadelphia's
6 bike lanes in reducing bicycle
7 collisions with colleagues from
8 public health, and I'm currently
9 working on a project looking at
10 weather and to what extent curb
11 extensions have reduced traffic
12 crashes as a part of Philadelphia's
13 green infrastructure stormwater
14 management program, recent findings
15 from a study on the effects of
16 speed cameras on traffic safety on
17 Roosevelt Boulevard. I've featured
18 in policy reports, newspaper
19 articles and public commentary on
20 the expansion of automated
21 enforcement to other corridors in
22 Philadelphia. And related to this
23 research, I've also provided expert
24 witness testimony on the

1 effectiveness of automated
2 enforcement in other large cities.
3 Lastly, I've lived in Philadelphia
4 for 16 years and I walk on
5 Philadelphia streets daily and
6 regularly drive, bike and take
7 SEPTA.

8 MS. DOWD-EISENHOWER:

9 Good afternoon, Chairperson Thomas,
10 Councilmembers, all of you and
11 Vice-Chair Landau. My name is Nora
12 Dowd-Eisenhower. I'm the Volunteer
13 State President for AARP. We've
14 submitted written comments, and I
15 know that some of you have been
16 looking at them. I'm going to try
17 to shorten mine to a few minutes,
18 but everything we have put in here
19 we've put in carefully for you to
20 review.

21 First of all, I want you
22 to know that AARP is the nation's
23 largest nonprofit, nonpartisan
24 social impact organization

1 dedicated to empowering America's
2 50-plus on how they choose to live
3 as they age. Our membership
4 includes nearly 38 million people
5 nationwide, almost 2 million people
6 in Pennsylvania and nearly 300,000
7 people in Philadelphia.

8 We advocate on issues
9 that matter most to older adults.
10 We hear from them, we talk to them,
11 their families and we have a focus
12 on health security, financial
13 resilience and livable communities.
14 We really appreciate the offer from
15 Council to come here and speak
16 today. Thank you, Members.

17 For AARP, Vision Zero
18 holds that as a society we have an
19 ethical responsibility to do all we
20 can to ensure that people are safe
21 as they move about their
22 communities, whether driving to a
23 doctor's appointment, walking to
24 school or a senior center or

1 bicycling to work. The benefits of
2 Vision Zero are numerous. We've
3 heard about that already today and
4 we're going to continue to hear
5 about it.

6 But we want to note some
7 additional facts for you here
8 today. As we age, our reflexes and
9 reaction times slow down. I hate
10 to admit it, but the data is very
11 clear, making us more vulnerable to
12 harm. According to the National
13 Highway Traffic Safety
14 Administration, adults 65-plus have
15 the highest rate of pedestrian
16 fatalities compared to the other
17 age groups.

18 Philadelphia joined the
19 World Health Organization's Global
20 Network of Age-friendly Cities in
21 2012. It's now called the AARP
22 Network of Age-friendly States and
23 Communities. The common thread
24 among those enrolled in the

1 Age-friendly Network is the belief
2 that communities are more livable
3 and better able to support people
4 of all ages when local leaders
5 commit to improving the quality of
6 life for the very young, the very
7 old and in between.

8 For over 10 years, AARP
9 has worked with Philadelphia
10 officials in the administrations,
11 in partner organizations, in
12 Council and local leaders to devise
13 an age-friendly action plan that
14 targets three things: Housing,
15 transportation and outdoor space.

16 In response to the
17 realization that Philadelphia had
18 the highest traffic fatality rate
19 in the country, the Philadelphia
20 Vision Zero Task Force was created
21 in 2016 with a goal to end traffic
22 fatalities in 2030. I know that
23 date's been changed and it was
24 discussed earlier in the hearing.

1 As a member of the
2 Vision Zero Task Force's Safe
3 People Steering Committee, we've
4 gained momentum as everyone wants
5 to keep themselves and their loved
6 ones safe. We have seen notable
7 progress in the city's bringing
8 greater attention and urgency and
9 action to safety priorities,
10 especially for vulnerable
11 road users. We've supported the
12 City's Vision Zero Action Plan,
13 which aims for zero traffic
14 fatalities.

15 For example, our Vision
16 Zero efforts led us to support the
17 initial installation, maintenance
18 and subsequent expansion of speed
19 cameras along Roosevelt Boulevard,
20 which has been effective as we've
21 heard from many, and I just hear
22 from you, across lowering speeding
23 violations, fewer fatal serious
24 injuries and fewer crashes

1 involving people walking.

2 Additionally through
3 2019 before the pandemic, AARP
4 partnered with the Bicycle
5 Coalition of Greater Philadelphia
6 to hold listening sessions in
7 neighborhoods in the High Injury
8 Network, which only make up about
9 12 percent of our streets and
10 account for 50 percent of our
11 fatalities.

12 Moreover, AARP's key
13 component of our Vision Zero
14 strategy is to perform walk audits,
15 which it's a simple activity which
16 an individual or a team of people
17 can conduct in their own
18 neighborhood to evaluate the
19 walkability of a location and to
20 document it.

21 We recently collaborated
22 with community partners, residents,
23 City Councilmembers and the City's
24 Office of Multimodal Planning and

1 the Transportation and
2 Infrastructure System to conduct
3 walk audits in several districts in
4 the city. I offer the walk audit
5 tool for you. It's available
6 online. We're happy to work with
7 you to do walk audits in your
8 districts.

9 I have six final points
10 to make. I'll make them as briefly
11 as I can. They are
12 recommendations. Lower speed
13 limits in key areas. Speed kills.
14 We've heard it again and again.
15 There are other things we can do,
16 but we think that reducing speed
17 limits in neighborhoods with high
18 pedestrian traffic, especially near
19 schools, senior centers, medical
20 facilities and public transit hubs
21 can help reduce the severity of
22 accidents which is crucial for
23 older adults.

24 Improve pedestrian

1 infrastructure, make crosswalks
2 safer with better lighting, clear
3 signage and more time for
4 pedestrians to cross. Enhanced
5 public transportation access:
6 Increase the availability and
7 coordination of public
8 transportation, especially for
9 older adults in our neighborhoods
10 and improve coverage in underserved
11 areas.

12 Age-friendly pedestrian
13 design: Create streets that are
14 accessible for people with mobility
15 challenges by adding curb ramps,
16 benches and safe spaces for
17 waiting. Designate pedestrian-only
18 zones in high-density areas where
19 older adults live, work and play,
20 such as near senior housing,
21 community parks and health care
22 centers.

23 And finally my final
24 recommendation, safe routes to

1 senior centers and health
2 facilities: Improve specific
3 routes to senior centers. People
4 in the neighborhood walk to senior
5 centers, health facilities and
6 transit stations to ensure safe
7 access.

8 At its core, Vision Zero
9 puts forth the notion that traffic
10 fatalities are unacceptable on our
11 streets and preventable if we plan
12 and work together. We can and we
13 must reach zero traffic deaths in
14 Philadelphia. Thank you.

15 (Applause.)

16 MS. AMADIO: Good
17 afternoon, Councilmembers. First
18 of all, I just want to thank you
19 for the excellent discussion that
20 has already happened at this
21 hearing. It's been very
22 informative, so thank you for your
23 time. My name is Jessie Amadio.
24 I'm a member of Philly Bike Action.

1 Philly Bike Action is a
2 volunteer organization. Our
3 mission is to make Philly a place
4 where anybody of any age, race,
5 income or ability can ride a bike
6 in this city without fear of being
7 hurt or killed by a driver. It's a
8 mission that's intrinsically linked
9 with Vision Zero. I think whether
10 you walk or bike, our roads just
11 feel kind of crazy. We've talked
12 about that a lot today. It's just
13 crazy out there and it's not just
14 vibes. In the city every week 10
15 people are seriously killed or
16 injured.

17 Philly Bike Action
18 advocates on the same principles
19 that our friends at OTIS do, the
20 City's kind of Complete Streets
21 method. This is designing streets
22 that protect the most vulnerable,
23 so that's people walking. And the
24 streets become inherently safer for

1 people who are biking or driving.
2 And we're not just talking speed
3 bumps. We're talking intersection
4 daylighting, curb extensions,
5 raised crosswalks, traffic
6 diverters, road diets and protected
7 bike lanes. These are part of a
8 broad toolkit of traffic calming
9 that Vision Zero projects can
10 offer.

11 Unlike enforcement,
12 these physical features can keep
13 people safe 24 hours a day no
14 matter how they're getting around.
15 These are capital investments.
16 This is the infrastructure that we
17 believe is like the quickest, best
18 way to change the way that our
19 roads are operating.

20 Good design accounts for
21 the fact that humans are imperfect.
22 It's really hard to change a
23 culture, but you can change a road.
24 And so, designs -- so if we have a

1 road where people are getting hit
2 again and again and again in the
3 same spot, you have a design
4 problem. And that's Philly's High
5 Injury Network, right.

6 So the Mayor's executive
7 order specifically commits the City
8 to implementing safety measures
9 along the entire High Injury
10 Network by 2030. So the High
11 Injury Network is 300 miles long.
12 And 2030 is five years away. All
13 right. And unfortunately, I think
14 that the City has missed
15 opportunities to keep this
16 commitment.

17 For example, North 5th
18 Street between Girard and Lehigh is
19 on the High Injury Network. It was
20 repaved last year with no major
21 alterations. There's a few speed
22 cushions there, but there's no
23 intersection daylighting, no lane
24 rebalancing, no protective bike

1 lane. It's sort of a wasted
2 opportunity to fix a road that's
3 not going to be repaved again for
4 at least 12 more years.

5 Failures to address the
6 High Injury Network as fast as
7 possible do have real world
8 consequences. Just last November,
9 Dominique Jones was killed while
10 riding his bicycle at the
11 intersection of two High Injury
12 Network roads in Strawberry
13 Mansion. And we've talked already
14 about how traffic violence is
15 correlated to lower-income
16 neighborhoods and how
17 Philadelphians who are Black or
18 Latino are more impacted, actually
19 twice as likely to be hospitalized
20 or killed.

21 So there's no doubt in
22 my mind that City Council, people
23 at City Hall and MSB care deeply
24 about this issue. It's very

1 obvious to me that people do really
2 take this seriously. The Mayor has
3 committed to the City's Vision Zero
4 goals. The staff at OTIS do
5 excellent work with the resources
6 that they have. And City Council
7 has introduced a lot of important
8 bills, especially ones that rectify
9 policy, remove administrative
10 barriers and authorize new
11 projects.

12 But I think we've sort
13 of established that the demand to
14 change the way our streets work is
15 rapidly outpacing the budget to
16 actually get it done fast enough to
17 save people's lives. So pardon the
18 pun here, but how can we move with
19 the speed that this issue demands,
20 right. What can we do, how do we
21 set these milestones that
22 Councilmember Landau is talking
23 about or Councilmember Thomas.

