COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
JOINT COMMITTEES ON
PUBLIC SAFETY and STREETS and SERVICES

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Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Tuesday, December 12, 2006, 10:25 a.m.

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Res. 060787 - To investigate the safety of Roosevelt Boulevard...

COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT:

Donna Reed-Miller, Chair
Frank DiCicco, Chair
Darrell L. Clarke
William K. Greenlee
James F. Kenney
Brian J. O'Neill
Juan F. Ramos
Frank Rizzo
Daniel J. Savage

- - -

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ATTACHED WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Samuel Harrell, Director of Operations
Greater Phila. Urban Affairs Coalition

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COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Good morning. The Committee on Public Safety -- the public hearing on Public Safety is now in session. The committee is now in session.

And to establish our quorum of our committee members that are here today -- actually, this a joint committee hearing of Public Safety and Streets and Services.

To my far left is Councilman Rizzo. Next to him is Councilman DiCicco, Chair of Streets and Services. And to my right is Councilman Bill Greenlee.

Will the clerk please read the title of the resolution.

THE CLERK: Resolution No. 060787, a resolution authorizing the City Council Committees on Public Safety and Streets and Services to hold joint public hearings to investigate the safety of Roosevelt Boulevard, including traffic engineering, law enforcement,

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the condition of street lighting, etc.; to inform and educate the public about the safety issues that plague the highway; and to explore any all feasible measures to make Roosevelt Boulevard a safe highway for all; and in furtherance of such investigation, authorizing the issuance of subpoenas to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of documents to the full extent authorized under Section 2-401 of the Home Rule Charter.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you.

I just have a few opening remarks. I'd like to begin by thanking those who have taken the interest in the safety concerns around Roosevelt Boulevard.

Today's hearing has been requested because of all of the pedestrian fatalities that have been plaguing Roosevelt Boulevard.

Since September 3rd, seven

pedestrians have been struck at various locations along the increasingly treacherous roadway, or have died. The number of pedestrians who have been killed along Roosevelt Boulevard is staggering and unacceptable.

We have installed red-light cameras at some of our busiest intersections, and they are working, but we need more. This technology is used to protect lives, but we need to do more.

Pedestrian bridges are very helpful but come with a very large price tag. The Department of Transportation has estimated that construction costs of $500,000 per pedestrian bridge.

We need to do something because the fatalities and severely injured pedestrians is not going away on its own.

In other cities such as Washington, D.C. and Las Vegas, they have countdown timers showing how much

time is left to cross the street. While this is not the answer, it is one of many solutions necessary for combatting this problem.

Thank you.

Thank you again for having an interest in this.

Councilman Rizzo?

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you, Madam Chair. And I want to thank Councilman Greenlee, the Chair of the Public Safety Committee, the Chair of the Streets and Services Committee, Councilman Frank DiCicco, and all of the panels and the witnesses here today for participating in this hearing. Many of them will participate this morning and also this afternoon at 2 o'clock at Cora Services.

It's ironic that on the way to work this morning, I heard on KYW News radio the traffic report that there were two crashes and possibly significant crashes on the Boulevard this morning.

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So, again, I thank you. And I think we'll learn a lot today, and I appreciate your participation in this hearing.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you. Thank you, Councilman Rizzo.

Does any other member of the committee have anything they want to say at this time?

(No response.)

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: All right. We'll start with the first panel and we have Clarena Tolson, Rina Cutler, Lester Toaso, Charles Davies, Louis Belmont, Eugene Bluam, and Vince Fenerty. Is Vince here?

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: He'll be here.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: We only have three chairs, but you can sit in the chairs along the wall.

(Witnesses come forward.)

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Please identify yourself for the record and

proceed with your testimony.

COMMISSIONER TOLSON: Good morning, Madam Chair --

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Good morning, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER TOLSON: -- and members of the joint committees. My name is Clarena Tolson, Commissioner of the Philadelphia Streets Department.

On behalf of the Managing Director's Office, I thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the safety of the Roosevelt Boulevard. The Streets Department is committed to protecting the citizens of this city and improving the systems that support safety.

The Roosevelt Boulevard, also known as US-1, is a State-maintained highway. The City oversees its traffic lights and lamps. It is a 12-lane roadway, which runs for 12 miles in the northeast section of the City. It consists of 45 traffic signals and 10

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mid-block, non-signalized marked crosswalks. This winding road carries over 60,000 to maybe 100,000 vehicles on an average day and is the most complex roadway in the City and, very possibly, in the State.

Roosevelt Boulevard is divided into four roadways of three lanes, and it includes three medians. This non-standard layout can be challenging to motorists. Its design is so obsolete that it dates back to the start of the 20th century.

The ideal design would be to construct a depressed expressway similar to Vine Street or to construct a two-lane roadway, with ten lanes and one median. The estimated cost for reconstruction would be approximately 1 to $3 billion.

In 2001, the Streets Department along with PennDOT, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, convened the Roosevelt Boulevard Safety Task

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Force to investigate and develop traffic-calming measures to increase the safety of pedestrians and motorists along the Boulevard.

In August of 2002, the Task Force issued the report with various recommendations, its most prominent recommendation being increased enforcement by the Philadelphia Police Department. Since 2001, PennDOT has provided a grant for targeted enforcement of traffic laws along Roosevelt Boulevard.

Additional recommendations include the following actions completed by the Streets Department's Traffic Engineering Division:

1. Pedestrian crossing signs at the 10 mid-block marked crossings were replaced to allow improved visibility.

2. Speed-limit signs were replaced with larger signs to allow for improved visibility.

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3. Signal timings on the northern section of the Boulevard (north of Pennypack Creek) were revised to include a longer cycle length to allow for additional time for cross street-and left-turn traffic.

The Streets Department is currently working with PennDOT to revise the timings on the southern section of the Boulevard south of Summerdale Avenue.

Recently, the Task Force has reconvened to evaluate the effectiveness of the traffic-safety measures taken over the past five years on the Boulevard. The Task Force is currently investigating and developing criteria for additional traffic-calming measures to implement.

In 2002, the State legislature passed a law allowing for photo enforcement surveillance cameras on the Boulevard. The cameras capture pictures of motorists speeding through red

lights. Since 2005, the photo cameras have been installed at three locations: Red Lion Road, Grant Avenue, and Cottman Avenue.

Six additional locations have been proposed for the installation of the cameras, and these intersections include: Southhampton Road, Welsh Road, Rhawn Street, Mascher Street, Ninth Street, and Levick Street.

As I stated earlier, the Streets Department is committed to the issue of safety. We look forward to continued partnership with PennDOT and other Task Force members to continue making safety improvements on Roosevelt Boulevard.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today, and I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you.

Before we proceed, Ms. Cutler,

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I just want to recognize for the record that Councilwoman Krajewski has just joined us. She's a member of Public Safety.

Thank you.

Ms. Cutler, you can proceed.

MS. CUTLER: Thank you. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today on behalf of Secretary of Transportation Allen Beadler to address safety on Roosevelt Boulevard.

My name is Rina Cutler and I'm the Deputy Secretary for Administration for PennDOT and the acting (inaudible) in Region 6-0, which includes Philadelphia and the four surrounding counties.

The State Department of Transportation is extremely concerned about safety on this unique highway.

I want to take this opportunity to express or deepest sympathy to those who have lost family members in tragic crashes on this roadway. We at PennDOT

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are deeply saddened and disturbed by events of the past September and October, when five pedestrians lost their lives on the Boulevard in a spate of crashes and (inaudible) to the State and the City to reexamine the road to identify further measures to make it safer for pedestrians and motorists alike.

Roosevelt Boulevard is one of its kind in the United States. It is essentially a limited-access highway that's functioning as an urban street in a densely populated area.

While the Boulevard may carry interstate-like traffic volumes, motorists and pedestrians also use it every day to reach adjacent neighborhoods to go to churches, schools, shopping centers, and businesses.

Just like on other State-owned streets in Philadelphia, PennDOT and the City Streets Department share

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responsibilities on Roosevelt Boulevard. PennDOT is responsible for maintaining the road pavement curb to curb plus the grass medians between the express and the local travel lanes. The City Streets Department has responsibility for all traffic signals, road signs, traffic lanes, and street lighting and drainage.

In regard to structures, PennDOT owns the bridges that carry the Boulevard over railroads and local streets. Of the eleven bridges over the Boulevard, ten are owned by PennDOT, one by the City.

As for winter services, PennDOT pays the City $2.5 million to plow and salt the State highways, which also includes Roosevelt Boulevard.

By its very design, which dates back to the 1900s, Roosevelt Boulevard attempts to satisfy numerous needs such as to provide local access to keep cross streets in neighborhoods, provide

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pedestrian access to neighborhood schools, churches and shopping areas, provide neighborhood continuity, and also to provide commuter travel in and out of Philadelphia.

Aside from its width and the number of travel lanes, the uniqueness of the Boulevard is further illustrated by the its 48 signalized intersections, 56 crossovers for travel between the highway's express and local lanes, 13 marked mid-block pedestrian crossings, 2 overhead pedestrian bridges.

By its length and design, the Boulevard provides numerous locations for pedestrians to cross its 12 lanes.

Despite the fact that the Boulevard's enormous traffic volumes and numerous intersections made crashes an all too familiar sign, PennDOT, the Streets Department, and the Philadelphia Police Department continue to work together to strive to make it a safer roadway.

