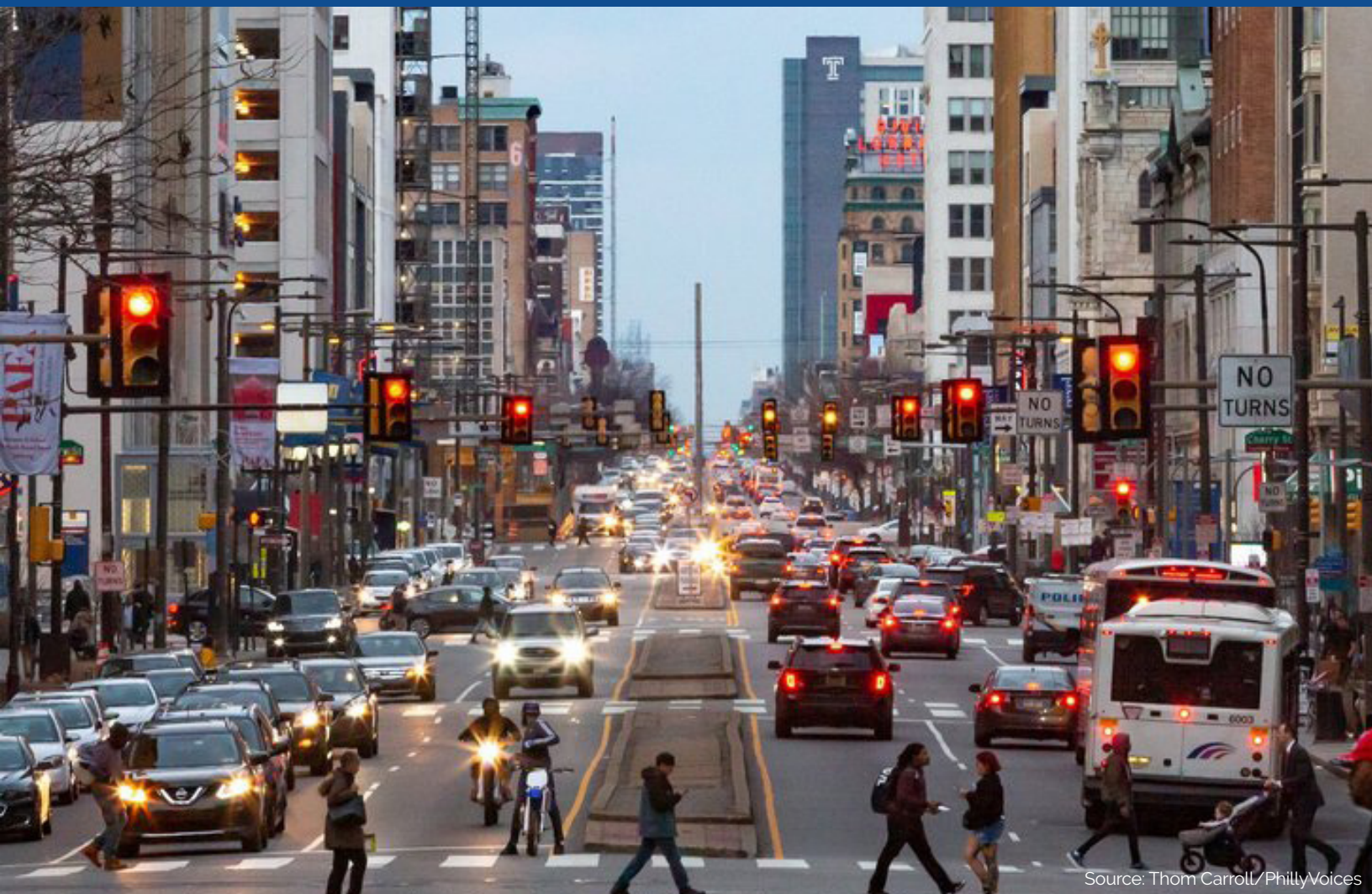


2022 Safety & Congestion Omnibus Action Plan

Implementing **CONNECT**: Philadelphia's Strategic Transportation Plan





Source: Kimberly Paynter/WHYY

Philadelphia can manage congestion *and* eliminate traffic fatalities by implementing decisive and equitable policies in the uncertain post-pandemic future.

In 2020, Philadelphia faced a dramatic increase of 78% in traffic fatalities, a trend which also remained high in 2021. As the city enters a period of economic recovery following the pandemic, a strategic plan is needed to ensure traffic deaths and congestion do not deter an equitable and healthy rebound.



Source: David Park / OTIS

Executive Summary

As congestion increased in the years leading up to the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, the City of Philadelphia set goals to improve mobility by providing a reliable and efficient transportation system in [CONNECT: Philadelphia's Strategic Transportation Plan](#). In response to the COVID-19 crisis, rising traffic fatalities, and urgency to improve racial justice, the need for equitable policies is even more crucial. The Office of Transportation, Infrastructure, and Sustainability (OTIS) has identified three main causes of traffic fatalities and congestion in Philadelphia and an action plan of specific steps to address these issues.



