

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Tri-State Transportation Campaign Statement on Car Usage Climbing to 50 Percent of Pre-COVID Levels

Car usage in and around New York City plummeted in late March, sinking to a third of pre-pandemic levels, according to INRIX. Since then, the number of vehicle trips taken and total number of miles traveled by motorists have been steadily climbing, hitting 50 percent of pre-COVID levels last week. In response, Tri-State Transportation Campaign released the following statement:

“As some businesses in the region begin to reopen, people are getting in cars at a much faster rate than they are returning to public transit. The results of the INRIX data should push the City and State to act faster on reconfiguring streets to be safer for those who choose to walk and bike, as well as taking steps to make accommodations for safer use of public transit.

“Once cars start to dominate the majority of road space again, it will be much harder for the City to find more street space to allow for safe physical distancing of pedestrians and cyclists, who we have seen are more vulnerable to cars than COVID while in mixed traffic. The same is true for expanding miles of bus-only lanes throughout the City so that bus service can be fast, frequent, and reliable.

“The MTA must maintain frequent commuter rail, subway, and bus service to prevent overcrowding. Additionally, the MTA must implement new measures to keep riders and workers safe, such as adding distance markers on platforms and onboard subways and buses. If people don’t feel safe taking transit, the City will see traffic congestion become worse than pre-pandemic levels, hampering the region’s chance of a robust, quick economic rebound.”

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Tri-State Transportation Campaign is a 25-year old advocacy organization that fights for an equitable, multi-modal transportation network that provides options and supports the economies of New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. TSTC works to fix our commutes, meet our climate goals, stop traffic deaths, and make transportation fair.