24 Philly Bike Action would

1 like to make some recommendations:
2 First and most importantly, and I
3 thank many of you for bringing this
4 up today, we need to increase the
5 budget for Vision Zero capital
6 spending. Without adequate
7 resources put forward to sort of
8 rapidly roll out these
9 infrastructure projects, people-
10 focused streets and a protected
11 bike network, the City is never
12 going to be able to deliver on the
13 promise of reducing traffic
14 fatalities or meet constituent
15 demand for traffic calming.
16 There's thousands of traffic
17 calming requests in 311 right now.
18 Number two, mandate
19 safety improvements for every
20 street when it's repaved,
21 especially the High Injury Network.
22 The posters that are in front of me
23 just show the High Injury Network
24 overlaid with roads that are going

1 to be repaved in the next five
2 years. Do not let these roads get
3 repaved exactly the way that they
4 are now. When a road is getting
5 repaved, make it safer.

6 Install physical corner
7 clearances at every intersection.
8 It's the easiest way to ensure
9 intersection visibility, and this
10 daylighting method as Hoboken was
11 able to achieve zero traffic deaths
12 for seven years straight. That's
13 how they did it, intersection
14 visibility. And it's an affordable
15 option of all of the things in our
16 toolkit.

17 Number three, increase
18 coordination with PennDOT. You'll
19 realize if you start looking at
20 this map that a lot of the roads on
21 the High Injury Network are also
22 state-owned roads, so the City has
23 to work with PennDOT to work on
24 them. The City should ask PennDOT

1 to publish for every project the
2 impact of vehicle miles traveled
3 and how the project is going to
4 impact the City's Vision Zero
5 goals.

6 Projects without
7 sufficient safety improvements or
8 that increase vehicle miles
9 traveled should be opposed. And I
10 think that the elected officials
11 here have a role where they could
12 lend their voice to support OTIS in
13 the negotiations that are happening
14 with PennDOT. I know that OTIS
15 often has plans that we would
16 consider to be a safer, a better
17 plan, but they have to work with
18 the state agency which can be hard.
19 So I implore elected officials to
20 do what they can to support OTIS
21 when we're pushing for safer
22 designs.

23 Number four, repeal the
24 2012 law that requires Council

1 ordinance to add a bike lane where
2 our travel or parking lane would be
3 changed. I just think that we
4 should be empowering OTIS to make
5 evidence-based design decisions
6 without political red tape that
7 jeopardizes the safety of people
8 who walk and bike. The
9 professionals at OTIS conduct
10 community input, they coordinate
11 with stakeholders and they
12 prioritize high-impact projects.

13 I believe that they're
14 doing a great job and we should put
15 these decisions in the hands of
16 experts who are working with
17 communities. Requiring legislative
18 amendments to the traffic code just
19 to make data-driven changes delays
20 our progress and our mobility
21 goals. And it's frankly fairly
22 unique. There are not -- maybe
23 Chicago is the only other city in
24 the states that have a rule like

1 this on the books.

2 Lastly, I just want to
3 say I think -- and actually I feel
4 like I've witnessed it today
5 already. The Mayor and all members
6 of City Council must become
7 advocates for safety. Look
8 proactively at dangerous roads in
9 your district and say what can I do
10 to fix this. See a paving coming
11 up and say is something getting
12 done, let me make sure it happens.

13 Champion the City's
14 plans like the pedestrian and bike
15 plan that was mentioned that would
16 bring a bike lane within a certain
17 number of feet to every resident in
18 Philadelphia. That's 400 miles of
19 bike lane. And I think we're
20 presently around 100, so there's a
21 lot more to go just on that one
22 plan or the Vision Zero Capital
23 Plan which OTIS has put together a
24 wonderful toolkit of 10 priority

1 intersections, 10 priority of High
2 Injury Network roads with the cost
3 of exactly what it would take to
4 bring these safety changes.

5 By my count, only 8 of
6 the 10 intersections -- no, I take
7 that back, only 2. So there are 8
8 intersections that have no progress
9 as far as the public can see or on
10 the ground. So that's been out for
11 a few years, since 2020 I think.

12 So my point is -- I'm
13 kind of off-script now. So I'm
14 just going to wrap up. There is a
15 lot of awesome projects and OTIS is
16 working on a lot of awesome
17 projects, but we can't do them
18 without the money to buy the
19 materials and pay the labor and put
20 it in the ground basically. You
21 want to put the concrete on the
22 ground and it's going to take a
23 while, but it is proven to be
24 possible.

1 Hoboken has done it. It
2 doesn't have to take decades, and
3 it's entirely within the power of
4 our local government to get it
5 done. So I really do believe that
6 we can do this if we all prioritize
7 Vision Zero. Thank you.

8 (Applause.)

9 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: I
10 want to say thank you to this
11 amazing panel. First of all, thank
12 you for taking the time to even
13 come down here, listen to what was
14 discussed between members of this
15 Committee and the Administration,
16 and then of course offering your
17 expertise. It is very much
18 appreciated.

19 I do want to allow
20 members of the Committee to ask
21 questions so I'm going to be brief.
22 One thing that was discussed was
23 the work around curbside
24 extensions. So what are the merits

1 of daylighting and other
2 interventions that can increase
3 intersection visibility? Anybody
4 on the panel that wants to answer,
5 that would be appreciated.

6 DR. GUERRA: Sure.

7 Happy to respond to that. Thank
8 you for the question, Councilman
9 Thomas. Main things that
10 daylighting do, they increase
11 visibility. So extending the
12 curbs, generally preventing a car
13 from blocking at the end of a
14 block. That also reduces the turn
15 radius of a car so they go slower
16 when they take a right or left turn
17 and then it's a shorter crossing
18 distance for pedestrians.

19 That said, just to kind
20 of add another point, another layer
21 about the intersection between
22 infrastructure and enforcement,
23 they don't work if people park on
24 them, and you'll frequently see in

1 Philadelphia some of them that the
2 City has invested quite a bit of
3 money into putting the curb
4 extensions in place will be
5 regularly parked on. So it's not
6 just the infrastructure, a
7 combination infrastructure and
8 keeping them clear of vehicles.

9 MS. AMADIO: I'd just
10 love to add a quick point. That's
11 a really, really good thing to
12 bring up. Some cities have had a
13 lot of success just plopping a
14 large crash-rated planter in the
15 middle of the daylighted bump-out,
16 if it's just painted so that it's a
17 lot harder to pull a car in where a
18 flex post or a low curb could be
19 driven on top of.

20 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

21 Thank you.

22 Chair recognizes

23 Councilmember Young.

24 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Thank

1 you, Mr. Chair.

2 Just one question. I
3 guess it's more aimed toward
4 Ms. Dowd-Eisenhower of AARP. Do
5 you know if the City takes the
6 consideration, I guess the timing
7 that it takes for the average
8 senior to cross the street when
9 they have their signal timing and
10 things like that? Do you know what
11 factors are taken into
12 consideration with that?

13 MS. DOWD-EISENHOWER: I
14 don't. I don't know what the City
15 takes into account. I do know that
16 when we've talked to officials here
17 and around the state about changing
18 timing of lights, we've been
19 advised that it's not always just a
20 simple thing. Not all lights are
21 computerized and can be changed
22 easily. But we do know that if we
23 extend the time to cross the street
24 and a crosswalk, it's safer for

1 older pedestrians, and I would also
2 argue it's safer for people with a
3 stroller, someone who might have a
4 disability, and it slows them down.
5 So I'm happy to get you more
6 information on that, how long
7 should the crossing be. What we
8 know now is that there's not enough
9 time to cross the street for most
10 people to do it safely,
11 particularly older people.

12 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Thank
13 you. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

14 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:
15 Chair recognizes Councilmember
16 Phillips, followed by Councilmember
17 Landau.

18 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS: I
19 just want to say thank you so much
20 for all your testimonies today. I
21 did learn something from each of
22 you. And I'm really touched by the
23 testimony about Dr. Barbara. And I
24 just think about the fact that how

1 is it possible for someone to drive
2 over a bike lane with things that
3 are literally and -- that bottles
4 is dropping on the sidewalk in my
5 mind, like you just decided to just
6 do whatever you want to do. But
7 just want to say thank you and
8 wishing you all Godspeed as we go
9 forward here. All right. Thank
10 you.

11 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

12 Thank you, colleague.

13 Chair recognizes

14 Councilmember Landau.

15 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:

16 Yeah. I wanted to echo the thanks
17 for all of you as well, especially
18 telling us Dr. Barbara's story is
19 awful. We should not have people
20 who are getting repeated DUIs
21 continuing to drive, so we should
22 also say that.

23 I have a question. I

24 have another idea I'd like to throw

1 out to any one of you guys who
2 would like to pick it up. But to
3 Professor Erick Guerra, you talked
4 a lot about your background and
5 your testimony but not as much
6 about solutions. So can you talk
7 about any infrastructure
8 improvements that you would
9 recommend, including any
10 low-hanging fruit that the City
11 could do quickly and easily?

12 DR. GUERRA: Sure. I'd
13 be very, very happy to discuss.
14 One of the areas where I think the
15 City is doing a good job is on
16 automated enforcement that has the
17 added benefit of raising revenues.
18 I wish all of it went to
19 Philadelphia, but adding revenues
20 that can be used to invest in
21 safety infrastructure.

22 I think curb extensions,
23 daylighting, that's a terrific
24 investment. I think another area

1 where the City could really improve
2 and make safety a priority is in
3 keeping sidewalks clear. It
4 doesn't matter how many sidewalks
5 you have if they're closed for
6 construction, whether it's the
7 City, SEPTA, a resident. It's
8 really common to even see both
9 sides of sidewalks closed on a
10 number of streets.

11 Parking on crosswalks,
12 particularly dangerous and
13 difficult for people with strollers
14 or in chairs. And I think that's
15 an area where really targeted
16 enforcement can play a role in
17 keeping those clear, and ideally
18 fund some of the types of
19 investments that can be made to
20 improve other infrastructures.

21 But as was said earlier,
22 a city that's safe for pedestrians
23 is safer for everyone. Most
24 fatalities in Philadelphia are

1 drivers followed by pedestrians,
2 and you keep the most vulnerable
3 road users safe and you keep
4 everyone safe. So I certainly
5 recommend prioritizing sidewalk
6 clearances, where possible
7 narrowing infrastructure.

8 Speed is always --
9 almost always a factor in a
10 fatality. There are instances
11 where a vehicle is large enough and
12 can pull someone into the tire.
13 But for the most part, most traffic
14 fatalities and serious injuries
15 involve speed.