Speeding and reckless driving

p.7

- Expand camera-assisted traffic enforcement
- Save lives with safe speeds



Lack of alternatives to driving

p.9

- Effectively regulate rideshare services
- Expand access to commuter benefits program to all large employers
- Strengthen alternatives to driving



Inefficient use of space

p.13

- Better manage use of curb space
- Incentivize sanitation and delivery activities in non-congested hours

The administration has already started addressing these issues through implementation of the following plans and programs:

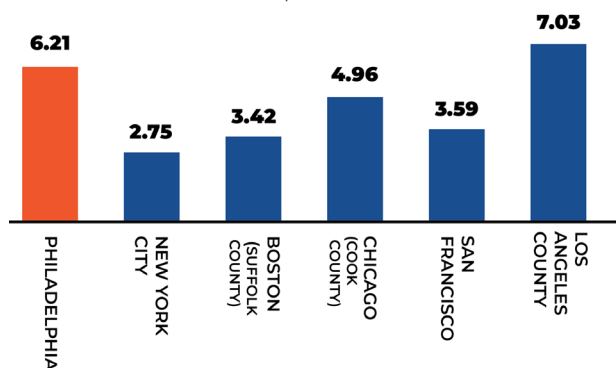
- [Philadelphia Transit Plan](#)
- [Vision Zero Action Plan 2025](#)
- [StreetSmartPHL](#)
- [Transportation Data Roadmap](#)
- [High Quality Bike Network](#)
- [Improving traffic and pedestrian signals](#)

Traffic fatalities and Vision Zero in Philadelphia

Compared to our peer cities with established Vision Zero policies, Philadelphia has one of the highest rates of traffic-related deaths per 100,000 residents. In 2018, Philadelphia's traffic-related death rate was over two times as high as that of New York City.

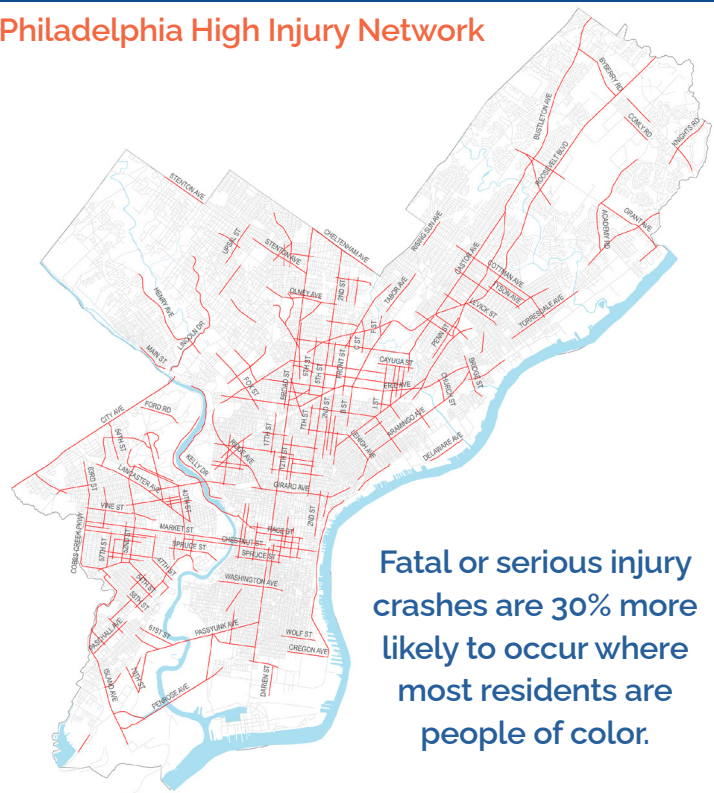
The [Vision Zero Action Plan 2025](#) was introduced in November 2020 to refine the City's approach to Vision Zero. It aims to renew Mayor Kenney's commitment to reducing fatalities on a system wide level and was a result of a collaboration of various governmental agencies, as well as community and advocacy groups.

Rate of Traffic-Related Deaths
(Per 100,000 Residents)



The [High Injury Network](#) will serve as the focus of the Vision Zero Action Plan 2025. The HIN identifies corridors with the highest rates of fatalities and serious injuries per mile. It addresses 80% of all traffic deaths and serious injuries on just 12% of Philadelphia streets.

Philadelphia High Injury Network

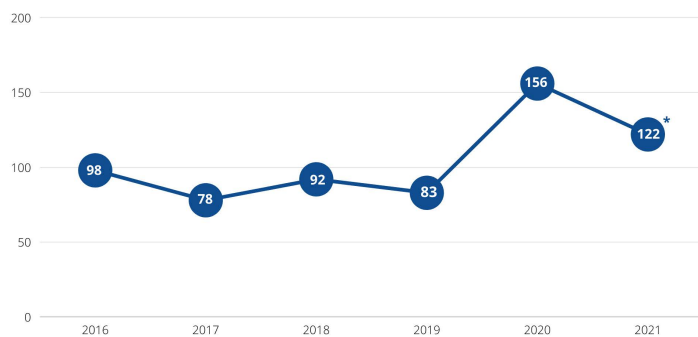


Impact of COVID-19

In 2020 Philadelphia saw a dramatic increase in traffic deaths, with 156 people killed on our streets. This is a nearly 80% rise from the previous five-year average of 87. The following year, traffic fatalities remained shockingly high with 122 people killed, a 40% increase over the pre-pandemic average. Changes to travel patterns have coincided with unforeseen strains on communities that could contribute to increased aggressive and impaired driving.

The commitment to safe streets is needed now more than ever to ensure a reduction in traffic fatalities towards zero.

