



BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT VANESSA L. GIBSON

March 26, 2024

Michael S. Regan, Administrator
U.S Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.
Washington, DC 20004

Re: Letter of Support for the New York City Department of Transportation (NYC DOT) Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Implementation (CPRG-I) Program application, FY 2024

Dear Administrator Regan,

As Bronx Borough President, I write in support of FREIGHT-30: Facing Regional Environmental Challenges by Implementing Green and Healthy Transportation by 2030, NYC DOT's application for the EPA CPRG-I Program. This grant will fund transformative freight decarbonization initiatives that will significantly reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and other pollution while promoting the health and well-being of federally designated Disadvantaged Communities.

Over 265 million tons of cargo enter, leave, or pass through New York City each year. Trucks alone deliver close to 90% of goods in the city – compared to the national average of 70% – and account for 10% of citywide transportation GHG emissions. Moreover, 52% of the city's census tracts are classified as Disadvantaged Communities according to the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST), facing higher levels of air pollution and greater health burdens. New York City is taking urgent steps to decarbonize the freight network to achieve our commitment to carbon neutrality by 2050, while focusing investments in Disadvantaged Communities to facilitate a just energy transition. This project proposes four cost-effective initiatives to equitably reduce freight GHG emissions.

The Bronx in particular deals with high levels of truck and other vehicle pollution due to the highways that cross our borough, including the Cross Bronx Expressway, Bruckner Expressway, and Hutchinson River Parkway. The traffic that passes through The Bronx on these highways has polluted our borough for decades, damaging our environment, and leaving our residents, especially our children, with chronic health conditions such as asthma. Additionally, The Bronx is home to the Hunts Point markets, which handle the distribution of a significant amount of our city and region's produce and other food products. The truck traffic that these markets need to function has harmed the health of surrounding communities. That is why it is so essential that we speed the transition to electric vehicles and other green modes of transport. We must act to improve environmental and health outcomes in ways that allow us to maintain local jobs and businesses.

The first initiative will expand and scale up NYC DOT's successful commercial cargo bike incentive program to transition local truck deliveries to the cleanest and most efficient technologies. The second initiative will establish a network of small-scale local delivery hubs, or "microhubs," to transfer goods from larger freight vehicles to smaller, low-emission electric vehicles or human-powered mode of transport for efficient last-mile delivery. The third initiative – undertaken in conjunction with NYC Economic Development Corporation (EDC) – will modernize marine infrastructure and integrate shore power to expand the "blue highways" network in a way that minimally impacts neighboring communities. Finally, new truck electrification and parking, including the funding of electric charging depots for trucks and other medium-duty vehicles accessible to any company, will be strategically located near Industrial Business Zones and existing freight hubs and will support the transition to electric trucks in the New York City metropolitan region.

Taken together, these measures are replicable and scalable across the freight sector. They leverage existing programs to maximize GHG reductions by 2030. And they target investment in New York City's Disadvantaged Communities. NYC DOT will work with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to expand these initiatives across agencies and further develop green freight programs within the New York Newark-Jersey City Metropolitan Statistical Area.

This project represents a long-term commitment to sustainability and environmental justice that will promote cleaner, healthier, and equitable communities. Thank you for your consideration of this important proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Vanessa L. Gibson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Vanessa" being the most prominent part.

Vanessa L. Gibson

Bronx Borough President