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From 1995 to 1997, PennDOT invested $27 million to rebuild the Boulevard between Ninth Street and the Bucks County line; to enhance safety by removing fixed objects such as trees; improving intersections; and installing more traffic signals throughout the corridor.

As Commissioner Tolson noted, in 2002, PennDOT and the City commissioned a Task Force to take a fresh look at pedestrian and vehicular safety on the Boulevard. The study resulted in safety enhancements, including the installation of large city limit signs to reinforce the Boulevard's speed limit for motorists, the installation of pedestrian-crossing signs at marked mid-block crosswalks to alert motorists of the areas where pedestrians cross; and funding for increased police enforcement on the Boulevard by the Philadelphia Police Department.

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This past October, PennDOT presented the City Police Department with another $250,000 grant for increased overtime patrols on the Boulevard for next fall.

Enforcement is pivotal to deterring reckless driving and changing bad driver behavior, and we have complete confidence that the Police Department will continue its outstanding performance in this regard.

The grant for enforcement on Roosevelt Boulevard was the fourth given by PennDOT to the City since 2002, with a total of $1.15 billion.

In our continuing efforts to keep the Boulevard smooth and pavement markings bright, PennDOT this past summer granted $6 million in State funds to resurface the 12 lanes between the Bucks County line and Ninth Street.

In addition, PennDOT is working with the Philadelphia Streets Department to address the timing of the traffic

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signals for better traffic flow and pedestrian safety. From October 2005 to April of this year, timing adjustments were made on the upper third of the highway from Wynnewood Street just below Welsh Road to Southhampton Road. In that section, there is (indiscernible) from cross traffic, which gives pedestrians more time to cross all lanes of the Boulevard.

Preparations are underway for similar adjustments to be made next year on the lower third of the Boulevard, from Ninth Street to Summerdale Avenue. Later on, the signal timings will also be changed to the middle of Roosevelt Boulevard.

We will continue to work with the City and the Philadelphia Parking Authority to review and approve additional locations for red-light cameras on the Boulevard and throughout Philadelphia.

PennDOT is committed to making

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Roosevelt Boulevard and all State-owned highways as safe as humanly possible. While each of the aforementioned safety enhancements make Roosevelt Boulevard a safer roadway, we certainly realize that crashes continue to occur, as Councilman Rizzo noted this morning, and that innocent lives are lost on this road.

The safety of Roosevelt Boulevard is dependent upon PennDOT and the City properly maintaining the highway, the Police Department aggressively enforcing the motor vehicle laws of the Commonwealth, and citizens driving responsibly on it and walking carefully across it.

Speeding and aggressive driving is prevalent not only in Philadelphia but throughout our state and our nation. PennDOT will continue to work throughout the Commonwealth to discourage aggressive driving through stepped-up police enforcement in our to make our streets and highways safer.

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More than a thousand fatal crashes throughout the State were attributed to aggressive driving. We don't view crash statistics as mere numbers, but as individual lives tragically lost.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, aggressive driving occurs when an individual commits a combination of moving traffic offenses that endanger other persons or property. These offenses include unsafe lane changes, speeding, running red lights and stop signs, following too closely, improper passing, and failing to yield the right-of-way.

Each of these offenses frequently occur daily on the Roosevelt Boulevard. Of the 2,504 reportable crashes that occurred on Roosevelt Boulevard between 2001 and 2005, aggressive driving played a role in more than 75 percent. Of those incidents:

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37 percent were rear-end crashes, a sign of people driving too close to the vehicle in front of them;

29 percent were angle crashes normally caused by aggressive turn movements at intersections; and

11 percent of all drivers who left the road struck objects such as a pole or a tree.

Many of the crashes involving pedestrians on the Boulevard during this time also may be related to aggressive driving, motorists who are worried more about going through an intersection than the people crossing at it.

Aggressive driving is a chronic characteristic of the Boulevard. While examining the road in three-mile intervals from 2001 to 2005, you will see that it has been the scene of an average of 180 reportable crashes a year between Ninth Street and Bridge Street, 145 between Bridge Street and Rhawn Street, 120 between Rhawn Street and Red

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Lion Road; and 58 between Red Lion Road and the Philadelphia-Bucks County line.

Again, the majority of incidents in each section were rear-end and angle crashes.

Pedestrians certainly have the right to walk across the Boulevard in specifically crossed areas but must exercise extreme caution when doing so, regardless of the location or the time of day. Walking across any busy street can be daunting, but to cross 12 lanes in traffic on a busy boulevard certainly requires the utmost attention to both pedestrians and drivers.

The five pedestrian fatalities that have occurred on the Boulevard this year since September are the most that have occurred since 2001. These fatal crashes happened in various locations at different times of the day, and the only commonality is the devastating impact these incidents have had on surviving family members.

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An analysis by the Philadelphia Streets Department of the 101 pedestrian crashes that occurred on the Boulevard between 2002 and October 15th of this year showed that 68 percent of those crashes occurred at intersections, 32 percent at unmarked mid-block crossings, and only 3 percent in marked mid-block crossings.

In an effort to enhance safety, PennDOT and City officials are reinstituting the Roosevelt Boulevard Task Force to determine future courses of action to create a safer environment.

While we are examining potential options and working to formulate a sound strategy and create a safer roadway, I can tell you that we will focus on public education programs designed to improve pedestrian safety by educating young and older citizens alike of the proper way to cross the Boulevard and how much care they need to take to do so.

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We will also be providing the City Police Department with a speed display trailer (indiscernible) that will flash speeds to motorists traveling on the Boulevard in an effort to get them to slow down. And we will utilize the federal earmark for safety-related improvements.

In an ideal world, Roosevelt Boulevard would look very much like Vine Street and Interstate 676, with local lanes running on top and the expressway lanes depressed below. This would separate the highway and pedestrian movements, thus improving safety.

But to make major long-term infrastructure changes on Roosevelt Boulevard such as this or to add multiple pedestrian bridges would require hundreds of millions of dollars in funding and the need to prioritize highway projects that are placed on the region's Transportation Improvement Program.

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Community input and support would also be needed to transform this highway into a different kind of facility. The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission's TIP is developed and improved every two years in a coordinated, cooperative process involving PennDOT partnering with the Delaware Valley region, including the City of Philadelphia.

The TIP is the region's agreed-upon list of specific priority projects, which includes all highway, bridge, and public-transit projects for which federal or State capital funds are anticipated.

Input to determine project priorities, both new and existing, is solicited from the municipalities in each of the five counties in the region, who, in turn, are represented on the DVRPC Board. As required by federal regulations, the four-year planning and programming document is fiscally

constrained when approved, and fiscal constraint must be maintained throughout the life of the document.

The development of the TIP is a group effort of PennDOT, Philadelphia, and counties who represent financial parameters as determined by the amount of federal and state funds projected to be available through that four-year period.

PennDOT and the counties submit projects for consideration, prioritize these projects, and then public hearing are held across the region. Once approved, the regional TIP is submitted for approval as part of PennDOT's 12-year transportation program.

While the region's transportation program is the blueprint for the future, PennDOT and the City are actively focused on the present and the implementation of an action plan to enhance safety for all those who live and travel on or near the Roosevelt

Boulevard.

Thank you for allowing me to make that presentation.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you.

The next witness is Lester Toaso.

MS. CUTLER: Councilwoman, I've made a presentation for all of PennDOT. You do not need to call on everyone.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay, thank you.

Has Vince Fenerty arrived yet?

(Witness comes forward.)

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Please identify yourself for the record and proceed with your testimony.

MR. FENERTY: Good morning, Councilwoman Miller. Vince Fenerty, Executive Director of the Philadelphia Parking Authority, and I have written testimony which I'd like to distribute copies of.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: One of

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our sergeant-at-arms will come over for that.

MR. FENERTY: I'm here today to present testimony on behalf of Resolution 060787, which calls for hearings to discuss the safety of Roosevelt Boulevard. I will discuss the role of the Parking Authority has played in conjunction with the Philadelphia Police Department through our Red-Light Camera Department to improve safety, the conditions along the Boulevard.

I would like to first thank Councilman Rizzo and members of the Committee for allowing me to testify today.

The Red-Light Camera Program is currently in operation at five locations in the City. The locations are: Grant and the Boulevard, Red Lion and the Boulevard, Cottman Avenue and Roosevelt Boulevard, Broad Street and Oregon Avenue, and 34th and Grays Ferry Avenue.

An additional five

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intersections are being proposed along the Roosevelt Boulevard strip. These intersections are: Roosevelt Boulevard and Mascher Street, Roosevelt Boulevard and Levick Street, Roosevelt Boulevard and Rhawn Street, Roosevelt Boulevard and Welsh Road, and Roosevelt Boulevard and Southhampton Road.

With the three current locations already in operation along Roosevelt Boulevard, the first three intersections along the Boulevard have had a 120-day warning period since their inception. And the two at 34th and Grays Ferry Avenue and Broad and Oregon have a 60-day waiting period.

The Red-Light Camera Program is in its pilot stage, and the goal of the program is to increase the safety of vehicle and pedestrian traffic at dangerous intersections by decreasing the amount of red-light running at said intersections.