16 And so, think about
17 Roosevelt Boulevard. The speed
18 cameras go off on parts of it at 55
19 miles per hour. Your chances of
20 surviving a crash at 50 miles, 55
21 miles per hour as a pedestrian are
22 almost 0. And if you're older or a
23 young child, particularly if you're
24 lower, your center of gravity is

1 lower, your probability of
2 surviving that crash is extremely
3 low. So trying to keep speeds
4 below 30 miles per hour, 25 miles
5 per hour in more parts of the city
6 and keeping sidewalks clear are two
7 of the things that I think the City
8 could focus on more.

9 MS. DOWD-EISENHOWER:

10 Can I add something to that. I
11 think all those recommendations are
12 great. I think everything
13 everybody has said today is great.
14 But I think the one point that you
15 started with was the speed cameras
16 and fines. We need to find a way
17 to pay for this. We met with
18 Councilmember Squilla the other
19 day, and he reminded us how are you
20 going to pay for it, have a
21 dedicated source. Is there a way
22 to look at the revenues raised at
23 the speed camera point to use that
24 for some Vision Zero work. I don't

1 know the answer to that, but I just
2 want to put that out there.

3 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Let
4 me jump in because this has turned
5 a different way. We're supposed to
6 ask you all the questions, but let
7 me just provide a little bit of
8 clarity. So based on the advocacy
9 work that we've done for some time,
10 one of the things that we felt like
11 did have a significant impact on
12 traffic calming was the cameras on
13 Roosevelt Boulevard.

14 So in the midst of
15 recognizing that being something
16 that worked, you would want to
17 replicate it. The reality is that
18 state law does not allow local
19 municipalities and counties to
20 determine when and where you can
21 have speed cameras. The new speed
22 cameras that's coming to the city
23 of Philadelphia is based on
24 legislation that came out of

1 Harrisburg that gave us an acting
2 ability to identify -- how many
3 roads?

4 THE CLERK: Five.

5 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Five
6 roads that we could pick in the
7 city of Philadelphia where we can
8 now add speed cameras. I know one
9 is Broad Street. I don't think
10 we've identified all five of them
11 yet. But in order to put it --
12 Councilmember, you want to --

13 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Point
14 of information. So they have
15 identified a few. So Broad Street,
16 Route 611, Route 13 and I believe
17 it's one more they've identified.

18 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: So
19 long story -- thank you, colleague.

20 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Marco
21 can answer those questions.

22 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Yep.
23 If you want to come on up, that
24 will help us. And we're not

1 following the traditional
2 structure. So I want to go ahead
3 and apologize to the Tech team and
4 anybody else in Legal that might be
5 mad at me for this. But it's
6 important that people recognize
7 that we do want to see more
8 technology be used for traffic
9 calming. But as our own local
10 county, our own municipality, we're
11 limited in what we are allowed to
12 do or not do. We have to get
13 permission from the state.

14 Another thing that we've
15 been advocating for -- because we
16 fought to get those cameras.
17 Another thing we've been fighting
18 for is the technology to be able to
19 assess speeding tickets right away.
20 Not the cameras, right. But I'm
21 bad with the technology stuff, but
22 there's technology out there that
23 allows you to catch someone
24 speeding right when they ride by

1 you. Technically, we're not
2 allowed to use that in local roads.
3 You can only use it for state
4 police and state highway.

5 I'll allow you to clean
6 up some of the mess I just made.

7 MR. GORINI: No, no,
8 that was all very accurate. And
9 Councilmember Young also, the exact
10 two that have been approved are
11 Route 13 and Broad Street. We have
12 a report out that we put out, I
13 think, in June of last year that
14 listed Route 216 which is Allegheny
15 as well as Route 3 which is
16 Chestnut and Walnut and Route 291
17 which is kind of Bartram over the
18 Penrose Bridge into South Philly.
19 Those were the next three that kind
20 of ranked the highest on that
21 evaluation.

22 We are looking at
23 additional data. So while we're
24 still kind of rolling the cameras

1 out on those first two corridors,
2 we want to make sure that since we
3 only have five, that we've
4 definitely got the top five going
5 forward.

6 The only other thing I
7 wanted to quickly add is that the
8 state legislation does dictate that
9 all revenue from that program,
10 after paying just basic expenses,
11 goes to a state transportation fund
12 that you have to apply for, but it
13 is dedicated to traffic safety
14 projects.

15 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:
16 Thank you. I'm going down a
17 different path now. So can you
18 stay with us? State your name for
19 the record again one more time.

20 MR. GORINI: Marco
21 Gorini, Vision Zero Program
22 Manager.

23 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Can
24 you just hang for a second?

1 MR. GORINI: Yeah.

2 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

3 Chair recognizes Councilmember --

4 we were on Councilmember Landau.

5 So let's go back to Councilmember

6 Landau.

7 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:

8 I'm going to hold my -- I'm good.

9 We'll talk offline about my idea.

10 It's going to be good.

11 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: We

12 know it. You can see the energy.

13 Chair recognizes

14 Councilmember Phillips.

15 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS:

16 And I just want to say that we're

17 going to need all of your help to

18 help residents in the city of

19 Philadelphia who, one, they do

20 understand that we need to do

21 something with the traffic and the

22 speed, but there is also a large

23 contingency of residents who are

24 concerned about, well, how is it

1 going to impact traffic, and in
2 their mind it's going to create
3 congestion.

4 And I don't know if -- I
5 haven't heard from any of your
6 testimonies, right, about how this
7 doesn't create congestion. And I
8 think that narrative needs to be
9 told as well, because right now
10 you're telling us how to save
11 lives, which is the most important
12 thing, but then also we need to be
13 able to be informed enough to tell
14 our residents that this also won't
15 cause traffic as well.

16 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

17 Thank you all.

18 Did you want to respond?

19 MS. AMADIO: I would
20 actually, yeah. I think that
21 that's a great point. I didn't
22 want to talk about it because I'm
23 sure that the professionals at
24 Vision Zero know the studies

1 better. But I know Philly Bike
2 Action would love to work with all
3 of your offices to find those
4 talking points. Because the thing
5 is there's lots of studies,
6 international studies, local
7 studies, Philadelphia studies that
8 show that these things that we're
9 talking about don't impact
10 congestion and can actually improve
11 it in certain cases and also
12 parking demand, like all the stuff
13 that people complain about, a lot
14 of these things can actually
15 address. But it's hard to prove it
16 to people if it doesn't exist in
17 your city yet and it's a study or a
18 statistic.

19 And so, that's always
20 going to be hard to convey numbers
21 to people in a way that's
22 meaningful. But I totally agree
23 that working together with
24 community groups that you already

1 know in your neighborhoods to try
2 to find the trusted messengers to
3 share that story, I think we could
4 do a lot of education in that way.

5 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS:

6 Thank you.

7 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

8 Thank you, Councilmember, and thank
9 you for the gesture.

10 And I would ask that
11 everybody who's a part of today's
12 conversation, even the folks who
13 haven't had the opportunity to
14 speak who clearly care about this
15 issue, we ask that you continue to
16 work in coordination with the
17 members of Council. Clearly, we
18 have an appetite for it. But at
19 the end of the day, it's no point
20 in doing all that research and
21 having all these experts and lived
22 experiences and not share that
23 information with us because you all
24 are the people we work for and you

1 drive our agendas, and you're the
2 folks who we are fighting for and
3 advocating for.

4 So thank you,
5 Councilmember Phillips, for that
6 spirit. Councilmember Landau,
7 thank you so much for your line of
8 questioning and your advocacy
9 overall. I know this is an issue
10 that you truly care about and I
11 appreciate this panel.

12 Mr. Clerk is going to
13 call our last panel. After this
14 panel, we're going to open it up
15 for public comment. Colleagues,
16 I'm going to ask that we don't ask
17 this panel any questions unless
18 it's a dying issue -- I shouldn't
19 use that word. I'm sorry. Don't
20 ask this panel any questions unless
21 it's an issue that you feel like is
22 really pressing that must be
23 presented to this panel because I
24 want to allow this panel to

1 communicate the stories that they
2 want us to hear. And then I want
3 to open it up to public comment and
4 allow the people who've been
5 waiting for over an hour, some two
6 hours, to be able to have their
7 platform to advocate for what they
8 want to advocate for.

9 Mr. Clerk, can you take
10 it away.

11 THE CLERK: Yes,
12 Mr. Chair.

13 Could we hear from
14 Nicole Brunet, Policy Director for
15 the Bicycle Coalition of Greater
16 Philadelphia; Reverend Stephanie
17 Evans and Ms. Narita Jones-Pugh.

18 (Witnesses approached
19 Witness table.)

20 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: So
21 just so you know what we're asking
22 is we want to set it up so for
23 those of us that's in here we can
24 see it, but this is livestream. So

1 when you livestream it, putting it
2 over there or putting it on the
3 floor. People who aren't here
4 right now, somebody might look at
5 this two weeks or two years from
6 now and we want them to be able to
7 see all the esthetics that's coming
8 with your testimony. So just give
9 us a couple seconds to be able to
10 figure out how can we put something
11 there to allow the images to be a
12 part of your testimony.

13 Also for those who
14 signed up for public comment,
15 immediately following this panel
16 we're going to open it up for
17 public comment. We're going to ask
18 that you kind of be as efficient as
19 possible as it relates to your
20 comments during public comment.

21 We don't want to really
22 put it -- we don't really want to
23 limit what people have to say. But
24 at the same time, we want to

1 respect the time constraints and
2 respect the tech staff who's been
3 working this hearing. So just give
4 us a minute or so and we'll be able
5 to put them up.

6 All right. You may
7 state your name for the record and
8 you may begin with your testimony.
9 Yep, it's in the shot. You're good
10 to go. We'll fix it. Fix that for
11 her.

12 Go ahead. You can start
13 your testimony. State your name
14 for the record.

15 REVEREND EVANS: My name
16 is Reverend Stephanie Evans. I
17 want to thank Chairman Thomas,
18 Vice-Chair Landau and
19 Councilmembers Lozada, Phillips,
20 Squilla and Young of the
21 Legislation Oversight Committee for
22 scheduling this hearing on the
23 Vision Zero program.

24 I'm here because I am

1 the mother of Robert Evans, III and
2 a member of Families of Safe
3 Streets and the Bicycle Coalition.
4 This is my fifth year coming before
5 City Council in reference to safe
6 streets. Today, I really want you
7 to see my pain, hear my pain,
8 listen to my pain and change my
9 pain.

10 The Vision Zero program
11 is important because my son Robert
12 is one of the thousands killed
13 since 2016. My son Robert was
14 murdered on January 25, 2020 at
15 12:35 a.m. outside of the 35th
16 Police District at Broad and
17 Champlost Streets. It's been five
18 years since that crash and I am
19 still going to court. The next
20 court date is March 21, 2025.

