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**MAYOR BLOOMBERG, SPEAKER QUINN AND
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSIONER SADIK-KHAN RELEASE
CITY'S MOST COMPREHENSIVE PEDESTRIAN SAFETY STUDY
TO DATE AND ANNOUNCE INSTALLATION OF 1,500
PEDESTRIAN COUNTDOWN SIGNALS ACROSS THE CITY**

*Speeding, Driver Inattention, Failure to Yield are Prime
Causes in Most Serious Pedestrian Accidents*

*Reduced 20 M.P.H. Speed Limits and Street Redesigns for
Pedestrian Safety*

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn and Department of Transportation ([DOT](#)) Commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan today released the City's most comprehensive pedestrian safety report to date, which found that pedestrian fatalities occur disproportionately along multi-lane streets and avenues, and that speeding, driver inattention and failure to yield are the underlying factors behind the vast majority of pedestrian fatalities or serious injury accidents. The report – the Pedestrian Safety Study and Action Plan – recommends a series of actions to continue to reduce pedestrian accidents, including pilot programs to reduce speed limits to 20 m.p.h. and street redesigns to increase pedestrian safety. In addition to releasing the report, the Mayor, Speaker and Commissioner announced the conclusion of the City's pedestrian countdown signal pilot program. Based on the data collected, which clearly demonstrates the types of intersections where countdown signals have a positive safety impact, pedestrian countdown signals will be installed at 1,500 initial intersections across the city, with installation beginning this month. The Pedestrian Safety Study and Action Plan is the most comprehensive report of its kind in the nation, reviewing more than 7,000 crash records. The Mayor also was joined by [NYPD](#) Chief of Transportation James Tuller, State Assemblyman Jeffrion Aubry, State Senator Jose Peralta, City Council Transportation Committee Chair James Vacca and Council Member Jessica S. Lapin at the announcement at 108th Street and Northern Boulevard in Queens where a new pedestrian countdown signal was installed this weekend.

"We've made historic gains in reducing traffic fatalities, and this year we are seeing pedestrians fatalities decline again," said Mayor Bloomberg. "But we still see too many families devastated by traffic accidents. The report and actions detailed today, including the installation of pedestrian countdown signals across the city, will make our streets even safer, especially for the pedestrians who, year

in and year out, account for the majority of New York's traffic fatalities."

"Our local government must be the national leader in protecting the millions of pedestrians and cyclists who travel our streets every day," said Council Speaker Quinn. "Created through the City Council's legislative action in 2008, the pedestrian safety report is a critical tool that keeps pedestrians as safe as possible, keeps our neighborhoods senior friendly, and keeps us on track to meeting our goal to significantly cut carbon emissions and congestion rates by the year 2030."

"New York's streets are the safest of any big city, and this study provides a roadmap for safety strategies throughout the five boroughs to make our streets even safer," said Commissioner Sadik-Khan. "Pedestrian countdown signals can help cut out any guesswork in crossing busy intersections to keep pedestrians from being caught in the middle of a dangerous situation."

"One of the biggest complaints I get as a Councilman is cars speeding down side streets, ignoring traffic controls, and creating a dangerous environment for pedestrians in general," said Transportation Committee Chair Vacca. "People are often in a rush to go nowhere, and they put other people's lives in danger in the process. As Transportation Chair, I firmly believe we need new and innovative approaches to traffic calming. I welcome the findings in today's report, and look forward to working with Speaker Quinn and the Department of Transportation to take action in the months ahead to make New York a safer city for pedestrians and motorists alike."

"Whether it's walking to the subway, taking a trip to the store, or just going for a stroll in the park, we are a city of pedestrians," said Council Member Lappin, chair of the City Council Committee on Aging. "However, our roads can be dangerous places, especially for our senior citizens. We're here today to announce an unwavering commitment to further reducing road fatalities and making our streets safer for everyone. We all use these streets and we need them to be safe."

"In 2008, the City Council made pedestrians and bicyclists a priority with the passage of the Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety Act, mandating annual reports on the dangers pedestrians and bicyclists face and related accident data," said Council Member Vincent J. Gentile. "Today, we're continuing to deliver on our promise to make the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists paramount. Today, we have a comprehensive report on the dangers that threaten pedestrians and bicyclists and a set of solutions to safeguard the public. Thanks to Mayor Bloomberg, Speaker Quinn and the Department of Transportation's commitment to protecting those who choose to walk or bike, a safer city will come out of this report."

Pedestrian Countdown Signals

Pedestrian countdown signals, which display LED numbers that count down the number of seconds remaining before the "flashing hand" phase turns solid red, can help pedestrians decide whether there is enough time to cross the street safely and reduce the number of

pedestrians still in crosswalks during the “do not walk” phase of the light.

A comprehensive pilot program was started last year, which installed countdown signals at 24 intersections in five corridors and used video to analyze the impacts. The pilot showed that the signals at wider crosswalks helped reduce the number of pedestrians still in the crosswalk when the countdown signals turned to solid red. The countdown signals had no effect on streets with shorter pedestrian crossing distances. A smaller pilot program, started in 2006, proved inconclusive and the program was expanded and video monitoring was added.