As was said in testimony before

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City Council last week, but a statement that I would like to repeat again today, because it's the Parking Authority's mission with the Red-Light Camera Program:

We are all aware, even with the three current locations along the Boulevard, of the amount of vehicular accidents, pedestrian injuries, and death along the Boulevard, which is certainly unacceptable.

The Parking Authority is committed to working to improving the safety for all who travel on, across, and near Roosevelt Boulevard. Because of the initial success of the Red-Light Camera Program, I am confident that these new intersections will work in conjunction with the current ones to help improve public safety.

One of the main problems that we are confronted with on Roosevelt Boulevard is that there is a culture which has existed for years that

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speeding, aggressive driving, and red-light running is acceptable. I have commented in previous forums about my belief that many times, Roosevelt Boulevard is a supersonic speedway where drivers and pedestrians take their lives in their hands while on or crossing it.

The operation of the red-light cameras on Roosevelt Boulevard have worked to start changing that mentality. By slashing the number of times motorists speed through red lights at operational locations on the Boulevard, the culture of carelessness is changing.

The data the Parking Authority has to compare the number of violations committed at particular intersections from one year to the next shows that the number of violations have significantly fallen.

At Red Lion and the Boulevard, the number of violations has fallen from 1,072 from a period starting in May of 2005 to 297 for a period starting in May

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of 2006. And that is a decrease of 72 percent at this intersection.

For the period of June of 2005 compared to June of 2006, the decrease was 1,317 to 299, which is a 77 percent decrease.

And from July '05 to July '06, the decrease was 1702 to 675, which is a 60 percent decrease.

At Grant and the Boulevard, the numbers are even more encouraging. From 4,065 violations from a period starting in May of 2005, the numbers have plummeted to 340 in May of 2006. That is a decrease of 92 percent.

The percentage of decrease in violations at Grant has been 69 percent, 72 percent, 82 percent, 92 percent, 90 percent, and 87 percent from the same periods in the same previous years.

Cottman Avenue has been omitted because the cameras have not been operational for a period of time to compare the periods from one year now to

the previous year.

The very large decrease in the numbers of violations shows the program is having a positive effect on the safety of those intersections along the Boulevard.

Grant Avenue and Red Lion Road were rated by State Farm Insurance Company as the second and third most dangerous intersections in the entire country.

The Red-Light Camera Program is very successful to date, but it is only a part of the solution to change the culture of driving along Roosevelt Boulevard. Excessive speeding and aggressive driving are other conditions to be dealt with.

House Bill 3069, introduced by Representative George Kenney, would bring speed cameras to the Roosevelt Boulevard. The combination of red-light cameras for Mascher Street in the south to Southhampton Road in the north and

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speed cameras would allow for a comprehensive integrated safety systems that would bring a large percentage of the problems on Roosevelt Boulevard under control.

We strongly urge the State legislature to make Representative Kenney's bill a top priority in January.

I would like to conclude my testimony by again saying that the Red-Light Camera Program is increasing the safety and quality of life for the citizens of Philadelphia, and I firmly believe that with the expansion of the program on Roosevelt Boulevard, the positive and successful progress of the program has started and will also continue.

Also, I would just like to say that with the speed cameras added, I feel our goal of increasing public safety and saving lives will become a reality very soon.

And I would like to thank all

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of the Councilmembers for this opportunity to testify before the committee today, and I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you. Thank you for your testimony.

Before we get questions from Councilmembers, I want to note that Councilman Clarke, a member of the committee, has joined me here, and Councilman O'Neill, a member of Public Safety. We've also been joined by Councilman Kelly, and I believe Councilman Kenney was here.

So thank you. Thank you for testifying.

Are there any questions of these witnesses?

COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you. Good morning. Thank you for your testimony.

Ms. Cutler, I'm looking at a chart in front of me, and it's the one concerning public safety on Roosevelt

Boulevard and talks about pedestrian fatalities.

And what's very striking to me is an item to non-marked mid-block crossings; 32 percent of accidents occurred in non-marked crossings. And there's a dramatic increase, almost down to zero, in those marked mid-block crossings of 3 percent.

Why wouldn't we have more marked mid-block crossings?

MS. CUTLER: Well, councilman, mid-block crossings by themselves have a tendency to be somewhat controversial, and we have limited the marked mid-block crossings to locations where there is high visibility to the site distance, where people can actually see what's coming. You know, the road is not straight and has a tendency to not give you good sight distances.

So we're particularly careful on mid-block crossings, signed mid-block crossings, where we believe you've got

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enough visibility to be able to gauge how much time you have to get across the street based on the incoming traffic.

So while we can certainly look at whether there are more locations where we could do additional mid-block crossings, part of the difficulty here is to get folks to use marked crossings, whether they are at intersections or mid-block.

And it is part of the problem that folks -- particularly you see a lot of folks who actually step off a SEPTA bus, walk around in front of the bus to walk across Roosevelt Boulevard. Obviously, the bus is stopped so they're fine in the first lane, but they have no visibility at that point of oncoming traffic.

And, in fact, there are a lot of crashes that occur similar to that.

So we'd really like to limit the number of mid-block crossings to areas where there's very weak

visibility.

COUNCILMAN DICICCO: And so then you're saying that non-marked mid-block crossings are basically where people are jaywalking?

MS. CUTLER: That's correct.

COUNCILMAN DICICCO: All right. That makes sense to me.

My other question or comment is that -- it's not intended to be critical to anyone, but I think traditionally, it seems that with the Streets Department's public highway entities, the emphasis is always on moving vehicles; it is not so much on moving pedestrians.

Delaware Avenue is a perfect example. Delaware Avenue is now, in my opinion, a second highway, the ultimate highway route to I-95.

I remember when I first came to Council and we had the infamous tire fire under I-95. The first thing that was discussed was: How do you move the

traffic along I-95? And there was an attempt by the Streets Department in those days to add a lane to Aramingo Avenue.

My point being: There seems to be really no emphasis on encouraging people to use public transportation. It seems there's consideration all the time of adding more lanes and trying to figure out ways in which people can move more quickly in their cars from Point A to Point B.

And, again, despite everyone's best interests with the red-light cameras and adding speed controls, mid-block crossings or whatever, it's all geared to moving vehicles.

And this may not be for the Streets Department and may not be just for PennDOT; it's probably a national thing. And that is that there really is no emphasis on designing highways or maybe reducing some lanes, in that case, which makes it less attractive for those

70 to 100,000 vehicles that use the Boulevard today.

I wonder, is there anything in the works? Is there any discussion going on at PennDOT or at the Streets Department to talk about whether we need to consider -- to continue to look at ways in which we move just vehicles and not have more of an emphasis on pedestrians or public transportation?

When the Boulevard was designed, I'm sure it was designed to maybe move 5 or 10,000 cars a day; it's probably quadrupled or increased even more dramatically than that over the years.

But, again, not to be redundant, but it's all about cars in this country. And I think that speaks to one of the problem we're having.

Traffic lanes -- maybe we should just reduce the number of traffic lanes to discourage people from using the Boulevard.

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MS. CUTLER: I'll take the first crack at that, Councilman, and I don't disagree with that notion. In fact, I think Departments of Transportation nationally are really looking at what we call "context-sensitive solutions," which really take into account the environment in which those roadways are designed.

The traffic timing is, in fact, part of how highways are now designed, so there certainly has always been, and likely will continue to be an, emphasis on moving vehicles.

But it is a complicated issue. What will happen if you reduce the number of lanes on the Boulevard? which certainly is one scenario and certainly a possibility is that those people aren't necessarily going to get out of their car in that case. What they are going to do is starting to down neighborhood streets.

And so a part of the balance is

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to actually try to keep the traffic on major arterials so that they are not flooding through neighborhoods.

I think there is certainly in Pennsylvania, and certainly in the District 6-5 county region, a very strong emphasis on transit and trying to get people out of their vehicles as much as possible.

But I do not believe that, in most cases, we will be successful in getting people out of their vehicles unless we are providing alternatives that actually make it useful for people to get out of their cars.

We certainly can slow down the traffic on the Boulevard. We certainly can look at reducing lanes on the Boulevard.

But the flip side of that equation is that as long as there are people who are determined to drive to and from wherever they're going is that those cars will start to move into

parallel neighborhood roads, as you would also see along Delaware Avenue.

So there is a notion that keeping those vehicles on major arterials is less of a problem than having them flood through the neighborhoods.

COUNCILMAN DICICCO: And I understand that, but the Boulevard is represented by Councilman O'Neill and it is in his neighborhood also. I mean there are a lot of residential properties there.

My cousins moved to the Northeast 40 years ago from South Philly, and the Boulevard was a very common place to drive, and it was literally a neighborhood.

So we've created the environment more or less by creating some sort of a superhighway to move traffic from Point A to Point B more quickly, and in that process, I think we've kind of painted ourselves into a

corner and we have the situation that we have today.

I mean, I do understand that some people may look for alternative routes to get to home or to business and to get to some of the neighborhoods as well.

These pedestrian accidents that occur, are there statistics? Do they happen primarily in the outer lanes, for a lack of a better description? Or the main boulevard, the high-speed. I'm just curious.

MS. CUTLER: (Confers with colleagues.)

COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Remember, I worked with that man's father.

MS. CUTLER: You did tell me that, Councilman.

The total crashes -- I have some data in front of me, which is crash summaries from 2002 to October 2006, and it shows that:

11.8 percent of the total

crashes were vehicles traveling northbound in the inner lanes.