21 Robert stepped out of
22 his vehicle to get something to
23 eat. Unfortunately, Tyree Evans,
24 not related, happened to be

1 speeding down Broad Street under
2 the influence of drugs and alcohol.
3 Robert went 6 feet in the air. And
4 when he landed, he died instantly.

5 After the crash, Tyree
6 had the audacity to Google
7 vehicular homicide while sitting in
8 his car on Vernon Road. The police
9 confiscated the vehicle within a
10 week. He has been out on bail
11 since 2020 on \$250,000.

12 Profoundly, I do understand it's a
13 constitutional right to the best
14 defense, in this case lawyer
15 Michael Coard. However, Tyree is
16 guilty of murdering my son Robert
17 by vehicular homicide.

18 The detectives went to
19 arrest Tyree, but he was informed
20 that they had to prove he was
21 driving the vehicle. Undeniable
22 evidence has emerged. Now
23 unbeknownst to us, Robert was taken
24 to the morgue because his remains

1 were damaged beyond repair. The
2 mortician wanted to close the
3 casket. However, I refused. I
4 wanted everyone to see and feel
5 what vehicular homicide looked
6 like.

7 To add insult to injury,
8 the City morgue was so crowded they
9 didn't have time to look for my
10 son's remains. We located my son's
11 body several days later after going
12 to different hospitals within the
13 community. Robert was a son, a
14 brother, a uncle, a friend who
15 worked diligently to provide for
16 his family. He had just asked his
17 fiancée to marry him that Thursday
18 and he died that Sunday.

19 He was not a hockey
20 player, he was not a state trooper,
21 but he was my son and he was
22 somebody. My prayer and hope are
23 that no other mother will have to
24 experience the fatality of losing a

1 child to vehicular homicide. And I
2 keep saying vehicular homicide
3 because people say it's an
4 accident. There's no accident when
5 you get behind the wheel of a car
6 and you're under the influence.
7 It's not an accident. It's a
8 crash. And the audacity not to
9 stop to see if he was still alive.

10 I'm here to advocate
11 today to appeal to your civic
12 duties. And I want to remind you I
13 got involved through -- God bless
14 Captain Mark Overwise who got me
15 involved in this. Because when my
16 son died, I've investigated like
17 what happened with the lights, the
18 infrastructure was outdated.

19 I'm appealing to City
20 Council once again to increase
21 funding for traffic calming, speed
22 bumps, daylighting, bicycle lanes
23 and better roads and also to
24 address the issues of the -- I

1 don't know if you all have any
2 power over the court system, but
3 all the postponements for five
4 years doesn't make sense to me.

5 Every time I go to court
6 I have to revisit the pain. Every
7 time I've come before City Council
8 I have to revisit the pain. Every
9 time I go to Harrisburg I have to
10 revisit the pain. Every time I go
11 to Washington I have to revisit the
12 pain because I don't have closure
13 on the court system.

14 I also want to see you
15 improve the light and speed
16 cameras. And I want to thank you
17 all for just advocating and
18 improving what you have thus far.
19 I know this is a journey and I
20 understand that it's a lot of
21 bureaucracy, it's a lot of
22 meetings. However, I still believe
23 in a sister and brotherly love and
24 sisterly affection.

1 I want to advocate for
2 protecting bike lanes on a state
3 level, legalize adding safe bike
4 lanes to more state roads. We need
5 crossing guards, longer pedestrian
6 crossings, traffic cops to slow
7 everything down. And I'm coming to
8 a close. I still believe in the
9 democracy of the city of
10 Philadelphia. Let us work together
11 and continue to create love and
12 legislation to prevent more
13 fatalities.

14 Philadelphia is the City
15 of Brotherly Love and Sisterly
16 Affection. Let us continue to work
17 together for safer streets. After
18 all we're better together, whether
19 it's City Council, community,
20 PennDOT, the Streets Department,
21 the Parking Authority, the Bicycle
22 Coalition, Families for Safe
23 Streets and so many more.

24 I want a special thank

1 you to Mark Overwise and his staff.
2 I want a special thank you to Mayor
3 Cherelle Parker and City Council
4 for signing legislation thus far.
5 I want to thank Nicole Hall because
6 she was a liaison with the District
7 Attorney's Office thus far that has
8 let me down numerous of times,
9 Melody Nelson, a former liaison for
10 the D.A.'s Office. I want to thank
11 Councilman Isaiah Thomas, who when
12 this first happened he began to
13 advocate for safer streets and also
14 Vision Zero.

15 So that's my story. I
16 pray that you hear my pain and
17 listen to my pain and that you see
18 it. I pray that no one else has to
19 experience this. Thank you for the
20 speed bumps and the lights and the
21 cameras on Broad Street. I live
22 off of Roosevelt Boulevard. The
23 last five years I've seen five
24 accidents personally myself where

1 three trucks actually flipped over.

2 I believe that it is working, but

3 we have to work together because I

4 do believe we're better together.

5 (Applause.)

6 MS. JONES-PUGH: Good

7 afternoon, and actually right now

8 good evening. And I appreciate

9 Council seeing us and listening to

10 us and allowing us to be here. My

11 name is Narita Jones-Pugh and my

12 family has been impacted by traffic

13 violence.

14 My son Nyier Cunningham,

15 this is my son right here, was 28

16 years old when he was struck and

17 killed by a tow truck driver while

18 riding his bike. Nyier was two

19 blocks away from home. I live off

20 of 52nd Street. He got killed on

21 52nd and Wyalusing. I'm on

22 Thompson. That's right near there.

23 The date was July 22,

24 2022. He was left to die while the

1 driver fled the scene. Nyier was a
2 musician. He was a martial artist
3 who was also an instructor of both
4 of those. He was a father of two,
5 he was a son, a brother and a
6 friend who was well-loved by many
7 here in Philadelphia and beyond.

8 He was amazing to a lot
9 of people in the community. He was
10 unique. He was thoughtful and
11 gracious to many people. My
12 opinion is terrible as everybody
13 else's. I won't see my son again.
14 It's sad to keep hearing every time
15 you turn on the news somebody keeps
16 getting hit. It almost seems like
17 we can't go a week. And I don't
18 think that I'm exaggerating.

19 So that's all my sad
20 stuff because it's many, it's a
21 lot. But my ask for Vision Zero
22 and Council and the City is for
23 resource-sharing and exposure that
24 many people have asked today. When

1 we came last -- when was that,
2 September, August when we met with
3 Council President -- we talked
4 about messaging, signage. I'm not
5 all over the city so I don't know
6 if it's begun somewhere else and
7 it's changed.

8 But when we do put new
9 traffic patterns up, some signage
10 and messaging would be helpful.
11 Again, I live in West Philly. A
12 couple years ago by the School of
13 the Future off of Parkside and
14 Belmont, new infrastructure was set
15 up for bicycles, a new circle that
16 kind of goes around where the
17 Please Touch Museum and all of that
18 stuff is. Awesome sauce. However,
19 not one notice to the people who
20 drive. I drive.

21 Not any notice to the
22 people -- I don't know because I
23 don't live specifically in that
24 neighborhood but of course, I come

1 out of the park off of Sweet Briar
2 off the Drive, off Girard, off of
3 all of those spots. You come there
4 and you drive -- I'm a person who
5 drives out of habit, which probably
6 a lot of people in the city do. I
7 didn't expect that to be there,
8 that new infrastructure.

9 If it's an evening, I
10 can't see that. It needs to be
11 yellow. To me yellow stands out.
12 Yellow is annoying. Like Cobb's
13 Creek, Cobb's Creek threw up the
14 stuff, the orange and the yellow,
15 and it's like you can't go a couple
16 of feet without those speed bumps
17 coming so you have to slow down.
18 All of those things matter. They
19 are very annoying to people because
20 they're flying, but they are
21 useful, very helpful.

22 And if we could get some
23 of -- not some, a lot of that
24 around the city letting us know

1 that, hey, there's a project coming
2 up. Stop telling -- not stop.
3 Maybe not let people know something
4 one time. People have short
5 attention spans here which we all
6 know. If it's not online, they
7 don't know about it. If you don't
8 come out into the neighborhoods and
9 tell people, we definitely won't
10 know.

11 So when you go to -- the
12 Vision Zero's program is listed on
13 the City of Philadelphia's website.
14 It's listed under programs and then
15 under the Office of Transportation
16 Infrastructure Systems, which I'm
17 going to assume is OTIS, to those
18 who are familiar with the numerous
19 departments of our city government
20 and how they work, it makes perfect
21 sense. But to the average layman,
22 it's a hidden program and
23 unfamiliar department.

24 If it's possible, even a

1 limited time, the top banner on the
2 front page of the City's website,
3 it would be excellent exposure to
4 guide interested individuals to
5 Vision Zero's goals, their work and
6 their objectives, especially in
7 such annual moments like the World
8 Day of Remembrance. It could be
9 really highlighting that.

10 And on that same note, a
11 temporary front page tab or
12 spotlight piece for those times as
13 well would be helpful. If we could
14 just -- don't know how much that
15 cost, what that takes to put out
16 there but it is helpful because
17 it's so tiny, the little
18 hyperlinks. If you're not savvy
19 with the Internet, you're messed
20 up.

21 I'd also like to ask is
22 there any way to engage the public
23 more. I'd like to see more
24 flooding of info to all households.

1 The same way that the alerts are
2 sent out to all residents over our
3 phones and also in the magnitude
4 and urgencies as the flyers and
5 leaflets that assail our homes when
6 anybody's running for election,
7 can't get away from those, but I
8 can't get one piece of information
9 about Vision Zero or any projects
10 that's coming up, what the City has
11 going on, any opportunities. Like
12 you're asking people about the
13 employment and all that, it's hard
14 to know those things if nobody's
15 telling you.

16 Everybody's not on their
17 phone all day. Everybody's not on
18 the Internet. I'm asking lastly if
19 we could advise neighborhoods where
20 there are community centers -- and
21 I know this was brought up, I
22 believe Councilmember Young made
23 mention somewhat to it -- but if
24 they could advise neighborhoods

1 where our community centers or rec
2 centers and the parks about the
3 urgency and the mission of Vision
4 Zero.

5 The neighbors sometimes
6 feel like they have no say and what
7 may be happening in their
8 neighborhoods. Before folks
9 converge to assemble for meetings,
10 people get upset -- when we just
11 did the World Day of Remembrance,
12 we were at Carroll Park.

13 Nice meeting, you know,
14 a couple Councilmembers were there.
15 Jamie and Representative Cephas and
16 several other folks. There was a
17 gentleman that was there walking
18 his dog in the park. He was
19 tripping. He was very upset that
20 there was a large group in his
21 park, in his neighborhood. To him,
22 there had been no traffic
23 fatalities.