People killed in crashes in Philadelphia (2016-2020)



Sources: PennDOT(2015-2020), *PPD(2021)

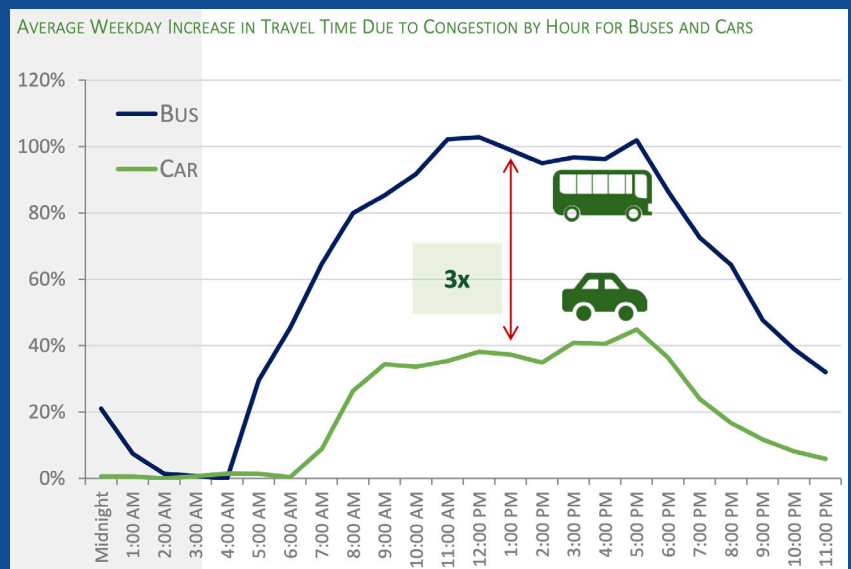


Source: Joseph Kaczmarek
Philadelphia Inquirer

Does Philadelphia have a congestion problem?

Congestion in urban areas is often a sign of a healthy economy and dynamic civic life. However, congestion needs to be managed to avoid having a negative effect on a city's future and quality of life. For example, increased congestion leads to reduced job access in the many busy parts of the city. In Philadelphia, average weekday travel time losses are roughly three times higher when traveling by bus than by car. This results in transit reliability problems for SEPTA. Many SEPTA bus routes fail to meet the target on-time performance standard of 80%. When buses are late or bunched, the use of rideshare by transit riders increases, further worsening congestion in the city.

Average weekday travel time losses due to congestion for buses are roughly three times higher than for cars.



Source: Econsult Solutions Inc./ Limiting our Potentials Key Findings Report, 2019²

Impact of COVID-19

During the early months of the pandemic, congestion in Philadelphia drastically decreased. In 2020, the average Philadelphia driver lost 94 hours due to congestion, greatly improving from 142 hours lost in 2019. Despite the improved figure, Philadelphia ranked as the 5th most congested city in the world, only after New York City in the U.S.¹ This figure represents the continued strong demand for economic activities in the city despite the decreased traffic on the streets during the pandemic.

Philadelphia looking to the future

As the City recovers from the pandemic, we are already seeing increased congestion on the streets as people begin to do more activities in their daily lives. It is understandable that some people are hesitant to take transit and those who can afford to may opt to drive instead. The need for policies addressing returning congestion are now more crucial than ever. In order to avoid congestion increasing as economic prosperity and office commute activities return to Philadelphia, now is the time to prepare for smart solutions to congestion.

Increased congestion and traffic deaths are a hidden tax that residents of Philadelphia have to pay. The pandemic and a refocus on racial justice and equity have highlighted that the recovery from the pandemic will be hampered if the right measures are not put in place.



What's causing traffic fatalities and congestion in Philadelphia?

Cause 1



Speeding and reckless driving

Cause 2



Lack of alternatives to driving

Cause 3



Inefficient use of space

Action Plan



Speeding and reckless driving

Expand camera-assisted traffic enforcement

Legislative ask: Camera-assisted enforcement of speeding (City & State)

Improved enforcement of existing traffic laws must be part of any effort to manage increased congestion and improve safety. The goal of enforcement is behavior change, not revenue generation. The two legislative proposals in this section not only increase the penalty for dangerous and congestion causing behaviors, but also increase the certainty of being caught. Certainty of being caught is shown to be just as effective in inducing behavior change as a large punishment alone.³ Enforcement must be equitable – ensuring that communities are not overly burdened by enforcement activities. The use of camera-assisted enforcement reduces concerns of racial bias in traffic stops and eliminates situations where a traffic stop could escalate into harm for the enforcement officer or the person being ticketed.

- **Expand speed cameras to new locations & make pilot permanent**

Camera-assisted enforcement has been an effective and fair method for enforcing traffic laws since it was first implemented in Pennsylvania in 2005. The Automated Red Light Enforcement (ARLE) program has been demonstrated to reduce crashes at intersections in Philadelphia.⁴ The Camera Automated Speed Enforcement (CASE) program on Roosevelt Boulevard started to issue tickets in August 2020 and will continue as a pilot until 2023. Since the implementation of automated speed enforcement along Roosevelt Boulevard, speed violations at these monitored locations show a 91% reduction in speed violations as of November 2021. Speed cameras are needed at more locations to reduce the prevalence of high-speed crashes that kill Philadelphians every year. Beyond 2023, the CASE program should emulate ARLE, where City Council and PennDOT approve new camera locations based on crash data.



