



Transportation and Equity: A 2017 Agenda for Candidates

In New York, mobility is opportunity. We have succeeded as a global leader in social justice, economic growth and environmental sustainability by investing for more than a century in comprehensive, reliable and affordable transportation.

But today, our transportation network is showing signs of strain, with subways beyond capacity, bus service increasingly slow and unreliable, and poor access to transportation for people with disabilities. Despite recent safety improvements from the Mayor’s Vision Zero initiative, traffic crashes continue to kill and injure thousands of New Yorkers each year. New Yorkers who are low-income, elderly, or have disabilities suffer disproportionately from high fares, long commutes, polluted air, and dangerous streets. To maintain New York’s competitive edge and achieve the OneNYC goal of a just and inclusive city, the Mayor and City Council should adopt the following 2017 Transportation and Equity Agenda:

Funding Public Transportation

New Yorkers made more than 5.6 million subway trips on an average weekday in 2015 -- and close to six million trips on weekends -- the highest ridership in nearly seven decades. But that increasing demand is overwhelming the century-old subway and its antiquated signaling system, leading to overcrowding and delays. The Mayor and the City Council must take the following steps to invest in the modernization of subway infrastructure:

- **Identify and Secure Funds:** In 2015, the City significantly increased its funding commitment to the MTA’s five-year capital plan, to a total of \$2.5 billion. The City must follow through by putting real dollars behind its promise. Albany must do the same.
- **Capture Value:** As the city grows, it should capture a portion of the real estate value created by rezonings and neighborhood redevelopment to fund transit improvements, to guarantee that our infrastructure can meet the growing demands placed upon it.
- **Find Local Solutions:** At a time of policy uncertainty in Albany and Washington, the City should lead on finding creative local solutions to the transit funding crisis, for example by supporting the Move NY Fair Plan or other new sources of revenue.

Better Bus Service

New York City Transit and MTA buses carry nearly 2.5 million riders on an average day, providing a critical link for communities that lack adequate subway access. Unfortunately, service is often slow

and unreliable, and buses are generally neglected by policymakers, at the expense of residents with disabilities and those who already have the most punishing commutes. To create more efficient options for New Yorkers who depend on buses, the City must revitalize its bus network:

- Expand Select Bus Service: meet the City's promise to create 20 SBS routes by the end of 2017.
- Add bus lanes on local routes: the City should double its bus lane mileage in the next four years, with a focus on using bus-only lanes to improve local service. It should also redesign bus stops so that people with disabilities and older people can board and alight safely.
- Build better bus lanes: the City should experiment with more robust bus lanes that work more effectively, including lanes with physical separation from mixed traffic.
- Collaborate to improve service: the City should work with the MTA on bus improvements that require joint action, such as implementing all-door bus boarding, installing Transit Signal Priority citywide and modernizing outdated bus routes to reflect people's current commuting needs.

Affordable Access to Public Transportation

Public transit should provide access to jobs and economic opportunity, but one in four low-income New Yorkers struggles to afford a MetroCard. Wealthier and middle-class New Yorkers receive transit discounts through pre-tax transit benefits, seniors and people with disabilities receive half-price MetroCards, and students receive subsidized rides. But we do not lend any help to the people who need it most: people who cannot afford to ride. The City should take steps to guarantee that everyone, including the poorest New Yorkers, can share the benefits of public transit:

- Fair Fares: the City should follow the lead of San Francisco, Seattle and other global cities and introduce a program of half-priced subway and bus fares for New Yorkers living below the poverty level.
- Commuter Rail: Encourage reduced ticket prices for Metro North and Long Island Rail Road users traveling exclusively within city limits.

Prioritizing Transit Accessibility

Access to mobility provides access to opportunity. Yet a significant number of New Yorkers are unable to benefit from our city's expansive transit network due to lack of access, whether due to limited mobility, age, or disability. For people with disabilities, that translates to a 29% employment rate in New York City. In fact, people with disabilities cite poor transportation options as a leading cause of unemployment. The City must lead the way to a more inclusive, accessible transit network, not one that is largely unusable for residents with disabilities.

- The City should work with the MTA to build and maintain an accessible subway system: the City must guarantee that the MTA makes the installation of new elevators throughout the subways a top priority. The City also must push the MTA to maintain and repair subway elevators already in place and to improve its status alert system.

- Reform Access-A-Ride: the City should work with the MTA to fix Access-A-Ride, the MTA's abysmal paratransit service. The City should help integrate its accessible yellow taxi fleet into AAR so riders can get a ride right away, rather than having to reserve a ride the day before.
- Legislate new requirements for wheelchair-accessible service: Either City Council or the Taxi and Limousine Commission (which has proposed new rules) should take steps to make sure a greater percentage of livery services, including ride-sharing services like Uber and Lyft, serve all New Yorkers, as yellow taxis already are required to do.
- Fix curb cuts: The City must embark on a rapid program to survey, fix or install, and maintain all curb cuts throughout the five boroughs, which now are often impassable for wheelchair users and others who need them to cross streets.
- Clean sidewalks, crosswalks and bus stops from ice, snow and puddles much more rapidly: The City must develop a more comprehensive snow-removal policy so that pedestrians can get around more easily after snowfalls and rainstorms.