24 So we're there. You

1 know, we got a group. Some of us
2 have our shirts on. You know,
3 we're mourning, we're healing. He
4 was so upset that he just kept
5 walking through the crowd back and
6 forth to try to disrupt it because
7 he was like, why are these people
8 here, who are these people in our
9 neighborhood. And just to keep it
10 real, who are these people who
11 don't live in our neighborhood, why
12 are they here, why do they come to
13 our neighborhoods when there's
14 something going on and they don't
15 tell anybody anything. They do
16 something and then they're out.

17 He was so upset that it
18 was like he was about to be
19 violent. I had to call my husband,
20 a couple people -- like somebody up
21 here tripping. The police was
22 there, one cop sitting over on the
23 side. He didn't really engage him
24 because he didn't notice him.

1 State Rep talked to him, and she
2 got him down, brought him on down.

3 State Rep -- Senator
4 Williams was there also. But
5 Senator Cephas, she talked him on
6 down and then he went on home. He
7 went and sat to the side and he's
8 just sitting there like, you know,
9 I don't know if he had some mental
10 health issues, whatever.

11 But the point was he was
12 very upset. Something so minor as,
13 hey, on Sunday there's going to be
14 a thing here in the park. Even if
15 nobody in this neighborhood died,
16 we're still part of the city and we
17 want to blah, blah, blah. He was
18 like, this isn't -- that should be
19 Morris Park, not Carroll Park.

20 What difference does
21 that make what park we're at when
22 we're all here trying to honor
23 people and trying to advise people
24 to slow down and care about other

1 people's family members. So that's
2 what I got. Thank you.

3 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

4 Thank you for your testimony.

5 Did you want to -- oh.

6 MS. BURNET: Hello and
7 good afternoon, everyone. I just
8 want to shout out Chairperson
9 Thomas. I see your J-Alert button.
10 Jasmine and Ayesha couldn't be here
11 today, but I know they sent some
12 testimony. But I just appreciate
13 you continuing to be a strong
14 advocate for helping to reduce
15 hit-and-runs. So thank you and
16 also thank you to all the other
17 Councilmembers that are here and
18 Vice-Chair Landau.

19 My name is Nicole
20 Burnet. I'm the Policy Director
21 for the Bicycle Coalition of
22 Greater Philadelphia, and I work
23 with these amazing women right here
24 with Families for Safe Streets. In

1 2015 we went to the candidate at
2 the time, Jim Kenney, and requested
3 his support of creating a Vision
4 Zero program in Philadelphia.

5 In 2016 after he was
6 elected, he signed an executive
7 order to make Philadelphia a Vision
8 Zero city. As we've talked about,
9 that executive order included a
10 goal of reaching zero fatalities by
11 2030 and setting a goal of 40 miles
12 of high-quality bike lanes by the
13 end of his term.

14 Since the creation of
15 the program, the City has created a
16 robust Office of Transportation
17 planners and bicycle pedestrian
18 coordinators and expanded their
19 work on Complete Streets and now
20 has an Office of Multimodal
21 Planning.

22 Throughout Mayor
23 Kenney's two terms, he advocated
24 for a dedicated budget from the

1 City for Vision Zero. Other budget
2 lines came from automated speed and
3 red light cameras. He also
4 advocated for parking, protected
5 bike lanes and more high-quality
6 bike lanes that separate vehicles
7 from bicycles with physical
8 separation and slow streets that
9 protect all road users, including
10 pedestrians, bicyclists, people
11 waiting for public transportation
12 and drivers alike.

13 Through his budget line,
14 he steadily increased it from 1
15 million each year to 2.5 and ended
16 his administration at 2.5. That
17 particular budget line, as we have
18 mentioned, was cut from 2.5 to 1
19 million with other money being put
20 elsewhere.

21 Part of our
22 recommendations have included basic
23 road maintenance. I know this was
24 already talked about so I'll go

1 quickly. It's in the testimony you
2 should have received. But the
3 Streets Department has historically
4 said that a state of good repair
5 for our roads is to pave at least
6 131 miles each year.

7 As Vice-Chair Landau
8 mentioned, we've consistently been
9 paving around 60 since 2019. We
10 did hit 84, but it has gone down.
11 But for more information, we
12 haven't hit 131 miles since 2002,
13 which can give you a sense of the
14 state of repair of our roads.

15 I say all this because
16 basic road maintenance is a crucial
17 part of road safety. It is crucial
18 to make sure that there is
19 equitable share of maintenance
20 across all neighborhoods in the
21 city. According to Councilmember
22 Gauthier's Just Services Campaign,
23 there's a clear correlation between
24 road safety, gun violence and other

1 quality-of-life concerns. And we
2 often get emails, phone calls and
3 complaints from neighbors outside
4 of Center City, from North Philly,
5 Southwest, West Philly not only
6 complaining that they don't have
7 traffic calming, but that they
8 don't have lines on the roads.
9 They don't have crosswalks.

10 I have been working with
11 Heritage CDC after Dominique Jones
12 was killed at 25th and Diamond, and
13 they had applied for a slow zone
14 that would include that section of
15 Strawberry Mansion, and they didn't
16 get it. So when we talk about
17 adding \$5 million to this one
18 budget line, that could have added
19 a slow zone in that area.

20 Mayor Parker's executive
21 order set a goal of improvements on
22 every mile of the High Injury
23 Network. This has been mentioned
24 as well. I want to know what those

1 improvements look like. I want to
2 know if they will put the safety of
3 vulnerable road users over the
4 speed of vehicles. And I ask that
5 Council continue to advocate for
6 the importance of increased funding
7 for paving alongside, not instead
8 of, Vision Zero budget so that
9 improvements can be made as the
10 roads are being paved and all in
11 order to not only save on cost but
12 to save lives.

13 Another thing we can do
14 is to empower the Streets
15 Department and OTIS to repeal the
16 Bike Lane ordinance passed in 2012
17 that added additional
18 administrative barriers to building
19 out the bike lane network. I see
20 this is very similar to
21 Councilmember Phillips -- kudos to
22 him for his bill -- that put the
23 school traffic-calming bill to
24 allow for more speed bumps around

1 schools without having an ordinance
2 passed by Council.

3 It gave Streets and OTIS
4 the power to use the data they had
5 and work directly with the
6 communities and to build out the
7 bike network. So it makes sense
8 for the City, and it's not
9 piecemeal which is another
10 complaint we hear from people who
11 ride bikes but also people who
12 don't ride bikes.

13 And something that is
14 often lost in the conversation
15 about traffic calming, we talk a
16 lot about speed bumps. It's like
17 one of the number one requests that
18 the Streets Department receives
19 from people all over the city. But
20 bike lanes themselves are traffic
21 calming.

22 They shrink the size of
23 the road which makes people go
24 slower. You can add things like

1 curb protection or planters and
2 help with the turning radius and
3 all the things that we just talked
4 about. But being able to say bike
5 lanes in the same conversation as
6 speed bumps is important to
7 educating our neighbors and showing
8 them that these aren't -- these are
9 solutions to our problems.

10 And it's important when
11 we're talking about changing
12 drivers' behavior. Like I said,
13 we're often met with this argument
14 that bicyclists don't deserve
15 protected spaces because they
16 themselves don't observe the rules
17 of the road. Despite countless
18 examples of drivers running red
19 lights, stop signs, making illegal
20 right turns, speeding, passing
21 bicyclists illegally, bicyclists
22 continue to be made the bad guy.

23 There are a set of
24 infrastructure solutions that

1 Council could advocate for to
2 improve both bicyclists and driver
3 behavior. And the number one
4 solution is protected and separated
5 bike lanes. When there is a safe
6 place to ride, people ride there.
7 When it's unsafe on the road, the
8 cyclist will move illegally through
9 cars to get in front of vehicles in
10 order to make themselves visible.

11 As someone who
12 frequently rides throughout the
13 city, I deal with constant
14 harassment from drivers who don't
15 abide by the law themselves. For
16 example, in Pennsylvania bicyclists
17 over the age of 12 have to ride on
18 the road. If there is no bike lane
19 or adequate shoulder, the cyclist
20 has the right to ride in the middle
21 of the street.

22 There is also a 4-foot
23 passing law. If there is not at
24 least 4 feet of space between the

1 driver and the bicyclist, the
2 driver cannot pass. Many drivers
3 will speed up or cut me off and
4 less than a foot to spare while
5 yelling at me to get off the road
6 or get on the sidewalk.

7 This is all being
8 said -- like every person in this
9 room I am also a pedestrian. I
10 understand the frustrations of
11 encountering people riding bikes on
12 the sidewalks. If this is a
13 concern of yours too, I implore you
14 to support creating a new goal of
15 building an additional 40 miles of
16 bike lanes. Create a goal of
17 daylighting intersections around
18 the High Injury Network and help to
19 advocate for legalization of
20 parking protected bike lanes on
21 state roads, something that is only
22 allowed in a restrictive pilot in
23 which we've already met the cap of.

24 As you know, PennDOT

1 owns state roads and ultimately
2 decides how they will be improved.
3 Consistently, state roads are some
4 of the most dangerous in the city
5 with more than 60 percent of all
6 traffic fatalities occurring on
7 them. Too often we are told that
8 we can't make these roads safer.
9 I've been in so many meetings where
10 people have said we can't make
11 Broad Street safer because people
12 need to drive where they need to
13 go, and these roads go through
14 neighborhoods. They're not just
15 roads to get onto highways.
16 They run through our
17 commercial corridors. And yet
18 we're just supposed to get people
19 through them. And it's incredibly
20 frustrating to just hear over and
21 over again that we can't do this.
22 Like Parkside -- like 52nd Street,
23 I think, is a state road. Also,
24 there's so many -- like, yeah,

1 there's so many roads.

2 I was just out -- so

3 Jayanna Powell's picture is up

4 here. We put out a memorial plaque

5 last week. It's at the corner of

6 63rd and Lansdowne. These are two

7 state roads. There's a school two

8 blocks away. There's no crossing

9 guard. There's a daycare center.

10 It's impossible for me to get

11 across the street by the time that

12 the light changes.

13 There's so much that

14 PennDOT is not doing to improve our

15 roads, and I want our

16 Councilmembers to have

17 conversations with them and

18 advocate to make your District

19 safer. I went a little off-script

20 there.

21 These run, like I said,

22 through our districts, around our

23 schools, rec centers, shopping

24 corridors and more and they create

1 serious hazards to residents, but
2 specifically for residents in
3 underserved neighborhoods who again
4 don't have line striping, don't
5 have basic sidewalks.

6 This Vision Zero program
7 can work and it has worked in
8 cities all across the country, all
9 across the world, but they won't
10 work unless the City and state work
11 together to seriously prioritize
12 them through funding, community
13 engagement and updated
14 administrative processes. Thank
15 you.