Source: Steven M. Falk / Philadelphia Inquirer

- **Implement camera-assisted enforcement of streets with transit**

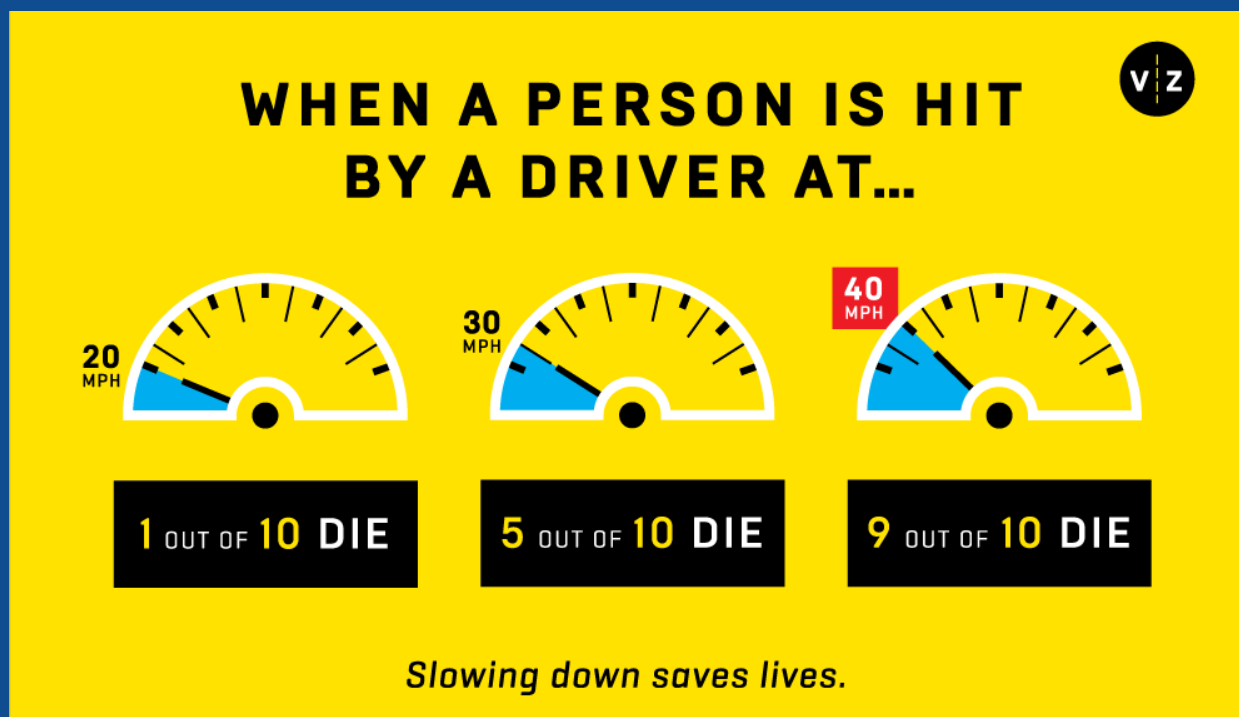
The effectiveness of camera-assisted enforcement can be seen in New York City where the MTA installed cameras on three bus routes and saw an increase in bus speed on all three routes.⁵ We propose that camera-assisted enforcement of traffic laws be expanded to fight congestion on the busiest streets with mass transit in Philadelphia. Because of restrictions in the PA Vehicle Code, the actions in this section are split into measures that can be enacted by City Council and those that can only be enacted by the General Assembly.

Camera-assisted Enforcement of Parking Violations (City or State)	City Council can authorize camera-assisted enforcement of parking violations in Philadelphia that interfere with bus and trolley services.
Camera-assisted Enforcement on Streets with Transit (State)	Enable the camera-assisted enforcement of moving violations on streets with transit and other congestion causing behaviors in congested parts of Philadelphia.

Save lives with safe speeds

Legislative ask: Local control of the safe speed limits (State)

Speed is the number one factor that determines whether someone survives or is killed in a crash. Setting lower speed limits is an inexpensive, scalable way to quickly reduce speeding and improve safety. The State motor vehicle code does not allow Philadelphia to set speed limits at the safe operating speed. State enabling legislation is needed for Philadelphia to set safe speed limits and save lives.



Source: Vision Zero Action Plan 2025



Lack of alternatives to driving

Strengthen alternatives to driving

Legislative ask: Advance pedestrian safety and bike lanes ordinance (City)

More people can move by transit, walking, and biking on a street than by automobile. Making transit, walking, and biking the fastest, safest, and most convenient options to travel will increase mobility and encourage people to get out of their cars, improving congestion.

Public transit ridership declined significantly at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and stay-at-home order. However ridership has significantly rebounded since, particularly on the bus and subway network. With people returning to the city for both work and pleasure, it will be crucial to provide convenient and attractive options for transit, biking, and walking. The following actions will improve alternatives to driving:

- **Improve transit options** by coordinating with SEPTA on the Bus Revolution and prioritizing buses on city streets, and working with regional partners to support increased transit funding. The proposals for commuter benefits and enforcement of streets with transit in this document will also improve access to more reliable transit as discussed in the Philadelphia Transit Plan.
- **Improve bicycle infrastructure** by building 40 miles of protected bike lanes, creating safe lanes that can accommodate users of all ages and abilities.
- **Improve the Indego program** by increasing station density and expanding to new neighborhoods.