And 24.75 percent, 25 percent were vehicles traveling northbound in the outer lanes. That's the highest number.

The second highest number for striking vehicles was traveling on cross streets.

So the outer lanes in this case appear to be much higher.

COUNCILMAN DICICCO: That's because that's one of those areas where buses discharge passengers.

MS. CUTLER: Yes.

And the other piece, which is sort of interesting -- the other piece that's occurred in the history of this particular corridor is that it has in itself transformed from an entirely residential corridor to a very high retail, entertainment, and restaurant corridor.

So the road use has

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substantially changed since the road was obviously built, and so it is that difficult balancing act, as you can imagine, between understanding that transportation is an economic-development issue as well as a safety issue, and trying to find that balance on a 12-lane roadway is very difficult.

COUNCILMAN DICICCO: One final question and comment, and then I'll yield, Councilwoman Reed-Miller, to the other folks.

I notice that the outer lanes, as the stats are saying, the majority of pedestrian accidents occur in the outer lanes. Is there any discussion or thought given to maybe reducing the number of lanes in the outer lane area or making it more of a local use, a local traffic only or a bus lane only so that you don't have that competition between the public transportation system and folks who are being discharged and trying to get across that inner lane

section, then getting across the Boulevard?

MS. CUTLER: I think we're obviously prepared to look at anything which assists in lowering the accident and fatality number.

I do not -- part of the problem with having a bus-only lane of course is that it will really start to tie up the resources of the Police Department as it relates to trying to keep vehicles out of there who want to stay local.

I mean, the way it was designed really was meant for the outer lanes to really be local and obviously handle turning movements into the retail establishments and for the buses.

You know, I think, yes, if we took out some those crossover locations, I think it would diminish that.

Perhaps the long-term solution and, I believe, something we're looking at is to have some of those intersections, instead of building

pedestrian bridges, which you would have trouble getting them to use, given the statistics in front of us, at certain intersections, perhaps bring the roadway down and leave the surface lane for the locals and the pedestrians.

COUNCILMAN DICICCO: I don't pretend to be a traffic engineer or anything, but from a layman's point of view, the outer lanes is where I had suspected would be where the highest percentage of pedestrian accidents would occur.

Thank you.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you.

I have two very quick questions and then we will have Councilman O'Neill and Councilman Rizzo.

Prior to my questions, I want to note that Councilman Savage has also joined this hearing. I believe he's a member of the Streets and Services Committee.

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I think one of the things that we have to do particularly around pedestrian deaths is to educate, to do public education.

You know, I know that certainly when we were younger, we learned to cross at the red light and we knew what the yellow lights and green lights are for.

But now, talking with the Streets Department, when you have that (inaudible) flashing light, I wasn't really sure how to cross, and I don't know if people have taught people how to use these lights and how to use four-way stop signs, you know.

In school, you learned to cross under a green light, period, that's it. Who knows about the flashing lights? Who knows about the four-way stop?

And I think there needs to be a whole series of education activities. I know at some of the schools, when we've had lots of accidents or children

getting hit by cars, we go through the whole thing of trying to reorient children, teaching them how to cross the at four-way stops.

Philadelphia is known for its jaywalkers, we all know it. But we really need to start teaching people how to cross the streets.

And I guess that's more of a comment, but has anyone thought of the fact that we do need to have a public education program going on here?

COMMISSIONER TOLSON: Yes, Councilwoman, we wholeheartedly agree with you.

Part of the activity of the Task Force is to look at our education efforts such that we're speaking to not only school children but also to adults and our seniors.

You mentioned basic things like understanding the signs with the hand and the man telling you when you can walk. There's also the notion of can

you cross the Boulevard in one signal? You have to educate people so that they understand that it's intended to be a multiple-signal crossing.

And I think that once we improve those educational opportunities and activities that people will have a better chance of understanding what they need to do and what their personal responsibility is when walking on that roadway.

Also, the motorists need a better understanding of the rules of the games and realize that pedestrians are often at the corners and to know that pedestrians have the right-of-way. At any location, pedestrians have the rights-of-way.

So yes, we can do a better job of educating all of our children and adults with regard to crossing the Boulevard.

As Ms. Cutler mentioned, the fact that the Boulevard has evolved into

such a little city in and of itself by the fact that it has so many houses, so many retail stores, and you have the fast-food establishments, the Rite Aid, and the like, as well as the malls, which draw people to either side of the Boulevard.

So this is virtually a walk across and a traveling across the Boulevard hundreds of times per day.

So we recognize it's important for us to do something special in our approach and techniques to support safety.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: That's true.

Are there other intersections in the city that are -- well, they're not equally as wide, but that are very wide?

Really, I don't believe you can cross them on one light, and the one that comes to mind is Broad and Erie. It has an island there.

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So I just think it's important that people understand how to cross the street.

I have a question for Mr. Fenerty. Vince, I was wondering how many violators were repeat violators on the Roosevelt Boulevard.

MR. FENERTY: Not that many. We don't really track that as of yet, and it's a question that came up two weeks ago, and we've asked the subcontractor of ATS to compile a list of all violators who have done it more than once. And that programming is in the process of being done.

So I can't honestly answer that question. I should be able to answer that, I believe, within a week or two.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you.

Councilman O'Neill?

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you.

First of all, I think a lot of good is going to come from the attention

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that both PennDOT, the Parking Authority the Police Department, and the Streets Department are paying to this issue.

Like Clarena Tolson mentioned, now there should be a focus on the educational component of this, both at the schools and the senior citizens.

High-visibility clothing isn't just for Halloween or for our young people, so there's a lot of good, I believe, that's going to come from this.

But one of the questions I have for both PennDOT and the Streets Department is: Since this focus has begun, are we both on the same page that what the Streets Department's responsibility is is appropriate? Are there things that PennDOT may do that would be better placed with the Streets Department or vice-versa?

I would just hope that now that we've agreed on what the responsibilities are -- like we plow snow, PennDOT pays you to do that -- are

there any other issues that you would see as the Streets Commissioner and the Deputy Secretary of PennDOT that should be controlled around here? Or is it where it needs to be, Commissioner Tolson.

COMMISSIONER TOLSON: I would have to say that I believe that it is fairly well designed, but we are not each acting; in fact we're acting in a very coordinated manner.

So that, yes, the City's responsibility for plowing the snow on the Boulevard; however, we work with PennDOT. And, yes, the City's responsible for the traffic signals and the street lighting.

And we work hand and glove with PennDOT to understand whether or not we're doing the appropriate things and whether we're using the best technology that there may be.

There's no finger-pointing to say that that's your responsibility and

only you can handle it. I think that both of our agencies and the other ancillary agencies are working together hand and glove to address the Boulevard.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: What prompted that question was when Secretary Cutler said that PennDOT is going to be working on a program for the timing of traffic signals, which confused me. You indicated that that's your responsibility, so why is PennDOT engaged in that?

COMMISSIONER TOLSON: For the very reason I just gave you: We're working hand in glove.

We also have guidelines set by the State, but the day-to-day operation level for a strategic or technical level, we work together to provide the best facilities possible along that corridor.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Well, again, it's still not clear to me, and maybe we should let Secretary Cutler possibly

chime in.

Is PennDOT physically going to have hands-on on this street timing program, or is it going to be delegated and PennDOT will reimburse the City of Philadelphia? Because now I see two people touching the same device, and I don't know why.

MS. CUTLER: Councilman, I think it really is a question of funding. The signalization issue is a PennDOT project because it's not being paid for out of City dollars or State or federal dollars that flow in the City.

So it is technically a PennDOT project, which is why it's occurring that way. Some of that just occurs in the funding.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: So what I'm hearing here is that the Streets Department people will do the, work but you will compensate them for that work.

MS. CUTLER: No. Actually, in this case, PennDOT will put out a

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contract for a vendor to work with the Streets Department and PennDOT to design that signal and do the work to actually get out there and change the timing.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Got it. Thank you.

Secretary Cutler, do you see any needs for any adjustments in the way Roosevelt Boulevard is managed by PennDOT versus the Streets Department?

Is there anything that you would like to give the Streets Department and compensate them for that, or is there something that you think the Streets Department does that you would like to have?

MS. CUTLER: I don't think so. As issues come up, much of the discussion really is around what pot of money might be able to pay for certain types of improvements.

PennDOT, for example, has safety dollars that may not be available from the City side, so if there's a

safety project the City is looking to do, PennDOT may do it as a PennDOT project because we've got the additional safety dollars that come from the federal government.

I don't think so. I think the real key here is to really make sure that the partnership -- and for me, the partnership is not only with the Parking Authority and the Streets Department, but actually, a huge player at the table is the Philadelphia Police Department.

I think that as long as these four entities are pretty clear about how to deal with priorities, we can figure how out to get it funded, who's going to issue a contract, and how to deal with those operations. It's really a communication issue.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Again, thank you. I think a lot of good is going to come as a result of these hearings and also your personal focus.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: I'm not

quite as optimistic but it's worth taking a crack at because it's that important.

I've got a couple of quick questions for Mr. Fenerty, then I'm going to ask Streets and PennDOT.

Mr. Fenerty, you mentioned the correlation between putting cameras in for the red lights and the reduction in violations over a short period of time.

Do you know, or do the people at the table with you know, if there's been any correlation in accidents? 'Cause it's all based on the danger.