The 1,500 initial intersections scheduled for pedestrian countdown signal installation are along corridors selected due to roadway width and geometry, and their high rates of accidents involving pedestrian injuries. Following installation of countdown signals at the initial 1,500 intersections, countdown signals will be installed along other corridors where DOT has demonstrated a strong need for such signals.

Countdown signal installation will be phased-in, with locations including: Grand Concourse in the Bronx from E.140th Street to Mosholu Parkway; 4th Avenue in Brooklyn from Pacific to 65th Streets; Broadway from Columbus Circle to W.169th Street; Queens Boulevard from Van Dam Street to Hillside Avenue; and Hylan Boulevard on Staten Island from Harold Avenue to Steuben Street.

Pedestrian countdown signals will become standard for all new signal installations on wider streets. The first 250 new signal installations will start within a month, with the remainder installed over the next year. A complete listing of the 1,500 locations where countdown signals will be installed is available at www.nyc.gov.

Pedestrian Safety Study and Action Plan

2009 saw the fewest traffic fatalities in New York City's recorded history and the Pedestrian Safety Study and Action Plan affirmed that New York City is the nation's safest big city and is getting safer as DOT moves toward the goal of reducing traffic fatalities by 50 percent by 2030, compared to 2007 statistics. The study examined eight years of data from 2002 through 2009 that showed that serious crashes in the city occurred overwhelmingly along high-traffic corridors, not at specific intersections. The data supports previous studies that have led to the launch of ambitious safety initiatives targeting seniors, schoolchildren and congested corridors citywide.

Some of the key findings in the report include:

- Pedestrian fatalities in 2009 were down nearly 20 percent from 2001.
- In the event of a crash, pedestrians are 10 times more likely to die than a motor vehicle occupant.
- Pedestrians accounted for 52 percent of traffic fatalities from 2005-2009.
- Driver inattention was cited in 36 percent of crashes resulting in pedestrians killed or seriously injured.

- Driver failure to yield was cited in 27 percent of fatal pedestrian crashes.
- Pedestrian-vehicle crashes involving unsafe speeds are twice as deadly as other crashes.
- Serious pedestrian crashes are about two-thirds deadlier on major street corridors than on smaller local streets.
- Most New Yorkers do not know the city's standard speed limit is 30 m.p.h.
- Male drivers are involved in 80 percent of crashes that kill or seriously injure pedestrians.
- Private vehicles – not taxis, trucks or buses – are involved in 79 percent of crashes that kill or seriously injure pedestrians.
- Manhattan has four times as many pedestrians killed or severely injured per mile of street compared to the other four boroughs.
- Pedestrians killed in Manhattan lived in other boroughs or outside New York City 43 percent of the time.

In addition to installing countdown pedestrian signals at 1,500 intersections, other major actions detailed in the Pedestrian Safety Study and Action Plan are:

- *A pilot program to test the safety performance of neighborhood 20 m.p.h zones:* Neighborhood 20 m.p.h. zones will be implemented to slow traffic on an area-wide, rather than individual street, basis. Projects will be developed in collaboration with local communities and at least one pilot project will be implemented in 2011. This year, reduced speed zones around schools have been tripled, from 25 locations to at least 75 locations. In 2011, DOT will implement at least an additional 75 reduced speed zones in residential neighborhoods.
- *Re-engineering 60 miles of streets per year for greater pedestrian safety, according to corridor crash data:* Using a corridor ranking system, DOT will identify and, based on feasibility, address safety issues with intensive redesigns on a minimum of 60 miles per year of these streets. These projects will employ a full range of design options, including pedestrian refuge islands, road diets, sidewalk extensions, pedestrian plazas, bicycle lanes, lane reconfigurations, signal timing modifications, countdown signals, markings, signs and parking regulation modifications.
- *Re-engineering 20 intersections for pedestrian safety on major Manhattan two-way streets:* High-crash, high-volume intersections of the Manhattan avenues with major crosstown two-way streets, such as Canal Street, 57th Street and 125th Street, will be examined individually and solutions will be tailored to local conditions with the full range of design options considered.
- *Implement pilot program to improve visibility at left turns along avenues in Manhattan:* Daylighting – the removal of curbside parking spaces at the approach to an intersection – will be implemented at all left turn approaches on major Manhattan avenues with high rates of left-turn pedestrian crashes. The removal of parking increases pedestrian visibility and reduces turning-vehicle pedestrian crashes. Rigorous before and after data will be collected and if substantial reductions in injury crashes are achieved, the program will be extended to other major Manhattan avenues.

In addition to these action items, DOT will increase its efforts to improve safety through public information, education and advertising

campaigns, and working with NYPD on targeted enforcement. The complete Pedestrian Safety Study and Action Plan report can be found at www.nyc.gov.

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