More people can move by transit, walking and biking than driving

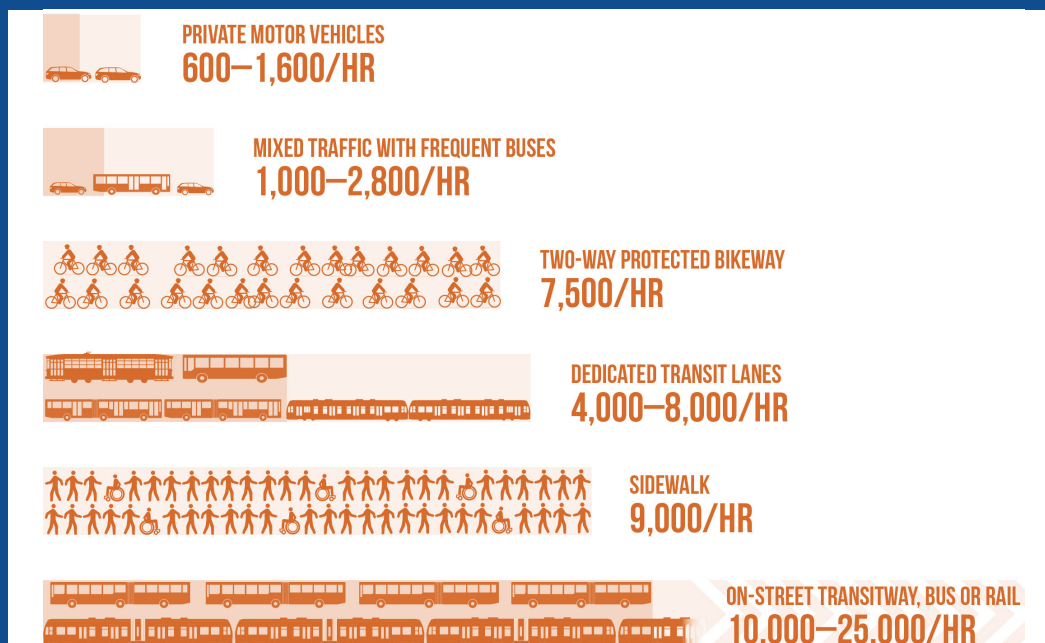


Image Courtesy of NACTO, *Global Street Design Guide*

Expand access to commuter benefits programs to all large employees

Passed: Bill Number #22033700- Commuter benefits ordinance (City)

Every person taking transit is one less car on the road. One method to promote transit ridership is to allow people to buy their transit passes pre-tax through a commuter benefit program offered by their employer. Commuter benefits programs save people money by allowing them to purchase their transit pass through payroll deduction BEFORE taxes are taken out, resulting in substantial savings. Employers also save as they don't owe payroll taxes on the pre-tax amount.

Commuter benefit programs encourage people to get off the road and onto transit. Finding different ways to support public transit will be even more crucial for a Philadelphia economy that is bouncing back from the pandemic. Commuter benefits programs can help ensure all Philadelphians can access opportunities, not just those who can afford them. New York, New Jersey, Washington DC, Seattle, and other jurisdictions require large employers to provide this optional benefit to their employees. The commuter benefits ordinance together with SEPTA's Key Advantage program will make using mass transit more affordable and attractive and will mean fewer people are waiting in congested traffic.