And I think I missed it but I didn't hear any testimony from anybody on the correlation of accident reduction because of the -- I assume there is, but I'm just curious.

MR. FENERTY: Councilman, we did do a study at Grant and Boulevard, and we're in the process of doing a study at Red Lion and the Boulevard.

And rear-end collisions were up

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a very small amount at the intersection. I believe it was two or three? They were down two. And accidents with injuries were down. Fatalities were down.

But the study --

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Is it minimal, is it --

MR. FENERTY: They were minimally down.

But the last time there was a traffic study done, a vehicular traffic study done, was in 2002.

As you well know, since then, a (indiscernible) was done in 2002, and we believe that the number of vehicles traveling in that area, because of the new malls -- Whitman Plaza is now there -- that the number of vehicles traveling may have doubled in the four years.

So we're doing a second study at Red Lion and the Boulevard because that area has not changed since the last

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traffic study.

Things are down but not as much as we thought they would be. We don't have accurate data to compare from year to year for a car camera.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay. Does PennDOT or The city have any comment on that?

MS. CUTLER: Yes, Councilman. Actually, as we speak, DVRPC, which is the transportation-planning organization for the city and the region, is actually currently doing a study on Roosevelt Boulevard's, so we expect to have updated numbers this year.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Is DVRPC here today with testimony?

MS. CUTLER: I haven't seen them.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: The most important thing that we've heard and will hear and dream about is taking the whole Boulevard under grade, and it has to go through DVRPC, and they're not

here?

MS. CUTLER: Well, it --

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: As much as we're grateful for the fact that (inaudible) the Cottman area and the areas north and south, and I hope that somebody's going to tell me we've put it in the 40-year plan.

So there's a reduction in speeding by quite a bit and going through the red lights. We don't know if they're speeding in other areas; we'll come to that.

But speed cameras are what I'm really interested in, because unless a miracle happens -- and miracles usually don't happen in local and state government -- we are not going to see any more police grants, and I've not seen any commitment to allowing the police radar or putting state troopers there with radar.

And the speed cameras seem like, just in concept, that they would

have a big impact on slowing cars down. Is there evidence in other areas that that happens?

MR. FENERTY: There are in some other areas known to have them, and we're compiling data on that.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: We know that it probably slows the cars down, the same way that the behavior was modified at Grant with red-light running, but is there a correlation to safety? Because while there is a correlation to red-light running being reduced, I'm not sure there's a significant enough correlation to serious accident reduction to say, Boy, that was great for that.

It's still a problem that's being handled but it's not the overall problem of pedestrian safety and even motorist safety.

MR. FENERTY: Well, Councilman --

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Is there

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any evidence out there that these speed cameras --

MR. FENERTY: Yes, they --

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Do they reduce accidents?

MR. FENERTY: They do reduce accidents. The eight intersections along the Boulevard that will have the red light cameras can be converted within a month of the time the bill is signed by the Governor.

The cameras that are out there, with a minor adjustment, can do what's "speed on green," which means going northbound and southbound on the Boulevard -- like let's say, for instance, Grant Avenue, assuming no, that people will go through that intersection much in excess of the 45-miles-per-hour, which is posted. So when the light is green for both north and southbound, the camera can clock them.

The way the bill was structured

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by Representative Kenney, the fine goes up after ten miles per hour, maximizing at several hundred dollars if you're going over above 45.

We have found that the higher the fine is, the more it hurts the person in the pocketbook, and it will curtail their speeding.

In Phoenix, where they have it, and in several other cities, we're told it slows the traffic down.

We would then meet with the City and the engineers from PennDOT and the City Streets Department and figure where else we would put the cameras.

That portion of the program will be a public bid for a new vendor, and we can adjust it and get a contract for the area along the Boulevard or for any new location for speed cameras. It would be a public RFP, which would take about 60 days.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: The bill needs to be reintroduced in the House

and the Senate when the legislature reconvenes. Assuming that they put it on a fast track -- say two months, sometime in March, and nothing gets done that fast, but say sometime in March, it passes and the governor signs it, how long are we talking about before we get the speed cameras up?

MR. FENERTY: In 30 days, we can put the speed cameras in the locations.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: And what is the funding stream?

MR. FENERTY: The funding stream on that would actually be from the fines themselves from the new cameras we're putting in along the Boulevard.

I have a -- Perzel had given the Parking Authority for $400,000 for the construction of red-light cameras at the intersections.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Where is the money coming from for the

construction of the speed cameras or for the installation of speed cameras?

MR. FENERTY: From the Red-Light Camera Fund.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay. And Ms. Cutler, Ms. Tolson, could you comment on the speed cameras? Is it something you're for or something you think is a bad idea?

Is it something that you would support if someone in the legislature said, What do you think of this? I'm getting ready to vote and I want to know if it's something that's going to help or not been proven or --

COMMISSIONER TOLSON: Well, I think that's how task forces work.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Well, let's say it isn't finished yet and I call you. I'm a representative from Philadelphia, and I say, "Clarena, I what's your judgment?"

COMMISSIONER TOLSON: Well, we're not prepared yet to give --

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COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: No, what's your personal judgment?

COMMISSIONER TOLSON: At this point in time, I would like to wait until.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: You don't have a judgment?

COMMISSIONER TOLSON: At this point, I would like to continue to meet with the Parking Authority to discuss this issue and come up with an opinion.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay. Is there a reason you wouldn't support it?

COMMISSIONER TOLSON: I'm not ready to comment.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay. Ms. Cutler?

MS. CUTLER: Councilman, I'm obviously not necessarily speaking for PennDOT, but I think anything that helps slow the traffic down and allows for traffic-calming is probably a very good thing.

In fact, I believe Mr. Fenerty

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and Representative Kenney and I are scheduled to have a meeting on this topic this week, so we expect to help support that at the legislature.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay. This is for the City and State people, not the Authority. I think I'm finished.

When was Roosevelt Boulevard designed? Someone told me it was over a hundred years ago; is that correct?

MS. CUTLER: 1900.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: I-95 is obviously 12 lines wide and at grade in most places. It runs from Key West to somewhere at the top of the country -- in Maine, I believe, before I-95 was the route.

I've never been on it where it's been more than three lanes in each direction except for in Philadelphia, including in Bucks County that feeds it and Montgomery County that feeds it on both ends of Philadelphia.

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Is it 12 lanes anywhere else?

MS. CUTLER: We believe it is not.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: This sounds like a remarkable idea but -- and crazy as all get-out, but why would we subject our residents and our vehicles to the safety problems in Philadelphia because somebody in 1900 designed a roadway for the future?

'Cause it's clearly -- everybody -- you started out by talking about how the design is wrong and how no one would design this today. It's like driving a car from 1900 now and telling our police to chase criminals in it; we wouldn't think of doing that.

What is wrong with -- see, I don't see a problem with just shutting it down to three lanes, because that's all you got from Key West, Florida, to the top of Maine. What is so special about Philadelphia that we have to provide this dangerous situation for our

residents?

The only real justification for the extra lanes is that somebody in 1900 thought it was going to be a good idea in the future, and it wasn't. Maybe it was during the '40s and '50s, but I don't know.

But I can tell you, sometime in the '50s and '60s, there were signs (inaudible). There was a court case that PennDOT was involved in and the City was involved in. Part of the Cottman Avenue (inaudible) was: This is a dangerous, high-accident intersection. And I remember those signs. Millions of dollars were spent to take Cottman Avenue under grade. It was sometime in the '60s to '70s, something like 35, 40 years ago.

It has to be the safest intersection on the Boulevard now. It has been for that amount of time, Cottman and the Boulevard.

How can it not be? It goes

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under grade. The speeding traffic is there. How much -- two questions.

One is: Why can't we just shut down the middle lanes?

The second one is: What since that period in time, '65 to '70, has PennDOT, the City of Philadelphia, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, 'cause everything feeds through them to get the federal money, whether it's through I-95, Vine Street or whatever else we're doing, Schuylkill Expressway, it gets in a planning process, and you get priorities.

But we, PennDOT, and we, the City of Philadelphia, we pressure for our priorities to get in there somewhere.

Where is the placement since Cottman Avenue was taken underground 40 years ago? Any more of the same kind of funding, whether it was to take Cottman Avenue north to the Southhampton Road, the last road we have, or south to

continue that progress, which is so clear to everyone, including in your own testimony today, Ms. Cutler, that is the right design. It's very expensive but the right design.

So we have all the expert State and City over 40 years, we have the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission not with us today, but -- and how many times has it been in the plan or how long has it been in plan? Or has it been in plan at all? Is it in the plan today?

Just answer those two questions.

I'm talking about, one, shutting it down so that I-95 is the same from Key West, Florida, to the top of Maine, six lanes.

And also, what is the status in the last 40 years and today of the planning for taking the rest of the Boulevard underground, even if just in certain areas?

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MS. CUTLER: I do actually not know the answer to the first part of the question, Councilman, although I will certainly do the research and get it for you as to, over the course of time in the '60s and '70s and '80s, whether there was something in the plan or not. I don't know.

I believe there is not money in the plan at the moment for the intersections or for pieces to go underground, although there is certainly money in the TIP for improvement on the Boulevard, whether they be resurfacing or --

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: I just want to know --

(Indiscernible; parties talking at the same time.)

