



21ST CENTURY TRANSPORTATION FOR A 21ST CENTURY CITY



a plan by

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for NYC Comptroller



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Transportation – how easy, safe, and affordable it is to get around the city – will be a critical factor in securing a just and durable recovery for NYC. For New York City to be a place where people of all backgrounds can continue to live, work and thrive, we need robust, 24-hour public transit that serves all neighborhoods in the city, investment in protected cycling infrastructure, a transformation of the streetscape, and to tackle the epidemic of traffic violence.

As Comptroller, Brad will be an advocate for a stronger, more sustainable, convenient and accessible transportation infrastructure that better serves New Yorkers, spurs economic recovery, promotes climate justice, and sustains livable neighborhoods.

Nearly 70% of New Yorkers do not own a car and rely on public transportation, walking, and cycling to get around the city. Yet more than 75% of public street space is devoted to driving and parking cars. A 21st century approach to transportation in New York City must make a priority of repairing, improving and enhancing public transit options, returning streets to the people in the form of places to walk, bike and play, and investing in infrastructure to make streets safer, subways more accessible, and buses more efficient. This approach to transportation will help support New Yorkers to get back to work, improve public health, and combat climate change.

Brad has been a champion for improving public transit, making streets safer, and expanding cycling infrastructure throughout his career. As director of the Pratt Center for Community Development, he helped lead the advocacy coalition in the 2007 push for congestion pricing, and partnered with DOT Commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan to help launch the neighborhood plaza program. In his first months in the City Council, he stepped up as one of the only elected officials to support the Prospect Park West bike lane, even as it faced backlash and lawsuits. He was an early supporter and founding member of the CitiBike program in 2013 and remains a regular rider (and yes, he is partial to pedal-assist). In 2014, he invited Amy Cohen, parent of a child killed by a speeding driver to

testify in the City Council, which helped to spark the campaign that reduced the speed limit in New York City. In 2018, he was arrested in civil disobedience alongside members of Families for Safe Streets to restore the city's speed camera program. Working closely with safe streets advocates and families of victims of traffic violence, Brad created the innovative, data-driven, Reckless Driver Accountability Act, to get reckless drivers off the roads and into a restorative justice driver accountability course.

As Comptroller, Brad will build on this history and deploy the tools of the office in innovative ways to secure 21st century transportation for a more thriving, equal, and livable city:

1. INVEST IN PUBLIC TRANSIT

FULLY FUND THE MTA

As Comptroller, Brad will work consistently to identify new sources of revenue for the MTA that do not require raising fares for riders. Brad was a strong and early supporter of the plan for congestion pricing as a reliable revenue stream for transportation infrastructure. He will fight for an implementation strategy that is rooted in equity, to achieve our emission reduction and revenue raising goals without putting a disproportionate burden on communities of color – and will fight to ensure that the revenue raised is used for transportation improvements that serve all New Yorkers equitably, particularly those underserved by transit, not just the privileged few.

MODERNIZE THE SUBWAY SIGNALS

Archaic, faulty signals are the #1 cause of subway delays, and the primary obstacle cited by the MTA in response to calls for more frequent service. London and other peer cities demonstrate the possibility, urgency, and benefits of signal modernization. Brad's Council office launched a participatory study of signal failures and collected data to demonstrate the need to modernize the signal system. As Comptroller, Brad will continue to shine an urgent spotlight on signal modernization to get trains running on time and more frequently.

RESTORE 24-HOUR SUBWAYS AND FULL SERVICE

Brad has been a vocal supporter of returning 24 hour subways, as an essential service for New Yorkers, especially essential workers commuting to late night shifts and people experiencing homelessness who rely on it as a shelter of last resort. Brad opposed the addition of 500 new MTA police, and has called for funding to be shifted from policing to invest in mental health professionals who can be called first to help when needed. Brad is also helping to lead the fight for a full restoration of service on the C and F lines, which the MTA reduced during the pandemic, and now is trying to make permanent without required public process, even as new federal funds arrive.

FIRST CLASS BUSES

New York City can and should have top-notch bus service for all New Yorkers, that moves faster and is more reliable. Investing in first-rate bus service and bus lane infrastructure has the potential to move millions of New Yorkers at a fraction of the cost of subway expansion while dramatically reducing the City's greenhouse gas emissions and significantly improving New Yorkers' quality of life.



Improving bus access, service, and efficiency is both a huge area of opportunity to better serve all New Yorkers, and a racial and economic justice issue. Buses are the number one way that seniors get around the city, and are heavily used by lower income, and predominantly Black and brown New Yorkers, essential workers, and people with disabilities. Brad passed a bill requiring a citywide plan for Bus Rapid Transit, and has won extensive transit improvements in his district, including bus lanes, bus arrival time clocks and improvements to the B61 route. As Comptroller, he will make the case for expanded transit signal priority, hold the city accountable to its commitment to building dedicated bus lanes and transitioning to a zero-emission bus fleet by 2040 (as part of his NYC climate dashboard), and advocate for investment in more bus shelters and redesigned curbs.