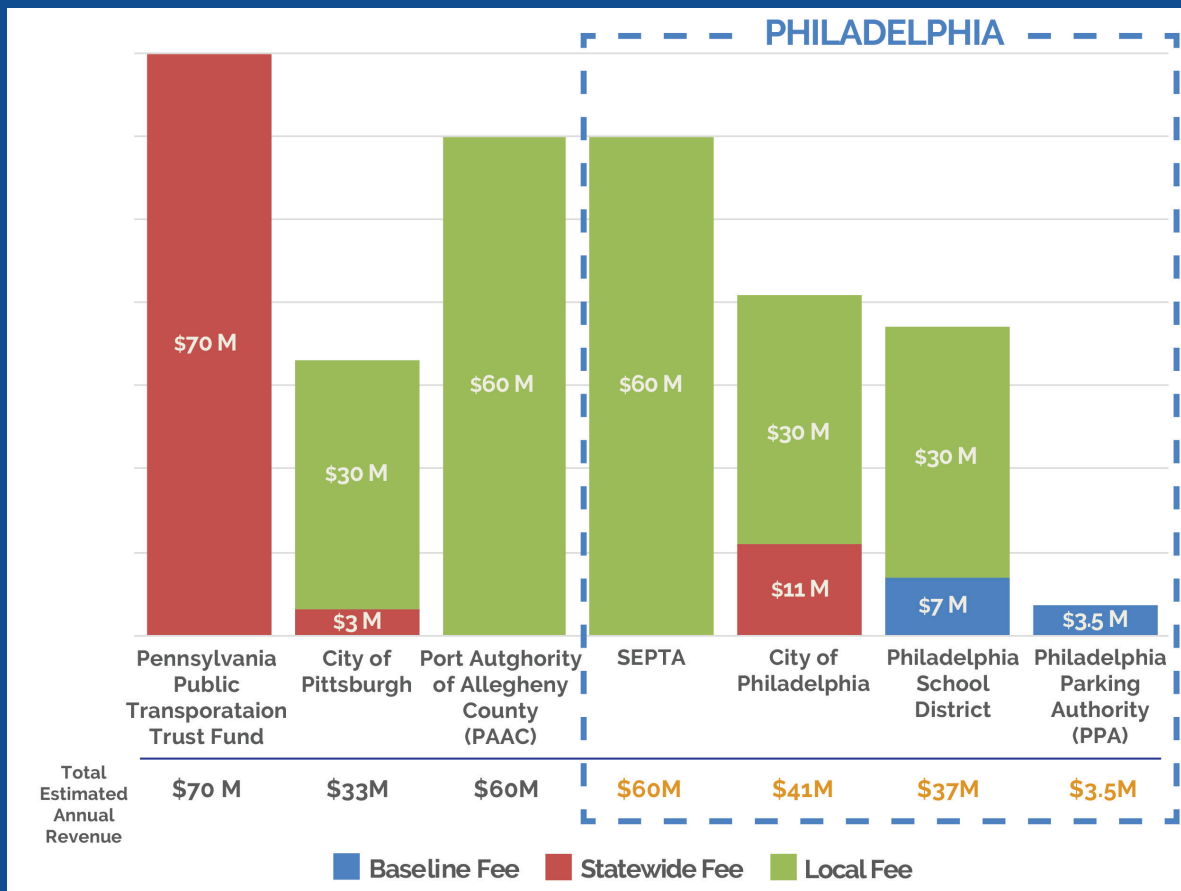
Effectively regulate rideshare services

Legislative ask: Adjust the regulations of TNCs to ensure fair mobility and good jobs (State)

The increase of rideshare services, also known as Transportation Network Companies (TNCs), like Uber and Lyft, has put a significant strain on the streets of Philadelphia. While rideshare has filled some urban transportation gaps, it [increases congestion, deteriorates traffic safety, pulls riders off of transit, and adds to carbon emissions](#).⁶ The City proposes the following list of measures to manage the negative impacts of TNCs:

- **TNC mobility fee:** The proposed TNC mobility fee is equitably structured to bring in revenues for the City and Philadelphia School District through pricing TNCs. It consists of three parts:
 - **Baseline fee:** Increase the existing fee and its funding to the Philadelphia School District and PPA from 1.4% to 2%.
 - **Statewide fee:** Expand the base of the sales tax to include gross receipts from all TNC trips originating in Pennsylvania.
 - **Local fee:** Impose a new peak-period (7 a.m.-7 p.m.) \$4 downtown congestion charge on TNC trips to, from, within, and through Center City/University City Philadelphia and Downtown Pittsburgh. By charging higher fees in areas such as Center City/University City Philadelphia and Downtown Pittsburgh that tend to have higher incomes, we are reemphasizing the importance of equity in the TNC mobility fee structure.
- **Data sharing requirements:** Adopt a data sharing requirement known as the "Mobility Data Specification" – a standard for sharing data between companies and municipal government.
- **Enhanced curbside management:** Participate and underwrite driver participation in curbside management programs adopted by Philadelphia. TNC participation should include provision of required data, payment of associated fees, and acceptance of appropriate liability for compliance with regulation of shared and virtual loading zones designated by the City.
- **Keep job growth for Pennsylvanians and ensure safe driving:** Insisting on Pennsylvania-only drivers operating vehicles with Pennsylvania plates will ensure that vehicles have met state minimum safety standards and that jobs created by Uber and Lyft go to Pennsylvania residents.
- **Good jobs:** Ensure the minimum hourly wage, after expenses, for drivers.
- **Driver cap:** To ensure safety, reduce congestion, and assure a living wage, the City will cap the total number of TNC drivers eligible to operate in Philadelphia.
- **Audit:** Explicitly authorize the Philadelphia Parking Authority and the City of Philadelphia to audit TNCs to ensure compliance with regulations and fees.

Proposed distribution of money raised from fees



Proposed uses for City of Philadelphia's portion of TNC revenues to help emergency responders, Philadelphia residents, and visitors move more safely and efficiently through our city.

\$11 M/year	Safe Routes to School pedestrian improvements and sidewalk repairs – Fund programs for school slow zones, sidewalk repairs, crosswalk upgrades, bump-outs, and other pedestrian improvements to make safe routes for children to walk to school.
\$10 M/year	Station accessibility acceleration – Work with SEPTA to accelerate the construction of ADA accessibility improvements for all rail stations in Philadelphia, starting with Broad Street Line and Market Frankford Line stations.
\$8 M/year	Emergency responder upgrades and Transit First Streets – Operating and capital improvements on City and PennDOT owned streets to speed the movement of first responders and people on buses and trolleys. Possible improvements include emergency preemption to aid EMS, and fire services; transit signal priority (TSP); red paint and other markings and signs; bus and emergency responder only lanes; queue jump lanes; real time info; and ADA accessible bus stations.
\$8 M/year	Low income transit pass program – Fund a low income pass program for 26,000 people. Similar programs exist in several other cities. Could function similar to the low-income programs that PWD and PGW have.
\$4 M/year	Select service augmentation – Fund weekend and late-night service on select priority bus routes.

Incentivize sanitation and delivery activities in non-congested hours

Sanitation and delivery trucks provide vital services, but their presence on city streets during congested times brings many challenges. Removing some of these heavy vehicles from roadways during the hours of highest pedestrian, cyclist, transit, and automobile volumes will improve congestion and bring corresponding benefits to safety, air quality, and government efficiency. This change would bring Philadelphia into alignment with best practices in other cities, such as New York and Boston, which both allow off-peak trash collection. While this is not the only measure needed to manage Philadelphia's transportation problems, it is one piece of the puzzle.

