

October 2023

A Climate for Change

The end of September marked Climate Week, and our first public hearing on Green Rides—TLC’s initiative for 100% of high-volume FHV trips to be either wheelchair accessible or zero-emissions by 2030. We heard a lot of good feedback, and I want to address a couple concerns.

Charging: As an EV owner myself, I’ve felt the frustration of waiting for an open fast charger (and coming across broken ones!). A major benefit of Green Rides is that it will literally supercharge charger development. Tens of thousands of TLC EVs is a guaranteed market. Revel alone is expected to triple the number of DC fast chargers by the end of this year, and Mayor Adams’s [PlanNYC](#) calls for large clusters of fast-chargers along “major transportation corridors, in public parking facilities, and near key destinations.” DOT’s overall roadmap includes 6,000 fast chargers and 40,000 Level 2 chargers, prioritized in areas where TLC drivers live, by 2030. TLC’s new Woodside facility will be part of this, with 30 fast chargers.

Another very real concern was repair costs and time. It’s absolutely true that fender benders may be more costly and require more time. This was true for Toyota Camrys and RAV-4s when they were new. New vehicles with fewer parts will have a cost. However, as vehicles scale and more used and new parts become available, time and costs will decrease. That is why our roll out, while expansive, will also be slow.

As I mentioned at the hearing, no one will be required to run out and buy an EV tomorrow, or even next year. Drivers and owners should consider their local charging availability and convenience before switching, as well as financing. Numerous maps and apps out there identify charging stations. I use [EV Connect](#) and [Flo](#) for city driving, and [PlugShare](#) for everything. The US Department of Energy also has a [regularly updated map](#). Many drivers will decide that they are better suited to WAVs, which will remain ICE vehicles until viable alternatives exist. Uber and Lyft will still be required to fulfill 80% of WAV requests in 10 minutes or less and 90% in 15 minutes or less.

The Commission vote on Green Rides will take place on October 18. You can view the presentation outlining Green Rides [here](#).

Speaking of EVs, I recently spent a night out driving a Revel vehicle. (As part of my educational goals as a driver and commissioner, I’m working my way through as many types of TLC vehicles as possible, in as many places and bases as possible, mixing it up). One observation: Most of my passengers were under 30, and unlike passengers in say, a yellow, they tended to be less chatty. Not unfriendly, just less talkative. Understandably, they were all also fans of EVs and wanted to minimize their impact on the environment. When I mentioned at the end of the ride that I also happened to be commissioner of the TLC, they did not seem to think that was unusual. The reaction was basically, “Oh, okay, that’s cool dude. Thanks for the free ride!”

I found the fact that they were nonplussed kinda funny. Based on my rough calculations, in any given month the odds of the TLC commissioner picking you up and giving you a free ride are probably somewhere around 1 in 6 million!

See you out there,

David Do

Commissioner, NYC Taxi and Limousine Commission