EXPAND FAIR FARES

Brad was an early supporter of the Fair Fares program, recognizing that access to public transit is an essential tool for economic opportunity. As Comptroller, he will make the financial case for the renewal and expansion of the Fair Fares program to aid very low income New Yorkers who are least able to afford the per-ride discount of buying a weekly or monthly bus pass.



DATA-DRIVEN AUDITING FOR TRANSIT IMPROVEMENT

The MTA's budget and performance data are notoriously opaque (notwithstanding good efforts by Andy Byford to improve communication), making it difficult for the public to understand what's really happening and for advocates to focus on what matters most. Data-minded journalists like Emma Fitzsimmons, Brian Rosenthal, and Aaron Gordon have been essential at digging in on the numbers, revealing the truth, and identifying critical issues. Brad will hire and assign a dedicated team within the Audit Bureau, modeled on their efforts, to focus on public transit and shine a spotlight on key issues, helping to illuminate the track forward to high-impact improvements.

2. STREETS FOR THE PEOPLE

PERMANENT OPEN STREETS

Brad helped launch the city's public plaza program in 2007, supported the pedestrianization of Times Square, and fought to provide funding and support to expand the program to low-income communities (including Kensington's Avenue C Plaza). He was an early supporter of the Open Streets program and successfully advocated for schools to be able to use streets closed to traffic as spaces for learning and play. Long before the pandemic, Brad supported turning public streets dominated by vehicles into public spaces for pedestrians, cyclists, and busways.

As Comptroller, Brad will advocate for making open streets permanent, including needed capital infrastructure upgrades and funding for maintenance and programmatic partners, especially in lower-income neighborhoods without well-funded BIDs. He will use the City's Neighborhood Plaza Program as a model for increasing equity in the City's open streets program, to ensure all neighborhoods can benefit from this program, especially those in desperate need of additional open space in environmental justice communities and in neighborhoods suffering from heat island effect. Brad will assess and advocate for the funding needed to maintain and program these spaces in partnership with grassroots community-based organizations that may not have the capacity to navigate the City's complex contracting and procurement processes. And he will conduct an analysis of the economic impacts of the Open Streets program in NYC as well other ambitious open street programs like Barcelona's "superblocks."

TACKLING RECKLESS DRIVING & TRAFFIC VIOLENCE

Reclaiming streets for people also includes tackling the crisis of traffic violence in NYC. Working closely with safe streets advocates, families of victims of traffic violence, and the Center for Court Innovation, Brad created an innovative, data-driven program at the Red Hook Community Justice Center (now expanded citywide) to get reckless drivers off the roads and into a restorative justice driver accountability course. Brad successfully sponsored the Reckless Driver Accountability Act, to transform how we focus on combating reckless driving, with a preventative, data-driven, restorative approach. As Comptroller, Brad will work to expand the Reckless Driver Accountability Program, move traffic crash investigation from the NYPD to DOT, and invest in street safety infrastructure like pedestrian walkways, speed cameras, and traffic calming. Read more about his plan using the Comptroller's role in audits and settlements to improve traffic safety with less policing.

IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY ON STREETS AND TRANSIT

Brad has long been a vocal advocate for subway accessibility, and fought together with local families and organizations to win a multi-year campaign for an elevator at the 7th Avenue F/G station. As Comptroller, he will push the city to prioritize the capital investments needed to make the subway more accessible to all. In addition to subway access, Brad will prioritize accessibility on our sidewalks, including advancing the implementation of containerized trash to free up our sidewalks for people instead of trash. He will doggedly monitor the City's fulfillment of court orders to install ramps, accessible signals, and expansion of narrow city sidewalks.

Brad has been a longtime advocate to improve the convenience and cost-effectiveness of Access-a-Ride. As Comptroller he will continue this oversight, as well as monitor the City's progress on accessibility of for-hire vehicles and explore expansion of more effective models to serve mobility-impaired New Yorkers. As buses offer the most reliable and accessible public transit option for New Yorkers, Brad will focus on strengthening the City's bus network overall, including addressing problems with snow-clearance at bus stops and additional training for bus drivers.

AUDIT THE CITY'S ON- AND OFF-STREET PARKING POLICIES

Brad supports eliminating parking minimums, and will explore new models for optimizing curbside parking spaces in ways that will free up more space for life-saving infrastructure and encourage the use of public transit, cycling, car share, and micro-mobility options over private car ownership. This will include assessments of our on-street parking policies and enforcement strategies around placard abuse to advocate for new and innovative models for rationalizing the City's approach to curb space and automating enforcement.

