



**Testimony of Carlos Castell Croke  
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**City Council Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
Hearing on Preliminary Budget  
March 16th, 2022**

NYLCV represents over 30,000 members in New York City and we are committed to advancing a sustainability agenda that will make our people, our neighborhoods, and our economy healthier and more resilient.

In order to effectively fight climate change and protect public health, we need to reimagine how people live and move in our City. Everyone should have access to reliable, affordable, and clean transportation in addition to safe streets and open spaces. We need to decrease the amount of private vehicles on our streets, they are a significant percentage of our emissions, a major source of air pollution, and result in public health issues such as crashes, congestion, and noise pollution. These issues are even more prevalent near New York City's major highways, which often run through low-income communities and communities of color.

Lack of safe biking infrastructure is a major barrier to accessing clean transportation alternatives and as we expand bike, e-bike and e-scooter shares we must also build out safe corridors to use them on. Additionally, we need to make public transit affordable and accessible so that everyone can have access to it, no matter where they live in the City. All these issues are even more prevalent in transportation deserts where cars rule, which is why we need to work to ensure these safe and reliable alternatives to cars.

If we are to improve the safety, accessibility, and quality of our transportation network and our City's streets, we must fully fund and implement the NYC Streets Plan. This plan will help to improve existing infrastructure for transit, cycling, and pedestrians as well as solve bottlenecks and congestion. It also intends to reduce the amount of dangerous vehicles on the streets, protect residents from reckless drivers through enforced speed cameras and bus lanes, and reform on-street parking. This plan will also reinforce the use of public and micro-mobility options, will make our City safer and cleaner, and will put money back into our underfunded transit system.

This will all be accomplished specifically by requiring the City to install 250 miles of protected bike lanes and 150 miles of dedicated bus lanes, 500 bus stop upgrades, 1,000 intersection signal

improvements, 400 intersection redesigns, 500 accessible pedestrian signs, in addition to improving pedestrian spaces, commercial loading zones, and parking spaces, within five years.

In order to efficiently implement all these transformative changes, we will need the funding to make it happen. We strongly encourage the Council to include \$170 million in the FY23 budget for implementation, as the plan is expected to cost at least \$1.7 billion over the next 10 years.

The Fair Fares program is also crucial in making public transportation more accessible for New Yorkers. The program helps eligible New Yorkers with low incomes manage their transportation costs by providing them with discounted subway and bus fares. We are glad to see that this program has been allocated \$75 million in the Mayor's preliminary budget and guaranteed annual funding. However, greater investment is needed in the next budget so that the program can be expanded to include other forms of public transportation discounts such as for Citi-Bike and Metro North.

We hope the Council will work to fight for these crucial initiatives and plans so we can have a truly traversable and equitable City.

Thank you.