MS. CUTLER: I do not believe there is something in there permanently.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: All these experts here, these are good people. Has it ever been the long-term 40-year

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plan since Cottman Avenue was done? Is it in there today?

MS. CUTLER: It is not in there today. Do we know if it's ever been in there? We don't think it's ever totally been in there.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: What does "not totally" mean?

MS. CUTLER: To put the entire road underground.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: It has been in there for certain sections? Do we know what sections we're talking about?

MS. CUTLER: Only the ones that have already been built.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay. So for the last 40 years or so, there hasn't been any because that's how they built it with the funding, but I'm not being...

So reducing it to six lanes, does the Mayor have the police power to do that, just based on safety for its

own citizens?

MS. CUTLER: Actually, I don't believe he has the power to do it alone. He may because it is a federal interstate -- Route 1 is a federal highway.

It may be that he has the ability to decide if he wanted to do it. The federal government has a right to decide whether it will take back all of the money that's been put on to the Boulevard, but that's not to say that does not happen.

There are certainly places where we have paid back federal dollars, including in Pennsylvania, for changes to a federal highway.

I would just like to note that how plans -- how projects get onto the TIP is not really dictated by DVRPC. Priorities are dictated by those individual counties.

So I will just tell you that right now, PennDOT has probably

$4 billion in projects under design. One third of those dollars are within the City of Philadelphia limits, so the City really has a strong say as to this is what the priorities are for the infrastructure needs of the City.

And so I don't want to leave you with the impression that it's DVRPC that is dictating where to put those dollars. Those decisions are actually made by the --

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: So we're a conduit of the decision-making.

MS. CUTLER: That's correct.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: So if we had prioritized any more of the Roosevelt Boulevard in the last 40 years to go under grade, meaning center lanes, it's Philadelphia that didn't prioritize it, not the DVRPC or PennDOT that said you can't put that in the plan.

MS. CUTLER: Well, I think that the plan needs to be fiscally balanced, and that is the only caveat that DVRPC

would have put on the table.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: But wouldn't the majority of this money be federal money?

MS. CUTLER: Well, it would. But federal dollars flow for certain amounts of it yearly and within each federal highway bill.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Right. Ms. Cutler, I don't mean to be light, but it's a 40-year plan. When it doesn't make it into the 40-year plan, it's really a low priority.

MS. CUTLER: I would not agree it's a 40-year plan.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Well, I didn't make that up. I thought you said it was a 40-year plan.

MS. CUTLER: I said "four years."

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Oh, four years. It's only a four-year plan.

MS. CUTLER: Well, it's a 12-year total plan, but the funding is

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for --

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Well, let's just stick with a long-range project, but the longest planning tool we have is 12 years.

MS. CUTLER: That's correct.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay. So it's never made it in a 12-year plan.

MS. CUTLER: Not that I know of.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Even though no one knows whether it comes from the federal government particularly or it's funding of a transportation bill, it hasn't even been on a wish list.

MS. CUTLER: Not that I'm aware of.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay. Thank you. That's all trying I'm to find out here.

I mean, it's not on your watch, and you're not in the Streets Department, but I wanted to get some

definition of what's going on.

Pedestrian overpasses. Your agency put out a number that no one seems to agree with, that it costs $45 million for an overpass, even a temporary one?

And I know people won't use it if they don't want to, but we can't make 'em cross at the intersection either. But to not try it? We have one on the entire Boulevard right? Is it one or two?

MS. CUTLER: Two.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Two.

And until we can get speed cameras depressed lanes, and other things, isn't somebody at least looking at one overpass somewhere?

MS. CUTLER: Again, Councilman, two things. One, it is not within PennDOT to decide on that spending, whether it's $5 million, $2 million or $10 million for a pedestrian overpass on Roosevelt Boulevard. We would not be

setting those priorities for the City, but certainly there is possibility that a pedestrian overpass can be built.

Secondly, I do want to go back to your other comment. We most certainly cannot lead people to the intersections much less the pedestrian bridges because that's where many of our accidents occur.

We do know that until there was a safety crossing guard put at the pedestrian bridge near the school, that kids coming out of that school weren't even going to cross at that bridge.

And so, it is just not normal pedestrian behavior necessarily. If you think you've got a clear shot, you are going to take it to get across the roadway.

The third piece, though, I do want to go back and to comment on is, in fact, Cottman --

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Can we stop at pedestrian bridges, 'cause

they're used up and down the East Coast --

MS. CUTLER: They are.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: -- in cities much tinier than Philadelphia on roads much narrower than the Roosevelt Boulevard have pedestrian bridges, and in those cities, we know everyone doesn't use them.

What is the reluctance? Is it because of costs or the fact that some people won't cross at signalized intersections or use pedestrian bridges? Are they just dismissed? They are they're not even the plans?

MS. CUTLER: Councilman, I don't know where you got the impression that PennDOT would not be supportive of the pedestrian bridge on Roosevelt Boulevard if the City deemed that to be its priority. We can certainly support it.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: When this resolution was introduced, it got a lot

of publicity. One of the things I remember coming from KYW, the Inquirer, was: Councilman, what's your reaction to a pedestrian bridge in the short term? We've already talked to PennDOT and they said $45 million out the question, there's no money for that.

So PennDOT has spoken on that, and if PennDOT has a different position than that, I'm glad to hear it today, but that's the position that was reported whenever the day this resolution was introduced.

MS. CUTLER: I believe what was reported was -- I believe the question asked of PennDOT was: What is a very rough estimate of the cost? We gave them that number.

The fact of the matter is, the City has the ability to add priority projects on a running basis to the TIP, and if that is deemed to be the City's priority, we would most certainly support it.

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What we did say, I believe, or at least what I will say, is that I am not sure that is the most effective use of those dollars.

If, in fact, we had money and wanted to program some improvements on the Boulevard, I believe it's certainly safer to move the traffic underground. And I don't mean the entire road; I mean at certain intersections and crossings so that the pedestrians get at grade service and the cars go underneath.

What I said. And I just wanted to repeat that, and it was a discussion I had in fact had with Representative Kenney, which was, if we actually are ever in a position where fines from cameras can pay for those improvements, that I would not like to be locked into just pedestrian bridges, that I think there are a wide variety of safety improvements that can happen on the Boulevard, and we'd like it to be as flexible as possible.

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So I don't believe and I don't wish to leave the impression that we are in any way, shape, or form averse to the notion of pedestrian bridges.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: And no one has presented it to you for support?

MS. CUTLER: No.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Excuse me. The Streets Department and PennDOT will be with us at 2 p.m, correct?

COMMISSIONER TOLSON: That's correct.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: I wasn't aware of that. I'm sorry.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: We actually have three more witnesses, two more public hearings scheduled for this room. The hallway is packed. And Councilman O'Neill --

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: I'm fine.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you.

Let's call up the other three witnesses.

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MS. CUTLER: Thank you.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you.

We have Panel 2, and we have Chief Inspector Richard Bullick, and he will be testifying and be supported by Inspector John Heath, Captain Murphy, and Captain Martin.

(Witnesses come forward.)

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: And after them, we'll have Catherine Rossi and AAA and Janice Woodcock.

Thanks. Thank you for coming. Please identify yourself for the record and proceed with your testimony.

CHIEF INSPECTOR BULLICK: Good morning. Good morning, Madam Chair and Councilpersons.

I'm Chief Inspector Richard Bullick of the Philadelphia Police Department's Special Control Bureau. Thank you for inviting me to speak.

With me today are Inspectors John Heath of the Northeast Police

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Division and Inspector L.B. Rebstock of the Traffic Parking Division. Along with Captain Murphy of Accident Investigations, and Captain Al Martin of the District who coordinates this.

The mission of the Roosevelt Boulevard Traffic Accident Reduction Initiative is to eliminate the loss of life and serious injuries resulting from the improper driving practices along the Roosevelt Boulevard corridor. This mission will be accomplished by enforcing and tracking and analyzing the current vehicle accident information to achieve the maximum enforcement and efficiency.

The Roosevelt Boulevard is a 12-line highway with motorists constantly exceeding the posted speed limits. In addition, the insurance economy studies show that the Roosevelt Boulevard has some of the most dangerous intersections in the country.

The drivers must be reeducated

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on motor vehicle laws and obeying them. Also, with the aggressive police controls and the new electronic enforcement tracking, the Roosevelt Boulevard will be much safer for motorists as well as pedestrians.

Thank you.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you. Attending this committee hearing is also Juan Ramos, who is a member of Public safety.

Thank you.

Councilman Rizzo?

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you.

Chief Bullick, as you know, and I think appreciate the fact that PennDOT has given us a substantial amount of money. I think it's $1,100,000 to pay police officers to patrol -- as you described, aggressively patrol on Roosevelt Boulevard.

My disappointment is the fact that that seems to me to be the very core of what a police department does --

patrol dangerous roadways. What -- without the grant, what would be the circumstances on Roosevelt Boulevard for patrol?

CHIEF INSPECTOR BULLICK: We have the six districts that border Roosevelt Boulevard -- four in the northeast, one in east, and one in the northwest division.

They're all driven by 9-1-1 calls, so they drive the Boulevard every day, they observe it, but it's not cost-effective for just going from job to job mainly.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: But an officer that's on an assignment on a 9-1-1 job, if he's on the Boulevard or she's on the Boulevard, and they see a person driving aggressively, it's probably not probable that that officer will ask radio to take him away from that assignment to stop a person. Or am I wrong there?