3. INFRASTRUCTURE FOR SAFETY AND SUSTAINABILITY

INVEST IN CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE FOR A BIKE-FRIENDLY NYC

Brad has been a champion for protected bike lanes in his district dating back to the battle for the Prospect Park West bike lane in 2010, and advocated for nearly 8 years to win a newly promised expanded bike lane on the Brooklyn Bridge. Brad supports the Regional Plan Association Five-Borough Bikeway proposal, a 425-mile network of physically protected, continuous, high-capacity, priority bike lanes, understanding that

not only do we need bike lanes to have physical protection from car traffic but that intersections and areas where those lanes disappear can be among the most dangerous. Brad will advocate for the expansion of CitiBike citywide, and support additional bike rack infrastructure, including expansion of models like Oonee.

CAPITAL PROJECT REFORM

Brad has been the Council's strongest champion for improving the management of capital projects to ensure that critical infrastructure is done on time and on budget, and has made investing better in our infrastructure a centerpiece of his approach to the city's economic recovery and climate-preparedness. Brad will explore the potential benefits of moving capital construction of life-saving street safety infrastructure to DOT. As Comptroller, Brad will use his position on the Franchise and Concession Review Committee and role in contracts approval to leverage investments from the private sector with respect to the City's sidewalks, curbs, and expansions of pedestrian space. Read more about his plan to improve New York City's capital projects management to save money, get projects done on time, create good jobs, invest smarter in our infrastructure, and create a more resilient city.



EXPAND AUTOMATED ENFORCEMENT

Brad will double down on automated enforcement to reduce the potential for harm that comes along with police enforcement of traffic issues. He will advocate for swift implementation of camera-enforced bus lanes citywide, and pilot automated enforcement in new areas including block-the-box, double-parking, placard abuse, noise pollution, and parking and driving in bike lanes. To guarantee that these new enforcement mechanisms are both effective and equitable, Brad proposes to establish a publicly-accountable oversight body to guard against bias and protect civil liberties. In addition, Brad will advocate for the elimination of fees, to avoid putting undue burden on low-income New Yorkers.

4. REDUCE CONGESTION

In addition to improving public transit, cycling infrastructure and pedestrian safety, Brad will take steps towards addressing the congestion that has worsened over the course of the pandemic. Brad has already been a leader in this space, working to pass the first ever minimum wage for for-hire vehicle drivers which used a "utilization rate" to calculate and reduce unnecessary drive time while ensuring that drivers were paid a living wage.

CONGESTION PRICING

Cars are now the city's largest source of the city's air pollution. As Comptroller, Brad will continue to be a champion for congestion pricing, which we cannot afford to delay and must be implemented as soon as possible in accordance with the policy passed by the State legislature in 2019. This would make NYC the first American city to implement this policy and reduce our City's greenhouse emissions while simultaneously providing critically-needed funding to the MTA. Brad will work to ensure congestion pricing is implemented in a way that achieves emission reduction and revenue raising goals without putting a disproportionate burden on communities of color. He will fight to ensure that the revenue raised is used for transportation improvements particularly for those New Yorkers currently underserved by transit.

DELIVERY & TRUCK CONGESTION

Even before COVID-19, New York City was failing to proactively address our truck and delivery vehicle congestion issues. Walk down any street in New York City and you will see trucks parked in bus and bike lanes, trucks idling, double-parked, or circling the block

for hours in search of an open loading zone, and our narrow sidewalks covered in packages crowding the right of way creating serious safety and accessibility hazards. With COVID-19, New York City has seen an explosion of e-commerce deliveries. Amazon has opened up a dozen warehouses within the five boroughs and now delivers upwards of 2.4 million packages a day. Meanwhile, we continue to hear stories of Amazon's horrific and inhumane treatment of its essential workers. Yet New York City has no rational approach to making better and more efficient use of our curb space for these vehicles, let alone regulating this industry that has rapidly expanded its footprint in our City as it continues to exploit its workers.

Brad will use the tools of the Comptroller's office to fight for a holistic regulatory approach to deliveries and logistics centers. Brad will advocate for creating more dedicated well-enforced space for delivery vehicles along our curbs including the expansion of the Neighborhood Loading Zone program, and will encourage sustainable modes of delivery including the State's legalization of e-cargo bikes. In addition, Brad will make the financial case for the imposition of new licensure and special permitting requirements for NYC's e-commerce and delivery companies including effective congestion pricing schemes, to ensure essential delivery workers get the workplace protections and benefits they deserve, effective congestion pricing schemes, and that companies sufficiently mitigate the impacts of truck traffic on surrounding neighborhoods including the exclusive use of electric delivery vehicles.

CONCLUSION

Ensuring that New Yorkers can get around the city in safe, sustainable, and affordable ways is critical to our recovery. Brad has been a longtime partner in efforts to improve transportation in NYC and will put the tools of the Comptroller's office to work to hold the city accountable to its goals in this sphere and make the case for innovative approaches to reclaim streets for the people, improve transit, and reduce congestion.