16 (Applause.)

17 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

18 Thank you for your testimony.
19 We're going to move on to public
20 comment so we can allow for other
21 folks who have been waiting to
22 communicate their story.

23 Mr. Clerk, can you
24 please call the -- Councilmember,

1 did you --

2 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: I

3 just have a quick comment. I'm

4 sorry. I just want to agree with

5 some of the panelists particularly

6 on Parkside Avenue. We put the

7 nice roundabouts in. You know, it

8 slows traffic down. But when you

9 look at those roundabouts, you see

10 tire marks through the roundabouts

11 because people don't know they're

12 there, right, particularly at

13 nighttime.

14 And so, I do think

15 signage as we are putting in place

16 this new infrastructure changes, we

17 have to make sure that the public

18 knows that these changes are

19 happening and occurring because

20 everyone doesn't drive on those

21 streets every single day so they

22 just need to have notice. But

23 Parkside Avenue, particularly

24 through the park is where I drive

1 every day because my son goes to
2 school out there. So I see the
3 changes that the roundabouts have
4 created. It does slow traffic
5 down. But if you're not aware of
6 what's going on, you're going to
7 roll right through it and cause
8 even more damage.

9 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

10 Thank you for the comments.

11 Councilmember Landau.

12 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:

13 And to those of you who shared the
14 loss of your loved ones, we are so
15 sorry. May their loss, may their
16 memories be a blessing and a
17 catalyst of change.

18 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

19 Thank you, colleagues, and I
20 couldn't agree with you both any
21 more.

22 Mr. Wilcox, can you
23 please call the first person to
24 testify for public comment.

1 THE CLERK: Yes,

2 Mr. Chair.

3 Could Steven Wigrizer.

4 (Witnesses approached

5 Witness table.)

6 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: So

7 while Steven is coming up, I do

8 want to take a moment to commend

9 similar to what Councilmember

10 Landau said to the last panel. But

11 I especially want to let folks know

12 that I remember when Dr. Evans,

13 Reverend Evans, went through what

14 she went through.

15 And when we talk about

16 the success that we've had as it

17 relates to technology, specifically

18 a new truck that we were able to

19 get for the police department, that

20 is directly related to Reverend

21 Evans, her advocacy, her

22 persistence and her agreeing to be

23 vulnerable and share her story with

24 everybody.

1 So for the folks who
2 don't understand the importance of
3 this, it is very important. It
4 moves the needle. People's lived
5 experiences often dictate how
6 members advocate. And understand
7 when you come down here, you
8 testify, you share your story. It
9 does matter. And Reverend Evans is
10 a great example of how City dollars
11 were able to be moved because she
12 was willing to be vulnerable and
13 fight the good fight.

14 So with that being said,
15 can you move on to the next person
16 to testify. And thank you,
17 Reverend Evans, and thank you as
18 well. Thank you both. Thank all
19 three of you for sharing your story
20 and for being vulnerable. It does
21 make a difference. I promise you
22 it does.

23 Who's next to testify?

24 THE CLERK: Seeing that

1 Steven Wigrizer is not here, could
2 we hear from Rich Herskowitz -- oh,
3 sorry. And could also Rich
4 Herskowitz and Kim Williams go to
5 the stand.

6 (Witnesses approached
7 Witness table.)

8 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: So
9 we're going to try to -- if you can
10 try to -- yep. Thank you. Thank
11 you. You got to start by stating
12 your name for the record.

13 MR. WIGRIZER: I will.
14 Let me just make sure the
15 microphone works. Thank you. My
16 name is Steven Wigrizer. And this
17 is Kim Williams; is that correct?

18 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes.

19 MR. WIGRIZER: Okay, and
20 Richard Herskowitz. Let me just
21 briefly introduce myself. I'm a
22 lifelong Philadelphian. I was born
23 and raised in this city. I own a
24 home on Pine Street west of Broad.

1 I am a Board member on a nonprofit
2 known as Friends of Pine and
3 Spruce. I don't know if Council is
4 familiar with this nonprofit.

5 Along with the many
6 people who have spoken here today,
7 we are very concerned about public
8 safety, including the safety of
9 pedestrians and motorists and
10 cyclists and motorcyclists. We are
11 also focused on the rights of
12 individuals who are homeowners
13 along the Pine and Spruce Street
14 corridors that run from river to
15 river. And I am here today to
16 comment upon some of the things
17 that I've heard and some of the
18 goals of our organization.

19 Very interesting to me
20 in listening to the comments of
21 individuals who have expressed
22 their views and told you about what
23 their organizations and advocacy
24 groups are doing. There has been

1 reference to interaction between
2 and among the various advocacy
3 groups. There's been reference to
4 interaction with City Council.

5 There's been a lot of
6 reference to interaction. But what
7 you have not heard at all is
8 interaction with the residents of
9 the streets where protective
10 measures are sought to be placed,
11 along with the budget request to
12 make that a financial possibility.

13 And that is precisely
14 why this nonprofit was started
15 several months ago because the
16 residents, the homeowners, those
17 who have chosen to invest in the
18 city of Philadelphia and who
19 provide at least a part of the
20 funding for programs like Vision
21 Zero -- and I understand that there
22 are federal funds available as
23 well -- have felt ignored, have
24 felt to be not part of this

1 process. And we believe that all
2 of the stakeholders need to be
3 heard. And so, we ask that going
4 forward we have a seat at the
5 table, that our concerns be heard.

6 Let me tell you what we
7 have been told in the past. Many
8 of our members were homeowners long
9 before anyone knew what a bike lane
10 was, right. When bike lanes were
11 introduced, we were told that we
12 would still be able to access our
13 properties. We'd be able to pull
14 over in the bike lanes. And some
15 of you may remember the promise
16 made by the two previous
17 administrations that if we had our
18 flashers on, we would be able to
19 pull over in the bike lane, by the
20 curb so that we could drop off our
21 children or pick up our children.
22 We could offload groceries and
23 other supplies, right. We could
24 pick up senior citizens, and we

1 ourselves as senior citizens could
2 easily go into our homes, and those
3 of us who are disabled would have
4 the ability to get into a car and
5 exit a car in a safe manner, right,
6 without having to stop in the
7 middle of the street. These were
8 promises made to us, which we have
9 relied upon for a number of years,
10 which is one reason that we have
11 been relatively quiet until now.

12 Those promises
13 respectfully in our view were
14 breached when this body passed an
15 ordinance prohibiting stopping in
16 bike zones. No exceptions, signed
17 into law by our Mayor, right. We
18 look at that as a very serious
19 breach of trust. We look at that
20 as a broken promise, right. And it
21 impacts us every day.

22 I went out on Pine
23 Street where I live to get a sense
24 as to who is stopping in the bike

1 zones. And I submit to you that
2 this ordinance is absolutely
3 nonenforceable. And what it's
4 going to do is lead to additional
5 injuries and additional problems
6 from all of the stakeholders.

7 What do I mean by that?
8 When I took a survey, I saw postal
9 service trucks stopped in the bike
10 zone. Are you going to ticket the
11 federal government? Is that going
12 to have any effect? I don't know
13 that you can even do that under the
14 Supremacy Clause, right, but I
15 submit that creates problems.

16 FedEx trucks every day
17 parked in the bike zones. UPS
18 trucks and City agencies. PGW, I
19 had a gas leak in my house, right.
20 Their truck needs to be at the curb
21 right in the bike zone. I'm on the
22 north side of Pine Street, right.
23 They need access to the truck.
24 PECO trucks are there routinely,

1 Water Department trucks. I've seen
2 a vehicle from Licenses &
3 Inspections and delivery trucks.
4 We have businesses and we have
5 restaurants and bodegas up and down
6 spruce and Pine Street, right.
7 They need supplies, right.

8 And every once in a
9 while a truck arrives and then
10 leaves and another truck comes.
11 But typically they come in mass,
12 right. And they have to park in
13 the bike zone, right.

14 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:
15 Mr. Wigrizer, are the other members
16 of the -- are you all going to sign
17 up for public testimony as well?
18 Are you speaking or are you
19 speaking on behalf of everybody
20 here?

21 MR. WIGRIZER: I am
22 speaking on my own behalf and as a
23 Board member of FOPS, Friends of
24 Pine and Spruce.

1 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: So
2 at some point we're going to have
3 to ask you to wrap up your
4 testimony to allow us to give a
5 platform to the other members of
6 the board so they can have a couple
7 minutes to speak --

8 MR. WIGRIZER: You know
9 what, let me point to one very
10 important thing, right. When you
11 advocate on behalf of a single
12 interest, sometimes the proposals
13 don't benefit from the input that
14 was available by consultation with
15 all stakeholders like the
16 residents.

17 Case in point, we've
18 heard a number of people advocate
19 for concrete barriers along the
20 bike lanes. Now, I live on the
21 west side of Pine Street, right.
22 I'm not sure that Council is aware
23 there are a number of homes on
24 the -- I'm sorry, the north side of

1 the block, right. There are a
2 number of homes with garages,
3 right. In order to access those
4 garages, you have to travel east on
5 Pine Street and then you have to
6 turn left across the bike lane to
7 get into those garages right now.

8 I have been practicing
9 law for 45 years. And by the way,
10 I've been representing individuals
11 who have been hurt and killed in
12 the kinds of accidents that we have
13 heard about today, and we are very
14 sympathetic to their cause, right.
15 And I think that the no-stopping
16 zone issue creates significant
17 Americans with Disability concerns
18 and issues. But more importantly,
19 it's clear to me that if you deny
20 somebody access to their garage,
21 that constitutes an
22 unconstitutional and illegal taking
23 of property, right.

24 Bottom line is this: We

1 have not been consulted by many of
2 the advocacy groups here. Our
3 opinion has not been heard, right.
4 We don't want to see this resolved
5 in the courts. We believe City
6 Council has traditionally been a
7 forum where differences of opinions
8 can be heard, negotiations and
9 discussions can take place. And we
10 would certainly be amenable to
11 discussions that foster a
12 resolution of some of our issues
13 under the guidance and auspices of
14 this chamber. Thank you.

15 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

16 Thank you. I'm going to ask that
17 you all limit your comments to
18 about two minutes. Public comment
19 is only supposed to be about two
20 minutes. I understand that your
21 organization didn't get an
22 opportunity to communicate some of
23 the concerns so I allowed you to go
24 a little bit longer. And I

1 understand and I hear your concerns
2 and we will be committed to working
3 together to figure out how we find
4 some common ground around some of
5 the solutions that you made.

6 But let me just put one
7 thing on the record for the public.
8 We would not build a bike lane that
9 prevents someone from getting in
10 their home. That's not a thing.
11 We're not going to do that so we
12 don't have to really worry about
13 that. All right. So that's not a
14 problem.

