



THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

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CONTACTS:

Stephanie Buhle (CM Rosenthal): sbuhle@council.nyc.gov // (646) 647-4395

Vanessa Ogle (CM Eugene): vogle@council.nyc.gov // (718) 287-8762

Russell Murphy (CM Rodriguez): rmurphy2@council.nyc.gov // (917) 584-9574

Call for Pedestrian-Safe "Barnes Dance" Crossings at 25 Most Dangerous Intersections

CITY HALL -- On Thursday Council Members Helen Rosenthal, Mathieu Eugene, and Ydanis Rodriguez introduced legislation ([Int. 1177-2016](#)) that would require the Department of Transportation (DOT) to do a study on implementing the "Barnes Dance" at the City's 25 most dangerous intersections.

The Barnes Dance would change the light signals so that pedestrians could cross in every direction while vehicle traffic comes to a full stop. Likewise, when vehicle traffic is in motion, pedestrian traffic would be at a full stop.

Left-hand turns are particularly dangerous for pedestrians crossing the street. According to the DOT in their 2014 report, [Getting to Zero: Tips for Sharing the Street](#), "1 in 4 crashes killing or injuring pedestrians happen when they are in the crosswalk with the signal." The Barnes Dance would protect pedestrians in the crosswalk from turning vehicles.

Several cities worldwide currently use Barnes Dance style crossings at select intersections, including London, Tokyo, and Los Angeles. New York City currently has only one Barnes Dance crossing, at the intersection of Vesey Street, Broadway, Park Row, and Ann Street in Lower Manhattan.

If the DOT study called for implementing the Barnes Dance crossings, they would impact only 25 of New York City's over 47,000 intersections.

“This Council and this Administration have worked hard to get us to Vision Zero, our shared goal of zero pedestrian deaths from traffic collisions, but we’re not there yet. Pedestrian fatalities are always heartbreaking, but they are especially frustrating when the pedestrian was in the crosswalk, had the light to cross, and was struck and killed by a turning vehicle. The Barnes Dance is one tool to keep pedestrians safe from turning cars, and this bill would study a targeted approach of implementing the Barnes Dance at the 25 most dangerous intersections in the City. I thank Council Members Mathieu Eugene and Ydanis Rodriguez for being great partners on this legislation, and I look forward to working with the Administration to move this bill forward,” said **Council Member Helen Rosenthal**.

“New York City must do more to protect our vulnerable pedestrians. According to Vision Zero statistics, the number one cause of injury-related death for children under 14 years old is being struck by a vehicle. Parents shouldn’t have to fear for their children’s safety every time they cross the street,” said **Council Member Mathieu Eugene, Chairman of the Youth Services Committee**. “We need safer streets, and I’m proud to work with my colleagues on legislation that will improve conditions for pedestrians. By addressing the most dangerous intersections in our city, we are taking another step towards a safer city.”

"Limiting the conflict between cars and pedestrians is key to preventing crashes and deaths on our streets," said **Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez**. "Bringing back the Barnes Dance Crossing, in an era where pedestrian-first policy is our goal, will give pedestrians peace of mind, knowing no car is moving at the same time. I'm proud to co-sponsor this legislation with my colleagues and hope the DOT can implement these crossings in dangerous intersections across the city."

"Because turning drivers who fail to yield continue to kill and seriously injure too many New Yorkers in crosswalks, we need to use every lifesaving tool at our disposal -- tools like the Right of Way law, dedicated turn signals, pedestrian head-starts, and the crossing system known as the Barnes Dance," said **Paul Steely White, Executive Director of the street safety group Transportation Alternatives**. "We commend Council Member Helen Rosenthal for showing Vision Zero leadership with this legislation, and we call on the DOT to implement this and other safety improvements around the city."

"Families like ours have been torn apart because of impatient drivers who did not yield and killed our loved ones -- even though they were doing everything right while crossing in the crosswalk," said **Dana Lerner of Families for Safe Streets**. "The Barnes Dance is a commonsense approach that will protect more pedestrians from dangerous traffic and spare more families the terrible pain we have had to endure. The City needs to move quickly to study and implement this crossing system in as many places as possible."

“To achieve the vision of zero pedestrian deaths in New York City, all tools need to be on the table, and considered seriously with sensitivity to context. Barnes Dance intersections substantially decrease the likelihood that pedestrians and cars will be in the same space, at the same time, and thus can substantially improve the safety of our streets. We

applaud Council Member Helen Rosenthal for her leadership introducing this legislation, and urge the City Council to approve it expeditiously,” said **Veronica Vanterpool, Executive Director, Tri-State Transportation Campaign.**

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