January 3rd, 2017

Hon. Bill de Blasio
New York City Mayor
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

RE: Supporting a Citywide Citi Bike Program

Dear Mayor de Blasio,

Thank you for your efforts to improve Citi Bike and expand the program over the past two years. When the program launched it was on unstable footing but now with your leadership its service has improved and it is functioning as we had hoped and deserved. We also commend your leadership in bringing Citi Bike to more places, beyond the Central Business District.

As you know, the planned expansion of Citi Bike will be completed by next year, at which point the reach of this popular transportation network will terminate, leaving many of our communities outside the central business districts off the map. To avoid the perception that this great amenity is exclusive to wealthier neighborhoods, we write to respectfully ask that your administration advance a plan and associated budget funding for FY ’18 to achieve your stated commitment to expand Citi Bike to all five boroughs. Specifically, we ask that you allocate capital and operating funding in your preliminary budget for FY ’18.

Citi Bike has proven its value as an equalizer in New York City, now providing over 60,000 trips per day on a regular basis to riders of all backgrounds. It has shown to be a sound solution to the last mile problem for commuters across the city fortunate enough to live in communities with docking stations. Citi Bike is a transit network that can serve both local and citywide needs with great effect. It can help residents in the outer boroughs or Upper Manhattan connect to economic centers, mass transit, the planned citywide ferry network or the proposed BQX streetcar; and it can also move residents within their own neighborhoods, whether to local small businesses corridors, neighborhood-based schools, doctors or even friends and relatives.

Moreover, Citi Bike supports so many of our shared goals for New York. With its strong safety record, Citi Bike has been central to achieving Vision Zero, as studies have shown that more bikes on the street make cycling safer for all. As such, Citi Bike helps achieve
the City’s goal of doubling cycling by 2020. Citi Bike also contributes to healthy living objectives, promoting an active lifestyle as we struggle with so many avoidable diseases. And, of course biking is the most sustainable way to get around town, with zero emissions or other negative impacts on the environment.

Unfortunately, with expansion scheduled to end next year, too many of our constituents are left out. In theory, Citi Bike should be something that improves equity, because bike share can quickly and affordably provide new transit options for underserved neighborhoods. This is amplified by the great partnerships Citi Bike has forged with NYCHA and IDNYC to provide discounted memberships. Yet to date Citi Bike is largely concentrated in high-income communities that are already well-served by public transportation.

While Citi Bike has been provided to date with no public funding, we are prepared to support significant funding in FY ’18 to expand Citi Bike to a more diverse set of communities in all five boroughs. Therefore, we strongly encourage you to put forward a detailed plan for achieving this commitment – including comprehensive information on public and private costs to grow and operate a five-borough system – so that appropriate funding can be considered for inclusion in the FY ’18 budget.

Bringing Citi Bike citywide is a legacy defining move that will help cement your place in history as a mayor dedicated to serving all communities in our great city—especially those forgotten in the past. This move will help achieve transit equity, lower emissions, ease crowding on subways, make streets safer, close transit deserts, boost small business corridors and more. And it can be accomplished relatively rapidly and for a fraction of the cost of expanding other forms of transit. Truly, there are few policies or initiatives more comprehensive in serving the goals we all share than bringing Citi Bike to all New Yorkers and we look forward to accomplishing this with you in the FY ’18 budget.

Sincerely,

Ydanis Rodriguez
Chair, Transportation Committee
NYC Council Member, District 10

Carlos Menchaca
NYC Council Member, District 38

Mark Levine
NYC Council Member, District 7

Brad Lander
NYC Council Member, District 39
Rafael Salamanca  
NYC Council Member, District 17

Donovan Richards  
NYC Council Member, District 31

Dan Garodnick  
NYC Council Member, District 4

Fernando Cabrera  
NYC Council Member, District 14

Deborah Rose  
NYC Council Member, District 49

Andy Cohen  
NYC Council Member, District 11

Ritchie Torres  
NYC Council Member, District 15

Daniel Dromm  
Council Member, District 25

Antonio Reynoso  
NYC Council Member, District 34

Andy King  
NYC Council Member, District 12

Paul Vallone  
NYC Council Member, District 19

Costa Constantinides  
NYC Council Member, District 22

Steve Levin  
NYC Council Member, District 33

Jumaane Williams  
NYC Council Member, District 45

Corey Johnson  
NYC Council Member, District 3

Helen Rosenthal  
NYC Council Member, District 6
Jimmy Van Bramer  
NYC Council Member, District 26

David Greenfield  
NYC Council Member, District 44

Joe Borelli  
NYC Council Member, District 51

Robert Cornegy  
NYC Council Member, District 36

Annabel Palma  
NYC Council Member, District 18

Vincent Gentile  
NYC Council Member, District 47

James Vacca  
NYC Council Member, District 13

Elizabeth Crowley  
NYC Council Member, District 30

Laurie Cumbo  
NYC Council Member, District 35

Alan Maisel  
NYC Council Member, District 46

Margaret Chin  
NYC Council Member, District 1

Rafael Espinal  
NYC Council Member, District 37

Vanessa Gibson  
NYC Council Member, District 16

Matthew Eugene  
NYC Council Member, District 40