Doubling Bicycling by 2020

Cycling is a sustainable, healthy and increasingly popular way to get around New York. The City has expanded the bike lane network in some areas in recent years, and Mayor de Blasio has adopted a goal of doubling the number of bike trips by 2020. Meanwhile, Citi Bike is seeing record use. To promote cycling as a form of public transportation for all New Yorkers, the Department of Transportation must take key steps to make streets safer for people on bikes:

- Build protected bike lanes: prioritize the construction of 50 lane miles per year of protected bike lanes across the five boroughs, with priority given to areas with high crash rates and poor existing networks. The City must ensure the DOT is appropriately funded to complete this and other bicycling safety initiatives.
- Expand bike share: create an equitable and integrated five-borough bike share system by using public funding and incentives to support its expansion, and eliminate the mandatory fee Citi Bike's operator, Motivate, pays the City when bike share stations replace metered parking.

Achieving Vision Zero by 2024

Since the launch of New York City's Vision Zero Initiative, the Mayor and City Council have won a safer 25 mph speed limit and approved several other traffic safety laws, leading to an historic drop in traffic fatalities in 2015. But if the City is to reach its stated goal of zero deaths or serious injuries by 2024, officials must make greater investments and move more quickly to fix the most dangerous streets in each borough, and make data-driven and automated traffic enforcement more effective and equitable across the city. We call on the City to:

- Expand the use of automated enforcement technology: to achieve fair and effective deterrence against dangerous driving, the City must expand its use of speed safety- and red light cameras and explore new technologies like failure-to-yield cameras.

- Set a path: publish a set of clear metrics and concrete plans to get to zero deaths and serious injuries by 2024.
- Fund Vision Zero: expand funding in future budgets for the Department of Transportation, so the DOT can move more quickly to re-engineer New York City's most dangerous streets.
- Reform dangerous streets first: prioritize the streets and intersections in the DOT's Pedestrian Safety Action Plans for redesigns based on "complete streets" principles, including comprehensive safety enhancements for all modes of transportation.
- Commit NYPD to the task: the New York Police Department must create a unified citywide policy for Vision Zero, and commit to 1) data-driven traffic enforcement that focuses on the most dangerous driver behaviors, 2) the use of the Right of Way Law, and 3) comprehensive training of police officers to overcome current racial bias in enforcement.
- Make equity a factor: City Hall should also explicitly include equity as a goal of Vision Zero, and outline what steps City agencies must take in order to ensure no communities are unfairly targeted by enforcement or denied safety benefits.
- Put safety first: Through policy and legislation, City Hall and elected officials must ensure that public health and safety for all road users is prioritized when considering changes to City streets.

Parking and the Allocation of Street Space

The City should take a hard look at how it allocates public curbside space. While we applaud recent changes to parking minimums, we believe that reforms must dedicate more space to uses like bike- and car-share, for-hire vehicle pickups, and the delivery of goods. The Mayor and City Council must take action to:

- Reform parking requirements: the City should build on the changes to parking minimums included as part of Zoning for Quality and Affordability by giving developers incentives to contribute toward sustainable transportation over private vehicle usage. The City should eliminate the parking requirement, or allow developers to substitute contributions to other transit improvements like construction of bike share stations or car-sharing spaces or contributions to subway and bus infrastructure. The City should also enforce the no idling law.
- Reform street parking: expand business-friendly and efficient loading options, including increasing the proportion of commercial loading zones on side streets and night-time deliveries and reviving incentives for off-hour freight deliveries. Study and plan for efficient parking solutions that address the growth of car- and ride-sharing services and driver-less vehicle technologies.
- Enforce existing parking rules: the City should prioritize enforcement against parking on sidewalks, in bus lanes, and double-parking, which hinders the operation of buses

and emergency vehicles and inhibits the movement of people with disabilities and other pedestrians.

- Pilot innovative technology: reactivate the PARK Smart program and apply dynamic pricing and new payment technologies for curbside parking spaces.

Protecting L Train Riders

With the L train shutdown looming, 300,000 daily riders in Brooklyn and Manhattan will be without their primary mode of transportation—and without robust alternatives in place, these New Yorkers will face long, difficult commutes. The majority of realistic alternatives will focus on surface-level transit improvements, much of which is overseen by the New York City Department of Transportation (DOT). That means the City has a major role to play in ensuring New Yorkers are able to get to work, school, medical appointments, and other important destinations during the L train shutdown. The City must prioritize development of new bus routes, improve bus service along existing routes, and implement transit-friendly street designs that minimize delays, transfers, and overcrowding. To achieve these goals, the City should:

- Develop Brooklyn-Manhattan Bus Rapid Transit: implement a new BRT route over the Williamsburg Bridge, including dedicated lanes on the bridge and in Brooklyn and Manhattan.
- Transform vital streets: the City should convert top-priority streets like 14th Street in Manhattan and Grand Street in Brooklyn into dedicated transitways, facilitating rapid movement of buses and access for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Pilot new bus technology: the City should focus on affected bus routes near the L train to pilot new technology like Transit Signal Priority that could help make buses faster and more reliable.
- Lead with inclusive governance: the City should create a working group that includes elected officials and community groups to guarantee that concerns can be heard and addressed in real time.