

The Forward Eagle

News, Reviews & Elisions
Of Mutual Interest
Compiled Weekly by Tim Forward
for
The Riverdale Senior Services Center
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Current events

The Rule of Law

The New York City Council passed a bill to decriminalize jaywalking in September 2024. It was officially made into law as of April 2025 after Mayor Eric Adams declined to sign or veto it.

The legislation ended a 66-year ban on jaywalking. The city’s Department of Transportation (DOT) revised its rules at a hearing on April 17, 2025, to reflect the new law. Now it is official that jaywalking is no longer a punishable offense. Pedestrians are still encouraged to use crosswalks and follow traffic signals for safety.

“Jaywalking is a way of life in New York City. It’s how people navigate our city,” said Council Member Mercedes Narcisse of Brooklyn.

Law enforcement penalties for jaywalking in the past have been unfairly enforced. It carried a penalty of up to \$250.

New York police have long faced criticisms for stopping Black and Hispanic pedestrians far more often than white citizens.

A New York City local newspaper, *The Gothamist*, reported that in the first half of 2024, the New York Police issued 786 pedestrian-related summonses, 77% of which went to Black or Hispanic people.

“We’re seeing discriminatory enforcement of this, and it is not keeping us any safer,” said Council Member Tiffany Cabán of Queens, one of the bill’s sponsors.

“Decriminalizing jaywalking in New York is long-overdue and eradicates a mechanism that city police have employed, for decades, as a pretext to stop, question, and frisk New Yorkers of color,” according to a Legal Aid Society statement.

Transportation Alternatives

For the past 50 years, *Transportation Alternatives* (TA) has worked to promote a citizen-led movement for safe and equitable streets in New York City. TA uses a combination of neighborhood-level grassroots organizing and citywide advocacy to push for changes in public policy, street design, enforcement, and resource allocation to make city streets safe for vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians.

Vehicle Violence

During the first nine months of 2024, all types of traffic accidents in New York City resulted in 193 fatalities and seriously injured another 2,338 people, according to an analysis from the group *Transportation Alternatives* (See NOTES 1 & 2).

Every week in the city this year, 17 pedestrians are injured in vehicle/pedestrian accidents. This is a 13% increase from the same period in 2023, and a significant increase in four of the the five boroughs.



Famous Picture Four Musicians Crossing the Street (London circa 1970)
Certainly choreographed. Left, right, left, left.

Pedestrians

Compared to 2023, 10% more pedestrians were seriously injured in the Bronx, 16% more in Manhattan, 20% more in Brooklyn, and 21% more in Queens. It is estimated that the number of pedestrian fatalities and serious injuries have had a comprehensive cost reaching almost \$2 billion in New York City.

Of the 88 pedestrian fatalities in the first nine months of 2024, 88% were at intersections with no “daylighting” for pedestrian protection (See NOTE 3).

Sammy’s Law

Sammy’s Law gave the City of New York the authority to lower speed limits to 20 mph on streets across the five boroughs. While speed limit reductions are underway, the DOT has not expedited the scope of speed limit reductions on city streets.

In the first three quarters of 2024 89% of pedestrian fatalities occurred on streets that were eligible for speed reductions but have not been implemented by the city. Known as Sammy’s law, authority to reduce speeds on New York city streets was passed by the state legislature in 2024.

Contributing Factors

Perception: Successfully crossing the street requires accurate perception of traffic flow, including the speed and direction of vehicles.

Motor Control: Efficient motor control is needed to make quick and precise movements while crossing.

Cognitive Functions: Cognitive abilities like attention, decision-making, and risk assessment are crucial for navigating street crossing situations.

Traffic Conditions: Street crossing can be more challenging in areas with high traffic volume, vehicle speed, or wide road width.

Age: Older pedestirans may experience difficulties of all sorts. These potentially increase their risk of involvement in an accident with a vehicle.

Crossing the Street Safely

Stop and carefully look left, right, and then left again to assess traffic flow.

Do not run or hurry across the street.

Use designated crossings: Pedestrians should use designated crosswalks, which provide a safer area to cross.

Pay attention: Avoid using distractions like mobile phones and headphones or even talking to others while crossing.

Make eye contact: While crossing, pedestrians can make eye contact with drivers to ensure they are aware of the pedestrian's presence.

Be aware of traffic: Continue to watch for traffic while crossing, even if you have seen no vehicles before entering the street.

Word of the week

cathexis

noun

ca·thex·is kə-ˈthek-səs
plural cathexes kə-ˈthek-sēz

- investment of mental or emotional energy in a person, object, or idea

Examples of *cathexis* in a Sentence:

Dependency and *cathexis* are also incredibly painful and difficult to extricate yourself from. There’s a word for this loss of self in devotion: *cathexis*.

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Tim Forward Editor

This paper is offered as a review of recent topics taken up by the current events discussion group at Riverdale Senior Services Center.

Please join us at the Center for Ageless Living, 2600 Netherland Avenue, Bronx, NY each Monday at 1:00 o'clock in the afternoon for Current Events with Tim.

This week’s articles were excerpted and edited from
NPR, NYC.gov and transalt.org

NOTE 1 In 2023, an estimated 943 died from gun-related injuries in New York City. This includes homicides, suicides, accidents, and other incidents where a shooting was the primary cause of death.

NOTE 2 In 2022, an estimated 3,026 people died of a drug overdose in New York City, a 12% increase from 2021 (2,696 deaths), and the highest number since reporting began in 2000.

NOTE 3 “Daylighting” at an intersection improves visibility for drivers and pedestrians by removing visual obstructions at street intersections. Daylighting disallows vehicles from “stopping, standing, or parking within twenty feet of a crosswalk at an intersection.” New York State law mandates daylighting at all intersections. New York City currently disregards the daylighting law.