CHIEF INSPECTOR BULLICK: They

would stop them.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: They would stop them.

But with the $250,000 that Senator Mike Stack made available to you, we get a report on exactly, you know, the nitty-gritty, but let's talk about how effective is it, how long will that money last before we're back where we were with just, for lack of a better word, casual control of the Boulevard?

CHIEF INSPECTOR BULLICK: Right. That's why I brought the two captains next to me. They know the nuts and bolts of what's going on with the Boulevard.

As I said, here's Captain Martin.

CAPTAIN MARTIN: Good morning, Councilman.

With this grant, we have $201,000. Starting around the week of Christmas, we'll be running at four days a week. Currently, we're running at

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five days a week, from 7 to 3, and one two-man team, and 3 to 10.

They're out there, and we're going to the end of the grant in September of next year.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: When that grant runs out, I'm not sure what we have in the pipeline, maybe another 250,000.

But, Captain, let's say that we didn't have the money, what would be our police presence other than the fact that they use the Boulevard to patrol, to get to other assignments? What conditions will you be in without that money?

CAPTAIN MURPHY: This programs works: It does reduce accidents; it does save lives.

What we would do is, we would have to redeploy our personnel. This is one of our main functions, as you said, saving lives through traffic enforcement.

So we would have to come up

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with a new deployment strategy with more officers out there (inaudible), 'cause there's more officers working.

Each patrol district along the Boulevard employs more officers out there, and the traffic report here on the Boulevard that we did in 2002, it also has the statistics and the numbers that shows the activity from 2002 through 2006. You can review that and you will see that there's secondary activity on the Boulevard that's not paid for significantly.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Captain, just for the record, this program that you're describing is overtime-driven; is that correct?

CAPTAIN MARTIN: Yes, it is.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Could you also comment on, right now, what kind of violations you are writing out there? Unfortunately, the Philadelphia police can't use radar; that has to get fixed. We should have other technologies to

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calibrate speedometers (inaudible).

So could you just comment on those two points?

CAPTAIN MARTIN: Currently, as a part of this PennDOT program, we have six vehicles currently on the Boulevard in each district. There's two in the Northeast Division, eight in the Northeast and two in the -- there's ten, actually, that we have calibrating the speeding program devices. And they're out there writing speeding tickets when they have the time available to do that.

Trackers basically need a specific distance to follow the vehicle. Or if you're in a secondary road, you have to clock 'em in and clock 'em out. Time and distance equal speed. So there is a process.

At rush hour, it could be dangerous chasing speeders. It could be creating a more hazardous situation by chasing an individual, so officers have to use discretion and common sense on

enforcing speeding violations.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: What are we doing out there? Are we writing speeding tickets?

I know reckless driving tickets covers it all.

CAPTAIN MARTIN: Yes. Specific violations that we're looking for are following too closely, red-light running, too fast conditions when the weather is bad, reckless driving.

And, obviously, the Parking Authority has the lights out there and are talking about putting out the Doppler radar.

But there's no substitute for a police officer in emergency situations where an officer has to be out there. So if there's a continuing course of criminal conduct, you need an officer out there, making an arrest, ending that problem right away.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Could you comment on what I believe would be an

excellent tool for municipal police departments? Would you agree with me or disagree that having the ability to use radar would be a big enhancement to the traffic enforcement, especially on the Boulevard and other municipal streets?

CAPTAIN MARTIN: It definitely is, Councilman. We would love to have radar, and we have mentioned it to PennDOT and we hope that some day, we'll have it. You have to first pass a law for a city of the first class.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: That would give us the ability to --

CAPTAIN MARTIN: It's so much easier with radar. You can just sit there and hit a car.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I know that the citizens are going to have to get ready for that, because the Pennsylvania State Police, I understand, are coming in gradually starting in January, and the State Police will start patrolling 95 and the Schuylkill and the other

roadways, and they're going to use radar.

CAPTAIN MARTIN: Also, what we plan to do, as the State Police slowly come in our sectors on the expressways, we would like to move those officers to the lower end of the Boulevard, like take them off of 76 from City Avenue to Montgomery Drive and move those cars and those two or three officers from, say, Ninth Street to (inaudible).

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I guess the last person I would like to hear from -- unfortunately, the sad part of the discussion is the fact that we've had this number of fatalities, and I want to compliment the Accident Investigation Unit for the great job that you've done.

And I'm sure, Captain, the saddest of the fatalities and the other issues associated with those, has many of the fatalities been resolved? The perpetrators caught? Or are there still open issues with that?

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CAPTAIN MURPHY: As far as the Boulevard Councilman.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Please identify yourself for the record.

CAPTAIN MURPHY: Mike Murphy, Accident Investigation.

As far as the Boulevard, if we could compare the fatalities from this year to last year, there's 9 this year compared to 16 last year. So the track record is a little better this year compared to.

CAPTAIN MARTIN: Councilman, I see you looking at the numbers of PennDOT. There's actually -- there were 11 fatalities this year. One was delayed for seven days; that's not in the mix. So it's showing ten.

And also two of the ten happened south of Ninth Street, so they were not actually in the Boulevard corridor, the Boulevard extension.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: So you just have one of the fatalities that is

still -- there's not been an arrest made on that? I'm sure that's ongoing.

Could you just take 30 seconds to elaborate on that one? And maybe it would be helpful, since the media is here, if you would tell us what you're looking for, which one of these accidents is exactly the one that's still open.

CAPTAIN MURPHY: That's the one that occurred on the evening of -- I'll give you the exact date and time.

That happened October 16th at around 10 p.m., just north of Rhawn Street, on the Boulevard. There was a vehicle traveling northbound on the Boulevard that struck a 15-year-old girl as she was crossing the street mid-block. The vehicle fled the scene without stopping. This is the open case.

At this point, we have very little witness testimony as to the vehicle that we're looking for, and

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we're still hoping that someone will come forward and help us identify this vehicle.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: There's no information on possibly the type of vehicle that you could mention today?

CAPTAIN MURPHY: No. Not at this point.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN DICICCO: The Chair recognizes Councilman O'Neill followed by a question from Councilwoman Ramos.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Captain Murphy, does Accident Investigation or any other unites that you're aware of, keep data on -- or develop data on accidents, particularly serious ones, involving pedestrians, whether it's purely speeding or whether it was pedestrian negligence or driver negligence?

I'm not speaking -- that kind of figure out -- I know we have mid-intersection as opposed to the

intersection, but I just don't know how much causation we can find in those three areas at least.

CAPTAIN MURPHY: When we investigate an accident, we try to determine the cause of the accident, and that is part of our determination. And I believe PennDOT keeps statistics on what they believe the cause of accidents are.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Do you know what percentage are in those categories?

CAPTAIN MURPHY: As far as the pedestrians? Probably about two-thirds. There's human error involved with the pedestrian and the other error would be the operator of the vehicle.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: How about speeding or pure negligence?

CAPTAIN MURPHY: The one fatality that we have this year was definitely a reckless driver speeding.

With the others, we don't

believe that speeding was a factor.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Councilman Ramos.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

A little while ago, my colleague Councilman O'Neill threw out a pretty interesting and unique idea of a proposition, and that was about eliminating the middle lanes, the center lanes on the Boulevard.

Do you think that that would help, or do you think that would not help? Since you guys patrol those highways, or try to --

CAPTAIN MARTIN: I believe it would just put more congestion along the highways, Frankford Avenue, 95.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Would it be safer? I mean, that's a thought that came to my mind. You know, the good people up in the Northeast would get up in arms that it would take much longer

to get home after work, but there's a safety issue.

CAPTAIN MARTIN: Well, personally, I drive Roosevelt Boulevard from Byberry, and it's behavior. We have to teach behavior.

If you remember back in the '60s, I believe you had two park districts on the Boulevard -- one on Luzerne Street and one at Rhawn. You had 95th that went from Rhawn to Southhampton Road. You had the police out there and you had the coverage.

Unfortunately, we can't have those numbers that we had in those days, but that's a lot of the reason we need this grant. This grant is great. If anything, we wish they would increase it because it would increase the coverage.

But as Captain Martin said earlier, there are a lot of tickets being issued by officers on straight time that work these districts.

So it's not like we didn't have

the grant. It's just so much that or the grant allows these guys and gals to concentrate just on the Boulevard or just on the traffic violations.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Do any other of the officers have any comments on this proposing?

I know that Councilman O'Neill presented it as an idea and maybe if we could get rid of this center lane, this safety issue would then be better addressed.

CAPTAIN MURPHY: Councilman, one of the things is lowering the speed limit by even 5 miles an hour. That could make a difference in stopping distance.

So in this Task Force we can get together and talk with PennDOT and the Streets Department about lowering the speed limit even 5 miles an hour, which may have an effect on reducing accidents.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Thank you,

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Mr. Chairman.

COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you.

Are there any other questions for these witnesses?

(No further questions.)

COUNCILMAN DICICCO: The next panel is Catherine Rossi and Trooper McGuire.

Is there anyone here from the Planning Commission who will be testifying? Sammy Wolfe? Is Mr. Harrell here?

I'd like to remind everyone that I know this is an important subject and matter, but we are running about an hour later late, and there will be a Public Property hearing as well as soon as this hearing is concluded.