We propose:

- Pilot extended residential trash and recycling pickup in Center City (Vine to South, Delaware River to Broad Street) to expand the hours of pick-up from the current 7 a.m. - 7 p.m. to 4 a.m. - 11 p.m.
- Explore franchising and hours of service changes to commercial pickup to reduce the amount of trucks on the street and encourage more efficient dumpster management.
- Continue to work with businesses and delivery companies to promote off-hours freight delivery.

Benefits of this measure are:

- **Less congestion:**

Heavy vehicles making frequent stops during rush hour back up traffic for everyone. OTIS and SEPTA receive frequent complaints by bus riders of being stuck behind a sanitation truck. While some auto drivers can divert to another route, bus service cannot. Removing sanitation trucks from the busiest places and times of day will result in mobility benefits to Philadelphia residents.

- **Improved safety:**

Philadelphia is a Vision Zero city. Philadelphia has a relatively high traffic fatality rate, two to three times higher per capita as New York City or Boston. Between 2014-2018 in Philadelphia there were 590 crashes involving pedestrian and heavy trucks resulting in 30 serious injuries and 17 fatalities. These deaths were avoidable. Heavy vehicles play a particularly dangerous factor to vulnerable road users due to their size and limited sight lines. Removing traffic, especially truck traffic, from streets during periods of heavy pedestrian and cyclist volumes will improve traffic safety.

- **Better air quality:**

While engine and emissions control technologies are continually improving, heavy vehicles such as sanitation trucks still emit criteria air pollutants such as PM, NOx, and CO. Exposure levels can change based on a few meters or a few minutes in relation to proximity to the source. Removing trucks from the streets during peak activity hours, when congestion and vehicle idling are lighter, will lessen Philadelphia residents' exposure to air pollutants.

- **Efficient Government:**

Due to the current limitation on collection hours, Philadelphia's municipal sanitation trucks also get stuck in traffic. This limitation reduces the efficiency of government services, driving up costs for Philadelphia taxpayers. Allowing off-hours trash and recycling pickup, when congestion is minimal, will result in faster and more efficient collection activities for the Streets Department.

While there aren't any active legislative asks at the moment, the City will continue to work with the industry stakeholders and the City Council and communicate the proposal to produce specific legislative asks for the future.



Inefficient use of space

Better manage use of curb space

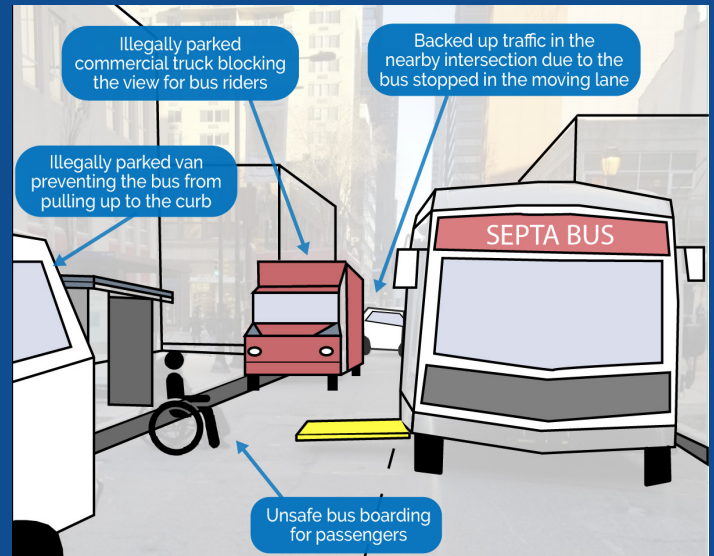
Legislative asks: Contractor parking (Bill #210928), smart loading zones (Bill #210866), dynamic parking pricing ordinances (Bill #210866), and increased parking violation fines ordinances (City and State)

Curbside space is a limited resource in Philadelphia and demand to use it will be at an all time high as the Philadelphia economy recovers from the pandemic. In order to avoid congestion and ensure the efficient movement of people and goods through the city, new tools are needed to better manage curb space. Competing uses include: parked vehicles, goods deliveries and pickups, rideshare companies like Uber and Lyft, sanitation services and snow removal, contractor placard parking, construction equipment and detours, emergency services, driveway curb cuts, bikes and bike infrastructure, pedestrians and crosswalks, transit and transit infrastructure, stormwater infrastructure, and electric vehicle (EV) charging.

To better manage this resource we propose to:

- **Price contractor permits to bring parity with other uses** - Currently contractor permits are \$150/6 months, less than \$1/day to park anywhere in the city. We propose to increase this fee and impose a bank of hours. This will give contractors the flexibility to perform work while balancing this curbside use with all the other uses.
- **Expand loading zones and pilot "smart loading zones"** - With the rapid rise of rideshare and e-commerce, the demand for loading space has skyrocketed in Philadelphia and other cities. A recent pilot reconfiguring the placement of loading zones on Chestnut Street improved traffic and transit flow while providing more space for deliveries and passenger drop-off. This pilot should be expanded to other corridors. The City should also pilot "smart loading zones" in the most congested areas. Smart loading zones can be reserved in advance and market mechanisms such as dynamic pricing and bidding can be used to manage competing demands for the space.
- **Pilot dynamic parking pricing on commercial blocks** - Not all parts of Philadelphia experience the same level of commercial demand. Studies have shown that having one or two open spots on every block encourages patronage of businesses.⁷ Dynamic parking pricing means meter rates can be adjusted based on demand. When there is a low demand for parking spaces, the pricing is reduced, and when there is a high demand for parking spaces, the pricing is increased. Adjustments to pricing can be made based on fluctuations in demand over the course of the day as well as by geography. This promotes business-friendly parking turnover so there are one or two open spots on a block at all shopping times.

