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New York City Council Member Selvena N. Brooks-Powers'
Comments on Local Law 171 of 2023 for Truck Route
Network Redesign
Submitted: June 9, 2026

My name is Selvena N. Brooks-Powers, and I am the Council Member representing New York City's 31st Council District.

I appreciate the New York City Department of Transportation's (NYC DOT) efforts to comply with Local Law 171 and undertake a comprehensive review of the City's truck route network. A modernized truck route system should improve safety, reduce congestion, and better balance the needs of freight movement with the quality of life of the communities through which these routes pass.

As part of this process, my office convened a community follow-up meeting with residents, civic leaders, environmental advocates, and stakeholders from Southeast Queens to review the proposed changes and gather feedback. While residents understand the importance of freight movement and the economic role of truck traffic, they also expressed significant concerns regarding the disproportionate burden already placed on communities surrounding John F. Kennedy (JFK) Airport and related warehouse and cargo facilities.

Residents consistently emphasized that their greatest concern is not simply truck traffic generally, but the movement of **large Class 7 and Class 8 trucks through residential communities**. These oversized vehicles create safety risks for pedestrians and motorists, contribute to roadway deterioration, generate excessive noise, and worsen air quality in neighborhoods that already shoulder significant environmental burdens.

One of the primary concerns raised by residents is the proposed designation of Farmers Boulevard as a Through Truck Route connection to the Nassau Expressway and JFK cargo facilities. Residents recognize the need for efficient freight movement throughout the city; however, Farmers Boulevard is also home to residences, schools, houses of worship, small businesses, and community facilities that serve thousands of Southeast Queens residents each day.

Residents also raised concerns regarding warehouse facilities embedded within residential areas that are zoned as M1 for light manufacturing uses. These facilities should not generate the level of heavy-duty truck activity currently being experienced by surrounding communities. As DOT evaluates freight movement patterns, it should work with relevant agencies to ensure that truck activity associated with these facilities is consistent with the intent of existing zoning regulations and does not impose disproportionate impacts on nearby residential streets.

As NYC DOT considers any expansion of truck routes within residential communities, including the proposed Farmers Boulevard designation, I urge the agency to evaluate the **use of Limited Local Truck Routes** as a mitigation strategy. Currently utilized in Staten Island, Limited Local Truck Routes restrict access to smaller trucks while limiting larger vehicles. Expanding this tool to Southeast Queens would help balance freight mobility needs with community concerns regarding safety, traffic, roadway wear, air quality, and quality of life.

Particular consideration should also be given to residential streets with medians and other design features that were not intended to accommodate heavy-duty truck traffic. Large Class 7 and Class 8 vehicles operating on these corridors create safety challenges, damage infrastructure, and increase conflicts with local traffic. Any future truck route planning should seek to minimize the presence of oversized trucks on these residential roadways.

Additionally, if NYC DOT proceeds with any expansion of truck routing in Southeast Queens, robust mitigation measures must accompany those changes. These should include:

- Clear and highly visible **truck route signage** to reduce off-route truck activity and illegal truck parking;
- **Enhanced enforcement** in partnership with the NYPD to ensure compliance with designated truck routes;
- Ongoing **monitoring and public reporting** of truck traffic volumes, route compliance, and community impacts along corridors such as Farmers Boulevard and surrounding streets;
- Continued **consultation with residents**, civic organizations, and local stakeholders as implementation moves forward;
- Designation of a **dedicated NYC DOT office or point person** responsible for coordinating community engagement, education, monitoring, and enforcement efforts with local stakeholders and the NYPD;
- **Education and training** of New York Police Department officers, warehouse operators, and the general public regarding truck route regulations and the environmental and health impacts associated with heavy truck traffic in residential neighborhoods.

Community members also raised broader concerns about the concentration of large freight activity around JFK Airport. As the City continues to evaluate long-term freight planning, NYC DOT should explore opportunities to reduce the presence of Class 7 and Class 8 trucks on residential streets through improved freight management strategies, including the use of designated staging and transfer facilities that can facilitate deliveries using smaller vehicles where appropriate.

The success of this truck route redesign should not be measured solely by the efficiency of freight movement. It must also be measured by its ability to protect public safety, improve quality of life, and reduce environmental burdens on communities that have historically carried a disproportionate share of the City's transportation infrastructure.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.