Councilman Rizzo has provided for those who may want to hear further testimony to attend a public hearing in the Northeast on Verree Road, Cora Services, at 2 o'clock p.m. And if need be, we can recess this hearing to a

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further date.

Good afternoon, good morning. Please identify yourself for the record and proceed with your testimony.

MS. ROSSI: Good morning. I'm Cathy Rossi, Manager of Public and Government Affairs for AAA.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak to you this morning.

Almost 200,000 City of Philadelphia residents are members of AAA, and many more -- thousands more, actually -- are driving in the city every day. AAA was founded on the principles of road and pedestrian safety more than 100 years ago, and we appreciate the time that City Council is spending in an effort to find ways of keeping motorists and pedestrians safer on one of the most dangerous roads in the country.

AAA shares your concerns about Roosevelt Boulevard.

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About 5,000 pedestrians die every year in this country after being struck by automobiles. It is inevitable that we will likely see more deaths unless we are proactive about doing something. Why?

We have a number of societal factors on a virtual collision course. As individuals, we are buying more cars, and congestion is getting worse. We, as a society, are encouraging more walkable communities. We encourage mass transit, which often involves walking to bus stops or train or trolley stops. And we're seeing an influx of many poor and uneducated immigrants, new arrivals coming from cultures where pedestrians are truly given the right-of-way.

When a driver hits or injures or kills a pedestrian, most especially a child, it becomes a life-altering event no matter who is at fault. That is why addressing this issue is so important, because it matters to drivers and

pedestrians alike.

AAA suggests for your consideration several options on Roosevelt Boulevard that may help mitigate its dangers. They focus on three Es: Engineering, enforcement, and equity.

We should, in every way possible, educate drivers about the dangers of the Boulevard, but will education alone change driving or pedestrian behavior?

For some, but not for most, drivers and pedestrians, unless combined with enforcement and engineering measures. The problem is both motorists and pedestrians, so the City's approach should consider both.

AAA suggests designating Roosevelt Boulevard "a safety corridor" -- making it a strict-enforcement, high-profile, high-fine area, with strong police presence.

Post warning signs for

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motorists and pedestrians. Consider posting portable speed monitors that flash drivers' speeds.

Visible law enforcement is the greatest deterrent to speeding. Ticket both drivers and pedestrians for speeding and jaywalking.

Consider sting operations like those in Bethesda, Maryland, where police wear plainclothes and walk around the street at specific times when pedestrians are supposed to have the right-of-way. Drivers who don't yield are ticketed and vice-versa.

The purpose is to cut down on the illegal and dangerous behavior. However, enforcement alone will not work.

AAA recommends banning right-turn-on red along the Boulevard.

It will take engineering measures to help create a safer flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic. Many cities have constructed "safe havens" or

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islands in the middle where pedestrians can stand if they can't make it all the way across the street.

Signaled, lighted countdowns, for pedestrians, such as those in Washington, D.C. and other metropolitan areas, make it less dangerous to make decisions about crossing the street because they can visibly see how many seconds they have left to do it.

In certain areas along the Boulevard, an overhead pedestrian bridge may be a viable solution, engineered in such a way that pedestrians are forced to use it. This may mean erecting barriers or fencing along medians. Such just went up on median strips in between a metro station and a mall in Wheaton, Maryland, to keep pedestrians back.

AAA recommends measures that can get motorists' and pedestrians' attention such as newer high-tech, high-visibility crosswalk designs with special sensors and in-ground or

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overhead lights that flash when pedestrians are using the area.

The City and/or the State could partner with major business corporations to possibly fund a high-tech crosswalk or pedestrian bridge. AAA encourages creative public/private partnerships where they have never been considered before.

We know that you're looking at speed cameras as a part of this discussion. Right now, none are used in Pennsylvania, nor are they authorized by law. And, frankly, we believe that lawmakers will be justifiably wary of automated enforcement, unless appropriate legislative safeguards are put in place.

AAA advises proceeding judicially, knowing that where speed cameras are now used, such in as Washington, D.C., it appears that revenue enhancement and not safety is the primary motivation for their

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operation. Thus, we have been correctly of their expansion there in Washington.

Just as radar in Pennsylvania can only be used by Pennsylvania State Police, right now, AAA would recommend that if initiated, that speed cameras operated by the State police with the following stipulations:

Under strict and specific standards spelled out in authorizing legislation.

With warning signs posted, telling motorists that speed cameras are present on the Boulevard.

As a pilot project only, with evaluation after a predetermined period.

Speed cameras operated by Pennsylvania State Police, with PennDOT authorizing those sites.

That speed cameras be mobile units, not fixed units, on the principle that once motorists know where cameras are, they will slow down for the cameras and resume faster speeds later.

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That speed-camera vendors contracted for the program be paid flat monthly fees that in no way correlate to the number of citations issued.

Red-light cameras appear to be effective in Philadelphia, and this enabling legislation was written with the cooperation of AAA, Councilman Rizzo, and others, and AAA supports their expansion.

Be it speed cameras or red-light cameras, the purpose of automated enforcement is not to catch people in the act of speeding or running a red light and, certainly, it is not enhancing City or State coffers.

The purpose is to slow motorists down or stop them from running red lights in the first place. Our priority and primary consideration, as you move forward, is, and should remain, the safety of motorists and pedestrians.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I'd be happy to

answer any questions now or later.

COUNCILMAN DICICCO: The Chair recognizes Councilman O'Neill.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: In the interest of time, one quick question. You've had many good things you've said in here. I think it's dangerous by design, even though it wasn't intended to be that way in 1900, but with the red-light cameras, I know you have some concerns. Would you be willing again to be a part of the process with the Parking Authority, PennDOT, and whoever is the legislative sponsorship?

MS. ROSSI: Absolutely.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Any other questions for this witness?

Councilman Rizzo.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: One of the things that I want to see, if it's appropriate and legal, is to get a feel for what the speed limits are. The Parking Authority's representatives

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indicate that the cameras do have the capability that are already in service to monitor speed on green.

So I think it would be a good engineering tool to possibly get that enabled. No enforcement, no fine, but just to try to get a feel for the speeds that are occurring there. I think we're all going to be very surprised.

MS. ROSSI: Absolutely. Any information that can help make decisions about limitation measures would be helpful to everyone.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you, and I appreciate AAA's always interest in Philadelphia. And hopefully together, we'll resolve some of these issues.

MS. ROSSI: We'd be happy to be a part of it.

Thank you.

COUNCILMAN DICICCO: The Planning Commission is next.

(Witness comes forward.)

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COUNCILMAN DICICCO: As you're approaching the witness table, I'm reviewing your written testimony and ask that in the interest of time, you summarize. Unless I'm missing something, it appears that much of your testimony has already been gone over by the PennDOT and/or the Streets Department is that a fair statement?

MR. JASPER: My name is Gary Jasper, the Deputy Executive Director with the City Planning Commission. With me is Debra Shoff, Senior Presentation Planner at the City Planning Commission.

Councilman, as you've stated much of our prepared testimony is very similar to that given of PennDOT and the Streets Department.

Major emphases, we all believe, should be enforcement along the Roosevelt Boulevard corridor and education of both drivers and pedestrians.

But as planners and longer-term

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thinkers, I would just like to add a couple of points.

One, we believe that one of the long-term solution involves major reconstruction of the Boulevard, ideally, rail transit, but this reconstruction would be very expensive.

A study in 2002 -- I believe it was based on 1980 dollars or 2000 dollars -- estimated that the cost of depressing the center lanes of the Boulevard and providing a provision for rail transit as well would cost about $2.5 million. That's in 2000 dollars, so that cost estimate most assuredly has risen since.

I would like to add, though, that with the prospect of additional State transportation funding as recommended by the Governor's Reform Commission, that some of the recommendations of that commission offer some hope for a long-term solution.

The City Planning Commission's

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March 2003 Roosevelt Boulevard Corridor Transportation Investment Study evaluated five alternatives.

One of the alternatives, as I will mention, called for express highway lanes with rapid-transit tracks and a median road. While the report itself did not recommend that alternative mainly due to esthetics, it may warrant additional discussion and evaluation.

This alternative would provide not only a major transit upgrade serving almost 125,000 daily riders, but it would also be half of the Roosevelt Boulevard traffic volume, and it would also eliminate the mid-block pedestrian crossings by forcing such crossings to occur at the bridges spanning the Boulevard.

A study taken by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission will review threes prior studies and develop suggestions to improve safety and mobility. The Planning Commission will

serve on the steering committee of that as well as the Safety Task Force, and we will continue working with other City departments and PennDOT towards working towards a safer Roosevelt Boulevard corridor.

Thank you.

COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you.

Are there any other questions for these witnesses?

(No further questions.)

COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you again for the time you've spent this morning. I know we've been running rather late.

Are there any other witnesses who have not been called up yet?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Seeing none, with the acknowledgment of my colleague, the co-chair of the Public Safety Committee, these hearings will be recessed until 2 p.m. this afternoon at the Cora, C-O-R-A, Services Facility at

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8540 Verree Road.
Thank you. Thank you all for attending.

C E R T I F I C A T E

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the proceedings of the City of Philadelphia Council Joint Committees on Public Safety and Streets and Services are contained fully and accurately in the stenographic notes taken by me on Tuesday, December 12, 2006, and that this is a true and correct statement of same.

_____

JOSEPHINE CARDILLO
Registered Professional Reporter

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