15 If you can state your
16 name for the record, begin with
17 your testimony and we still have to
18 get to another couple people as
19 well too.

20 MR. WILLIAMS: So good
21 afternoon. My name is Kim
22 Williams. I'm also a supporter of
23 Friends of Pine and Spruce, better
24 known as FOPS. FOPS is a 501(c)(4)

1 organization representing hundreds
2 of residents who are outraged about
3 what the City is doing and
4 proposing for Pine and Spruce
5 Streets.

6 My wife and I have been
7 residents of Center City for over
8 20 years and we currently live in
9 Society Hill. I am a retired CEO
10 of a not-for-profit organization
11 that develops, owns and operates
12 senior living communities in the
13 Philadelphia area. FOPS supports
14 the concept of Vision Zero, but we
15 believe that the City has strayed
16 from its actual mission, and City
17 Council oversight is greatly
18 needed.

19 Please allow me to
20 explain. In the City's
21 publications about Vision Zero over
22 the years, the City has
23 consistently stated its policy of
24 focusing its resources on the High

1 Injury Network or the 20 percent of
2 streets in Philadelphia that
3 account for 80 percent of the
4 traffic-related deaths and serious
5 injuries.

6 As the City states in
7 its Vision Zero 2024 annual report
8 on Page 4.1 and I quote, "Focus
9 should be on the High Injury
10 Network where safety improvements
11 are most needed. If you want to
12 save the most people, you go to
13 where most of the harm is
14 occurring." And FOPS strongly
15 supports that policy. But it is
16 wrong, and I repeat wrong, to spend
17 City resources on Pine and Spruce
18 in Society Hill.

19 In my neighborhood
20 Society Hill, there is no part of
21 any street that is on the High
22 Injury Network. Yet the City
23 spends a great amount of resources
24 there, and that is wrong. That is

1 not saving any lives, let alone the
2 most lives. And it is making
3 safety in Philadelphia less
4 equitable.

5 For the City to spend
6 its finite resources on blocks that
7 are not on the High Injury Network,
8 on blocks like ours in Society
9 Hills that are relatively safe,
10 means that you're depriving the
11 communities who actually have the
12 most dangerous streets. You're
13 denying the areas that need the
14 resources the most. This
15 misallocation of resources causes
16 harm. By diverting money away from
17 the most dangerous streets, you are
18 allowing unnecessary deaths and
19 serious injuries on those streets.

20 City Council should
21 provide oversight on this and we,
22 therefore, support the pending
23 resolution. We implore you to have
24 OTIS follow the City's stated

1 policies. Thank you.

2 MR. HERSKOWITZ: Members
3 of Council and staff, thank you for
4 allowing us to speak today. And
5 also, I've learned a lot from the
6 other people who have spoken before
7 us and I see that we have much more
8 in common than separate us, and I
9 think you see it also.

10 And I was very happy to
11 hear you, Councilman Thomas, say
12 that you're not trying to take away
13 our access. Because as of now, in
14 my opinion, it's illegal for the
15 City to remove the access to my --

16 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: I'm
17 sorry. I thought you were going to
18 do it. You got to state your name
19 for the record.

20 MR. HERSKOWITZ: Oh, I'm
21 sorry. Richard Herskowitz. I'm an
22 architect and a planner in
23 Philadelphia, okay, also a member
24 of FOPS. The result of the

1 no-stopping and proposed barriers
2 when elderly people like myself, my
3 wife was handicapped, the young
4 family up the street who need to
5 load their baby, my access to Uber,
6 the unloading of groceries right in
7 front of my house, all which make
8 it unsafe or impossible if they
9 were not allowed to stop there,
10 especially if they put in more
11 barriers -- especially if they put
12 in concrete barriers it'll be
13 impossible. The streets will be
14 gridlocked, et cetera, et cetera,
15 so he said it all. Mayor Nutter
16 promised in writing that we would
17 have 20-minute loading. That was
18 in 2009.

19 In 2018 they shifted the
20 bike lane to the south side of
21 Spruce, and that promise was
22 repeated by Mayor Kenney's
23 administration and by Councilman
24 Squilla, who's not here right now,

1 okay, and it was in writing. It's
2 not legal for you to break those
3 mandates. And I think almost
4 you're saying you agree that we
5 should be able to have access
6 there. We're not trying to take
7 the street over, but we don't want
8 other people to take our street
9 away from us, period.

10 It's time to give a
11 little bit more priority to the
12 safety of the residents because
13 we're the residents, and we have a
14 hard time getting to where we need
15 to get to. That's all. We can't
16 put a wheelchair in. We can't get
17 a wheelchair out if we're in the
18 middle of the street and there's a
19 bike lane there. We agree.

20 And let me just say, as
21 an architect it's a 26-foot street.
22 That's from curb to curb. That's
23 one parking lane, one driving lane,
24 a protection lane and a bike lane.

1 There's not enough room to do it
2 all. Mike Carroll agrees we can't
3 have it. We need 10 feet more.
4 And for 342 years, we haven't had
5 that extra 10 feet. It's the Old
6 City that we're dealing with, and
7 that's what we have.

8 There are other options
9 which we have not talked about, one
10 of which is a very important one,
11 which is that City Council, Mayor
12 Parker, Mr. Carroll who is very
13 (inaudible) to this, could create
14 more public awareness by demanding
15 that the main TV stations start a
16 public advocacy campaign for all of
17 what we're talking about today.

18 In other words, how do
19 you control these cars. They want
20 to do it with physical barriers.
21 You want to do it with lights, you
22 want to do it with that. But you
23 could do it in another way, which
24 is to say get them together and

1 utilize the media, show what's
2 wrong today, how it could be
3 improved and how the improvement
4 works.

5 For instance, that
6 accident on Frankford Avenue where
7 a poor man was killed, a bicyclist
8 was killed by somebody at night on
9 a rainy night. It turned out that
10 he didn't have his lights on. It
11 would be nice if the stations would
12 be saying, what happened in that
13 accident, what was the reason for
14 it and how we could improve it.
15 That kind of public activity, it
16 doesn't cost the thing for the
17 city. It takes a certain attitude
18 by the Council and by the Mayor and
19 by OTIS to get with the TV stations
20 and give them a job to teach and
21 educate. Education will work.
22 Okay.

23 The city is -- he's
24 already said the High Injury.

1 Okay. So the other piece of this
2 is that Council should mandate safe
3 operating equipment for the pedal
4 bikes, ebikes and escooters. There
5 is no legislation for these things
6 in the state or the city. We need
7 more of that. There is no reason
8 these vehicles are not licensed and
9 required to have front and rear
10 lights, bells, rearview mirrors and
11 side reflectors and follow traffic
12 laws.

13 I've done that. I rode
14 for 40 years in the city. I had
15 all those things. I was never hit.
16 I never had an accident. I think
17 that's important. The other thing
18 is I met with the City Streets
19 Department about lighting. There
20 is a need, a great need, for
21 lighting at intersections. You
22 heard it by all these other people.
23 It's \$10,000 a pole. They're
24 trying wherever they can with the

1 5G network antennas that they're
2 putting at corners to get them to
3 put lights in. But we need more
4 light at intersections. We need to
5 have pedestrians lit there. And I
6 think that's it.

7 The other one piece is
8 that the City really has no traffic
9 plan for the increased gridlock
10 that a lot of these bike lanes can
11 create, and we need comprehensive
12 planning. I'm old enough to
13 remember when we had comprehensive
14 planning, and we don't have it
15 today. Thank you very much.

16 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:
17 Thank you. We appreciate it, and
18 we'll be sure to follow up with the
19 organization as we go into budget
20 negotiations so we can hear your
21 concerns. No one should come
22 before City Council and say nobody
23 talked to us. That's 100 percent
24 not right.

1 So we'll make sure that
2 we follow up and have that dialogue
3 and continue to talk about what we
4 need to do to make sure that
5 Philadelphians are safe. So thank
6 you very much.

7 Mr. Clerk, can you
8 please call the next panel to come
9 testify -- I'm sorry. I'm sorry.
10 Mr. Clerk, please call the next
11 witness to come provide public
12 comment.

13 THE CLERK: Yes. Could
14 Jay Borowski, Matthew Jones, Peter
15 Furth and Jonathan Kraus, please
16 come to the stand.

17 (Witnesses approached
18 Witness table.)

19 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: So
20 if everybody can try your best to
21 condense your public comment today.
22 You all are the last four people,
23 so we want to try to be as
24 efficient as possible and have a

1 little sensitivity for our Tech
2 team as well as our Chief Clerk --
3 I mean, our Chief Clerks and our
4 Sergeant-at-Arms. Whoever wants to
5 go first, just start with your name
6 and proceed with your testimony.

7 MR. BOROWSKI: Sure.

8 Some of my thunder was stolen by
9 one of the prior speakers so
10 that'll shorten my bit.

11 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: I'm
12 sorry. What did you say?

13 MR. BOROWSKI: Oh, I was
14 saying somebody stole my thunder
15 and much of what I was going to
16 say, so you're lucky on the time
17 issue.

18 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Oh,
19 okay. Well, thank you.

20 MR. BOROWSKI: Thank
21 you, Councilmembers, for the
22 opportunity to speak today. My
23 name is Jay Borowski. I am a long-
24 time resident of Society Hill and

1 also a bicycle commuter on Spruce
2 and Pine for over 25 years. I'm
3 here to express my deep concern
4 regarding OTIS, either recent or
5 soon-to-be planned proposal to seek
6 an additional \$5 million to install
7 a physical barrier on Spruce and
8 Pine through Center City. This
9 expenditure strays from the core
10 principles and values of the Vision
11 Zero plan and disregards the voices
12 of the local community.

13 Without going into too
14 much detail, OTIS without any
15 participation from the neighbors
16 affected on Spruce and Pine decided
17 that they were going to recommend
18 the installation of a physical
19 barrier throughout Center City on
20 Spruce and Pine.

21 The current proposal,
22 because it diverges from going
23 after the High Injury Network,
24 because as it was already stated

1 the roads in Society Hill are not
2 on the High Injury Network. They
3 never have been to date. And what
4 I'd like to introduce on the
5 record, if possible, is a letter
6 from Jim Kenney that was written
7 during his tenure to the then head
8 of the Bicycle Coalition, because I
9 think the principles that he
10 espoused in there when referencing
11 their request for a protected bike
12 lane, strikes the core of what's
13 going on here with respect to
14 Society Hill.

15 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Sir,
16 I'm sorry. You're not going to
17 read the whole letter, are you?

