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New York City Department of Transportation



Alleviating Dangerous Conditions by Thinking Creatively: Queens Boulevard

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Deputy Commissioner

Impacts Geneva, November 12, 2003



New York City: The 5 Boroughs



Critical Thru Route



Queensboro Bridge



•Over 2 million residents in Queens

•Queensboro Bridge serves as critical link to Manhattan

•Approximately 200,000 vehicles travel on the bridge every day



Queens Boulevard Background

•Opened in early 20th Century

•1920s and 1930s widened to 12 lanes

•50,000 vehicles on Queens Blvd per day



Competing Needs and Visions for Queens Boulevard



Queens Boulevard serves 2 Roles:

- Major Vehicular Route
- Neighborhood Services



Pedestrian Crash History

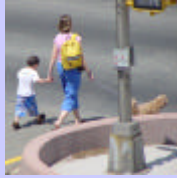
1993 to Mid-1999

- 82 fatal crashes
- 64 pedestrian fatalities
- 9.8 pedestrian fatalities per year

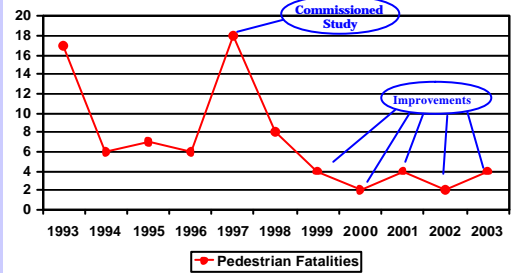


Mid-1999 to 2001

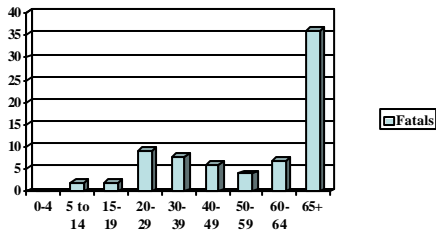
- 13 fatal crashes
- 12 pedestrian fatalities
- 4.8 pedestrian fatalities per year



Pedestrian Fatalities on Queens Boulevard 1993-2003



Age of Pedestrians Involved in Fatal Pedestrian Crashes ('93-'01)



Media Outrage



Daily News, January 11, 2001

Media Response - Headlines



Roadside Memorial

- 12/1/00 - *Girl, 14, Hit by Car, Dies*
Prompts call for safety improvements on Queens Blvd.
- 12/2/00 - *A Child Mourned*
Friends, family grieve girl's death
- 12/5/00 - *Speeding Car Hits Fireman*
on Queens Blvd.
- 12/7/00 - *Queens Blvd. 'Killing Fields'*
Get Less Deadly

Media Reaction

Nov 30, 2000 to May 1, 2001:

Daily News **67** Articles
Newsday **55** Articles

122 articles over a **171** day period

NYC DOT's Challenge

Balance competing needs:

- ❖ Ensure pedestrian safety
- ❖ Maintain vehicular function of the roadway

DOT Action

- ❖ Dramatic Pedestrian Signs
- ❖ Additional crossing time for pedestrians
- ❖ Reduced speed limit
- ❖ Removed travel lane in each direction
- ❖ Extensive use of pedestrian barriers
- ❖ Installed other traffic calming devices
- ❖ Increased Enforcement and Education

Pedestrian Crossing Signs

- ❖ 406 signs at 36 intersections
- ❖ *A Pedestrian Was Killed Crossing Here* (8 intersections – 3 or more fatalities)
- ❖ *Be Alert/Cross With Care* (27 intersections – 1 or 2 fatalities)
- ❖ Pedestrian signal informational signs

Improvements – Pedestrian Signs



Pedestrian Signal Signs

City has light touch

New walk signals make crossing streets safer



Crosswalks



Service Lane



- ❖ Parking permitted in left lane of service road
- ❖ Travel lanes reduced from 2 to 1
- ❖ 545 additional parking spaces
- ❖ Meters in commercial districts
- ❖ Curbside truck loading zones to prevent double parking

Travel Lane Reduction



Meters at Medians



Flexible Bollards at Median Lane



Truck Loading Zones



Other Devices

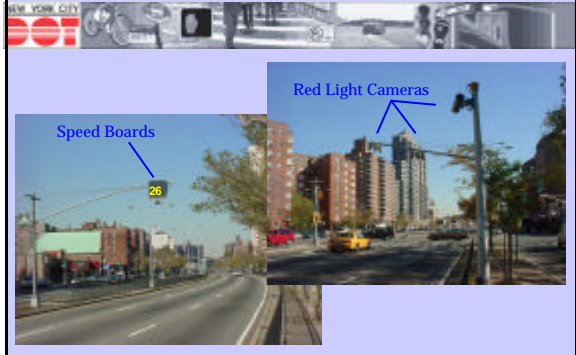


- ❖ 400 pavement messages
Wait for Walk Signal (40 intersections)
- ❖ 2 new red light cameras (total 4)
- ❖ 8 speed detector boards
- ❖ Raised plant medians

Pavement Message



Other Devices



Other Safety Improvements



Enforcement

- ❖ Targeted Enforcement
- ❖ Jaywalking
- ❖ Speeding
- ❖ Double Parking
- ❖ Difficult to maintain

Education

- ❖ Senior center workshops
- ❖ Local school performances
- ❖ "Pedestrians: Be Alert!" postcards mailed to 44,000 seniors
- ❖ Safe crossing cards to 50,000 bus riders on Q60
- ❖ Materials in Russian, Chinese, Korean & Spanish

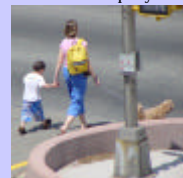
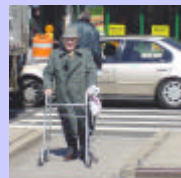
Results

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Lessons Learned



- ❖ Transportation issues impact everybody
- ❖ Consensus on solutions is difficult
- ❖ Press can help and hurt
- ❖ Most often, trying something is better than doing nothing
- ❖ Thinking creatively can alleviate dangerous conditions

The Future



- ❖ Completion of Phase II of study on Queens Boulevard Safety Study. Working to develop mitigation concepts to deal with dangerous conditions.
- ❖ Build upon Queens Blvd. success to create a safer network of roadways throughout the City
- ❖ Try to better balance the needs of pedestrians and drivers

The End



SPECIAL REPORT

Bld. of Death claims fewer lives this year

Safeguards, traffic crackdown pay off

The Daily News
November 29, 2001