



**Cortland County Judiciary
& Public Safety
Committee
Committee Meeting
~ Agenda ~**

60 Central Ave.
Cortland, NY 13045
www.cortlandcountyny.gov

Thursday, March 12, 2026

9:00 AM

Room 302

View Meeting Virtually:

WebEx Meeting Information

<https://cortlandny.webex.com/cortlandny/j.php?MTID=m2a474bd85bf8f9dad85e67000529773f>

Thursday, March 12, 2026 9:00 AM | 1 hour | (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)

Meeting number: 2342 636 0683

Password: sVtYNm6ZS77

Join by phone

+1-415-655-0001 US Toll

Access code: 234 263 60683

Call to Order

Attendee Name	Present	Absent	Late	Arrived
Committee Member Douglas Bentley				
Committee Member Cathy Bischoff				
Committee Member Mitchel Eccleston				
Committee Member Christopher Newell				
Committee Member Jason Prentice				
Committee Vice-Chair Eugene Waldbauer				
Committee Chair Sandra Price				

Approval of Minutes

- Judiciary & Public Safety Committee Minutes - February 12, 2026**

Resolutions

ON MOTION OF SANDRA PRICE

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1.

Proposed Local Law "A" of 2026 - A Local Law To Ensure the Safety of Vulnerable Road Users in Cortland County

WHEREAS, said Local Law has been in final form upon the desks of the members of the

Legislature at least seven (7) calendar days, exclusive of Sunday, prior to this date; AND

WHEREAS, a public hearing thereon has been held before this Legislature after publication of notice thereof as legally required; NOW THEREFORE

BE IT ENACTED, by the County Legislature of the County of Cortland, New York, as follows:

SECTION 1. TITLE

This Local Law shall be known and referred to as the “Cortland County Safe Passing Law”.

SECTION 2. LEGISLATIVE INTENT AND FINDINGS

This Legislature finds and determines that it is the duty of Cortland County to protect the health, safety and welfare of its residents. This Legislature also finds and determines that many Cortland County residents ride bicycles for exercise, recreation, or as a primary mode of transport.

The Cortland County Legislature recognizes that bicyclists, pedestrians, and other vulnerable road users often need to share roadways with motor vehicles out of necessity. The Legislature also acknowledges that in these situations, vulnerable road users are susceptible to the actions of motor vehicle operators who can pose a threat to their health and safety if passing too closely or from the right side of the road.

Therefore, this Legislature finds it necessary to establish a minimum passing distance for motor vehicles approaching or passing vulnerable road users and to penalize those who disregard their safety.

SECTION 3. DEFINITIONS

As used in this local law the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

A. “Vulnerable Road User” (“VRU”) shall mean any of the following:

1. A pedestrian
 - a. An individual in a wheelchair, or other device driven by muscular or any other kind of power, that is designed for and used by a person whose mobility is limited by one or more conditions or functional impairments;
 - b. An individual using service animals, plus the animal itself;
 - c. An individual waiting to board, or just having disembarked, mass transit including but not limited to a bus, taxicab, shuttle, train, ferry and streetcar;
 - d. Any other individuals existing upon a roadway and outside of any vehicles;
2. Any rider of a horse, mount or other animal, plus the animal itself;
3. An individual who is on the roadway because the individual is engaged in construction, maintenance, repair or a similar function while on that part of the roadway;
4. An individual who is an emergency services personnel and is acting in the course of their duties, including but not limited to a law enforcement officer, firefighter, emergency medical technician, or first responder;
5. An individual who is not in or on a motor vehicle, streetcar or other motor vehicle running only upon rails, motorized snow vehicle, traction engine, farm tractor, self-propelled instrument of husbandry, or roadbuilding machine;
6. An individual on a bicycle, on an e-bicycle, on a motor-assisted bicycle, or on other non-motorized modes of transportation such as roller skates, rollerblades, roller skis, skateboard, longboard, or unicycle;

SECTION 4. MINIMUM DISTANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR MOTOR VEHICLES PASSING VULNERABLE ROAD USERS

The operator of a motor vehicle that is approaching or overtaking, from behind, a VRU on the same side of the road shall pass to the left of such VRU at a distance of at least three (3) feet until safely clear thereof. The three-foot distance requirement shall not apply on roads with clearly marked bicycle lanes as defined by New York Vehicle and Traffic Law § 102-a.

If an operator of a motor vehicle does not have sufficient space to approach or pass a vulnerable road user at a distance of at least three feet, the driver must slow down and only approach or pass if it may be done safely and reasonably.

SECTION 5. COMPLIANCE WITH NEW YORK VEHICLE AND TRAFFIC LAWS

Nothing in this Local Law shall be deemed to authorize the passing or crossing left of center of a roadway in violation of New York Vehicle and Traffic Law, including but not limited to Vehicle and Traffic Law §§ 1122-a, 1124, 1125, 1126.

The three-foot distance requirement shall not apply on roads with clearly marked usable bicycle lanes as defined by Vehicle and Traffic Law § 102-a.

[The operator of a motor vehicle that is approaching or passing a vulnerable road user shall not violate New York Vehicle and Traffic Law §§ 1122-a, 1124, 1125, 1126, or any other section pertaining to overtaking and passing.]

SECTION 6. ENFORCEMENT

This Local Law may be enforced by the law enforcement entities in any municipality within Cortland County, as well as but not limited to the Cortland County Sheriff, State Police, City of Cortland Police, Village of Homer Police, and SUNY Cortland Police.

SECTION 7. PENALTIES

- A. Any person committing the above-referenced offense shall be guilty of a violation and subject to a fine not to exceed \$225 for a first offense, \$325 for a second offense and \$425 for any third or subsequent offense(s).
- B. This section does not preclude a person from being charged with, convicted of, or punished for any other violation of law.

SECTION 8. APPLICABILITY

This law shall apply to all actions occurring on or after the effective date.

SECTION 9. SEVERABILITY

If any clause, sentence, paragraph, section, subdivision, or other part of this local law or its application shall be adjudged by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid or unconstitutional, such order or judgment shall not affect, impair, or invalidate the remainder of the local law which shall remain in full force and effect except as limited by such order or judgment.

SECTION 10. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Local Law shall take effect upon its filing in the Office of the Secretary of State as provided by Section 27 of the Municipal Home Rule Law.

Discussion Items

Monthly Reports

1. **Coroner's Monthly Report**
2. **Department of Emergency Response & Communications Monthly Report**
3. **Assigned Counsel Monthly Report**
4. **Public Defender Monthly Report**

Adjournment