18 MR. BOROWSKI: Oh, no.

19 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:
20 Okay. All right. Because we
21 just --

22 MR. BOROWSKI: Just
23 snippets, but I would like to at
24 least introduce it in the record.

1 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

2 Absolutely, 100 percent.

3 MR. BOROWSKI: He said

4 in terms of responding to the

5 Bicycle Coalition, too often

6 residents are pitted against bike

7 lane supporters. That's precisely

8 what's happened here with OTIS.

9 They came to the community saying

10 that they're going to recommend the

11 installation of a physical barrier

12 on Spruce and Pine without any

13 input whatsoever from the

14 neighbors, anyone who's affected by

15 this.

16 Only now they're

17 engaging with the neighbors, but

18 they've already made up their mind.

19 There's been no dialogue here.

20 There's no imposition of other

21 viewpoints. For example, I'm a

22 bicyclist. I actually think that

23 installing on those particular

24 roads a physical barrier creates

1 greater dangers for me as a
2 bicyclist than not having one at
3 all. But they are not listening to
4 anyone else's perspective and
5 they're not welcoming it.

6 In addition to that,
7 this, the installation here almost
8 assures that money is going to be
9 diverted that should be spent in
10 the High Injury Network. I happen
11 to agree with what was said by the
12 Bicycle Coalition as well as the
13 Philly Bike advocacy when they were
14 testifying earlier, money should be
15 spent on the High Injury Network.
16 Yet OTIS has decided on its own
17 violating the tenets of the High
18 Injury Network and the Vision Zero
19 program to divert money that
20 they're going to be requesting to
21 be spent in areas that are not on
22 the High Injury Network and don't
23 pose a danger to the community, and
24 as a result that will be millions

1 of dollars that could be otherwise
2 spent on the High Injury Network
3 preventing deaths, known deaths,
4 because the whole point of the High
5 Injury Network was to identify
6 those areas that are likely to lead
7 to injury and potential death.

8 What I'm requesting here
9 is that this Committee in its
10 oversight capacity review what's
11 going on with OTIS and why they're
12 deviating from the
13 responsibilities, the priorities of
14 the High Injury Network and the
15 Vision Zero program to install
16 physical barriers in areas of the
17 city that are not on the High
18 Injury Network. And --

19 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: So
20 what we'll do -- we hear you on
21 public comment. We'll get a
22 statement from OTIS to explain why
23 did they choose this area and what
24 the thought process was behind it,

1 and we'll be sure to share with the
2 community, the organizations and
3 the District Councilperson who is
4 Councilmember Squilla and Council
5 President Johnson. Is that good
6 enough?

7 MR. BOROWSKI: That's as
8 much as I could hope for from this
9 body.

10 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:
11 Thank you very much. We'll get
12 that to you as soon as possible.
13 Can you just leave your name and
14 information and we'll get that,
15 we'll make sure you get that.

16 State your name for the
17 record.

18 MR. KRAUS: My name is
19 Jonathan Kraus. I live in South
20 Philadelphia in Councilmember
21 Squilla's District. People don't
22 need a bike or a car or a bus.
23 People simply need a mode of
24 transportation. And our design

1 environment dictates how people
2 choose to get around. People
3 deserve to choose their mode of
4 transportation and not fear for
5 their safety.

6 Vision Zero funds
7 infrastructure that saves lives,
8 making narrow streets where people
9 inherently drive slowly, adding
10 bump-outs to shorten pedestrian
11 crossing distances, adding concrete
12 to bike lanes to protect vulnerable
13 road users. Vision Zero
14 understands that people are people
15 and we make mistakes. But the
16 program drives us to design an
17 environment where when people do
18 make mistakes, they are not fatal.

19 A safe network doesn't
20 let people die because someone is
21 driving while tired or distracted
22 or drunk. My safety and mortality
23 should not depend on the
24 politeness, the attentiveness or

1 the sobriety of others. It should
2 be guaranteed by the infrastructure
3 that we choose to design. Thank
4 you.

5 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

6 Thank you for your comments. Thank
7 you for your testimony and thank
8 you for your patience, sir. Very
9 much appreciated.

10 MR. JONES: Well, first
11 I'd like to say very well said. I
12 love your speech, absolutely. So
13 my name is Matthew Jones. I am a
14 resident of City Council District
15 5, specifically on Arch Street and
16 Broad Street, so making me your
17 neighbors, neighbors of the City
18 Council itself.

19 I'm also a frequent user
20 of the Spruce, Pine and 13th Street
21 bike lanes. I use them all the
22 time because a bicycle,
23 particularly an ebike or scooter,
24 depending on what I'm feeling like,

1 are my main mode of transportation.
2 I sold my car when I moved to the
3 city last March of last year as a
4 method of reaching my financial
5 goals, of paying off my student
6 loans and buying my first property,
7 which I plan to buy in the city of
8 Philadelphia. I am a future
9 Philadelphia homeowner.

10 And so, being able to
11 get around the city without having
12 to spend thousands of dollars on a
13 car has granted me more financial
14 security than I have had since the
15 beginning of the pandemic. On top
16 of the financial benefits, swapping
17 my car for an ebike has saved me
18 enormous amount of time getting
19 around the city. Due to
20 Philadelphia's layout and density,
21 it is far more convenient to get
22 around the city, get groceries, do
23 whatever I need to do on an ebike
24 or a scooter or a cargo bike, which

1 can load groceries just as well as
2 any car.

3 Unless you plan to
4 bulldoze the entire city, which
5 tragically happened to so many
6 American cities, that's why I love
7 Philadelphia because it's one of
8 the few cities that largely
9 survives in this pre-war state,
10 it's never going to be more
11 convenient to use a car than it
12 would be a scooter or just simply
13 walk or use public transportation.

14 People often times have
15 a misconception that biking is just
16 a hobby or a form of exercise when
17 it's so much more than that. It's
18 a practical way to get around
19 density and can be a great
20 financial relief for many of our
21 low-income residents. But just
22 because it's the most convenient
23 way doesn't mean it's the most safe
24 currently, as I found out last

1 Wednesday when I was hit by a car
2 on 15th and JFK.

3 Now, luckily the car
4 stopped just in time leaving me
5 only with a very bad bruise and a
6 bad cut on my right leg. But if he
7 had not stopped and hit the brakes
8 just one or two seconds later, I'd
9 be either in the hospital or dead
10 or on one of those signs in front
11 of your desk.

12 And so, that is what
13 made me come here because it made
14 me realize how badly the City needs
15 to design safe infrastructure. We
16 cannot rely, as the previous
17 speaker said, on the politeness of
18 drivers. Because if they can get
19 away with it, they will. And
20 that's why I'm asking the City
21 Council to fully invest in Vision
22 Zero, the full \$5 million project.
23 And not only to add concrete
24 barriers to the Spruce and Pine

1 Streets, but to add more of those
2 concrete barriers.

3 I was just in
4 Washington, D.C. last week, and I
5 am envious of how much they have
6 done. It doesn't even have to be
7 very something very obstructive.
8 It can be just little concrete
9 pillars or if the residents are
10 concerned with their access to
11 their garage, we can build a little
12 gap for them to access that. And
13 just having those two pillars there
14 not blocking their garage would do
15 so much to block cars if there's a
16 drunk driver on the road or
17 anything like that. So that's
18 really all I have to say, and thank
19 you for letting me speak.

20 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:
21 Thank you for your advocacy and
22 thank you for your patience. Very
23 much appreciate it.

24 MR. JONES: No problem,

1 Councilman.

2 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Last
3 but of course not least.

4 MR. FURTH: Last but not
5 least hopefully. Hi. My name is
6 Peter Furth. I am a resident of
7 Councilman Squilla's District. In
8 1983 I was a young engineer working
9 for a chemical company in
10 Southeastern Pennsylvania in the
11 Corporate Safety Department. And
12 my job was to calculate the
13 probabilities of an uncontrolled
14 release better known as an
15 explosion, and not only that but
16 what the probability of that
17 explosion or those explosions had
18 or what the probabilities were that
19 they would potentially kill
20 somebody.

21 And then on top of that,
22 we layered in if the probability
23 was too high what could we engineer
24 into the system to reduce that

1 probability. And on top of that
2 was the financial aspect of it, was
3 that a good financial return. So
4 if the remediation cost more than
5 saving a life, they wouldn't
6 necessarily do it. They would try
7 to figure out a different way to do
8 that.

9 So in order to do that,
10 I had to ask my boss back then
11 what's the value of a human life.
12 In order to do this calculation, I
13 have to know what am I calculating
14 against. And he said, oh, our
15 number is \$6.7 million. This was
16 1983.

17 So anyway, the important
18 thing is if you take that \$6.7
19 million in 1983 and adjust it for
20 inflation, that's about \$20 million
21 today. I don't think any of the
22 families of the loved ones that we
23 see here would trade \$20 million
24 for their loved one. But if we

1 take the numbers that we heard
2 today, that 120 people are killed
3 in Philadelphia every year, we have
4 100 projects in the pipelines to
5 make things safer and we just
6 bumped out the goal of having zero
7 fatalities of 2050, why are we only
8 talking about \$5 million in this.
9 We should be talking about a whole
10 lot more. The return on investment
11 to our society for every life we
12 save is at least \$20 million.
13 That's all I have to say. Thank
14 you.

15 (Applause.)

16 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: If
17 you don't mind me saying, well
18 worth the wait, sir. Thank you
19 very much. Very much appreciate
20 it.

21 There being no further
22 questions from members of the
23 Committee and no other witnesses to
24 testify, I ask is there anyone else

1 present in the hearing whose name
2 we failed to call and that wishes
3 to offer some type of comment on
4 today's resolution being
5 considered?

6 (No response.)

7 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

8 Hearing none, I want to say thank
9 you to all of you for taking the
10 time. Thank you for your patience.
11 Thank you to every panel. Thank
12 you to all the families who made
13 themselves vulnerable by telling
14 their stories and using their
15 platform as a way to advocate for
16 what we know we need to do to keep
17 Philadelphia safe.

18 We value your opinions,
19 and this concludes the business of
20 the Committee. We will now recess
21 the hearing to the call of the
22 Chair. Have a good evening,
23 everybody. Thank you so much.

24 (Committee on

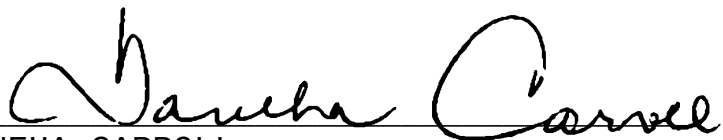
1 Legislative Oversight concluded at
2 4:26 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, hereby certify that the proceedings
and evidence noted are contained fully and
accurately in the stenographic notes taken by
me in the foregoing matter, and that this is a
correct transcript of the same.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Taneha Carroll', is written over a horizontal line.

TANEHA CARROLL
Court Reporter - Notary Public

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