- **Increasing Parking Fines** - Improved enforcement of existing traffic laws must be part of any effort to manage increased congestion and improve safety. As the photos below show, illegally parked vehicles contribute to congestion and endanger the lives of Philadelphia residents every day. Recent Enforcement blitzes in Center City on Market Street, Chestnut Street, and elsewhere have shown that PPD, PPA, and SEPTA do not have all the available tools to adequately enforce traffic laws. While additional enforcement personnel, such as the proposed class of new public safety enforcement officers, are to help with managing congestion, additional enforcement tools are needed to have a more comprehensive and effective approach.



Illegally parked commercial vehicle creating a dangerous environment for SEPTA customers

In cooperation with other partners, the City has stepped up enforcement of traffic and parking violations. However, evidence has shown that many current fines and enforcement practices are not effective deterrents to illegal parking behaviors. Studies in other cities have shown that increased fines as part of an overall approach to better manage traffic and curbside use can increase mobility, especially for those who rely on transit to get to jobs. [For example, when Toronto increased fines for illegal parking, travel times improved but revenue from fines stayed constant because the rate of violations decreased dramatically.](#)⁸ Raising illegal parking fines, combined with other efforts to increase the availability of parking and loading zones, will improve traffic throughout the city, especially in the most congested parts of Philadelphia. This proposal addresses equity issues by raising fines more in Center City and University City than in outlying neighborhoods.

Ongoing program reduces unpermitted construction blockages

Road and sidewalk closures due to construction add significant congestion to the roadways in Philadelphia. The Philadelphia Streets Department launched [PermitPHL](#) to combat unpermitted street and sidewalk closures. [PermitPHL](#) is a part of the StreetSmartPHL platform and provides residents and stakeholders with up-to-date information regarding street closure permits issued for construction projects, special events, block parties, detours, and right of way information. [PermitPHL](#) provides streamlined, real-time access to information on permit requests for closures, but also a direct-line of communication to 311 which users can contact to report issues related to street closures. Common issues that can be reported include hazardous conditions, closures that are causing conflicts, and non-permitted closures. This crowdsourcing mechanism empowers the residents to help create safer streets in Philadelphia.

The screenshot displays the StreetSmartPHL web application. At the top, the City of Philadelphia logo and 'StreetSmartPHL Beta' are visible. A search bar is present above a map of downtown Philadelphia. The map shows various streets with colored overlays indicating closures: blue lines for partial street closures and red lines for full street closures. On the left side, there is a sidebar with the following elements:

- Welcome to StreetSmartPHL**
- A brief description: 'StreetSmartPHL is your portal for viewing information about Streets Department activities. Click to open any of the topics below. Select features on the map for detailed information.'
- A button labeled **PermitPHL**.
- A section titled 'View street and sidewalk closure permits.'
- Two checked checkboxes: **Current Closures (points)** and **Current Closures (segments)**.
- Legend for points:
● Sidewalk Closure (black dot)
● Partial Street Closure (blue dot)
● Full Street Closure (red dot)
- Legend for segments:
— Sidewalk Closure (green line)
— Partial Street Closure (blue line)
— Full Street Closure (red line)
- Two unchecked checkboxes: **Future Closures (points)** and **Future Closures (segments)**.
- A section titled 'Click to take the following actions:' with three links:
 - [Apply for a permit](#)
 - [Submit a Right-of-Way Violation 311 Request](#)
 - [Download the frequently asked questions \(FAQ\) doc](#)

At the bottom of the sidebar, there are links for **Help** and **Feedback**.

Endnotes

- 1 <https://inrix.com/scorecard-city/?city=Philadelphia%20PA&index=5>
- 2 <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/five-things-about-deterrence>
- 3 <https://econsultsolutions.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Philadelphia-Congestion-Report-2019.pdf>
- 4 <https://www.talkpatransportation.com/assets/TAC/ARLE/ARLE-two-page-summary-6-13-17.pdf>
- 5 <https://nyc.streetsblog.org/2020/01/20/camera-enforcement-is-nice-but-buses-work-best-on-streets-without-cars-mta-data-shows/>
- 6 <https://www.citylab.com/transportation/2019/08/uber-lyft-traffic-congestion-ride-hailing-cities-drivers-vmt/595393/>
- 7 Shoup, Donald. (2018). Parking and the City.
- 8 <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2016/ex/bgrd/backgroundfile-89468.pdf>

Summary of Legislative Asks

Legislative Asks	Local Action	State Action
Expand speed cameras to new locations & make permanent	✓	✓
Implement camera enforcement of streets with transit and illegal parking	✓	✓
Authorize local control of speed limits		✓
Passed: Bill #22033700 Expand commuter benefits programs to all large employers	✓	
Adjust the regulation of TNCs to ensure fair mobility and good jobs		✓
Bill #210928 Price contractor permit parking to bring parity with other uses	✓	
Bill #210866 Expand loading zones and pilot "smart loading zones"	✓	
Bill #210866 Pilot dynamic parking pricing on commercial blocks	✓	
Increase parking fines for targeted parking violations	✓	