

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Adam Carlson, Founding Partner of Zenith Research
DATE: July 9, 2026
RE: New Poll: New Yorkers’ Views of Horse-Drawn Carriages

Methodology

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|---|--|
| Poll Conducted By: | Zenith Research |
| Poll Sponsored By: | The Central Park Conservancy |
| Field Dates: | June 30th - July 4th, 2026 (fielding ended at 9:00AM EDT on July 4th) |
| Sample Methods: | Mixed mode (online opt-in panel and text-to-web randomly sampled via L2 consumer file) |
| Audience: | New York City Residents (age 18+) |
| Sample Size: | n=834 (n=385 text-to-web, n=449 online) |
| Margin of Sampling Error: | ±3.4 percentage points |
| Weighted By: | Borough, Gender, Race/Ethnicity, Educational Attainment, Age Group, Household Income |
| Sources for Weight Targets (linked): | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Borough (2024 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, age 18+) • Gender (2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, age 18+) • Race/Ethnicity (2024 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, age 18+) White, non-Hispanic Black, non-Hispanic Hispanic or Latino (of any race) Asian, non-Hispanic • Age (2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, age 18+) • Educational Attainment (2024 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, age 18+) • Household Income (2024 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates) |
| Quality Control Measures: | Quality control procedures were used to ensure data quality, including removing “speeders” (those who completed the survey in less than half of the median length of interview), “straightliners” (those who answered the same response for multiple grid questions), respondents who failed an attention check question, and respondents who provided nonsensical open-ended responses. |

Key Findings

- 1) **Nearly seven in ten New York City adults (68%) support legislation to end horse-drawn carriage operations in the city, while just 20% oppose it and 12% are unsure.**
 - 44% strongly support the legislation, compared with just 9% who strongly oppose it (24% somewhat support, 11% somewhat oppose).
- 2) **The breadth of support is striking: a majority of every one of the 83 demographic, geographic, and political subgroups tested supports banning horse-drawn carriages.**
 - Support for the ban is especially strong among Democrats and left-leaning groups – self-identified democratic socialists, progressives, and liberals (82% support); 2025 Mamdani general election voters (77%), and Democrats overall (73%).
 - Support also runs especially high among those who approve of the job being done by Mayor Zohran Mamdani (77%), Governor Kathy Hochul (75%), and Council Speaker Julie Menin (72%).
 - Demographically, support is strongest among mothers with children under 18 living at home (78%), college graduates (76%), Asian New Yorkers (76%), Latino New Yorkers (73%), and New Yorkers under age 45 (72%).
 - Notably, even the least supportive demographic subgroup — New Yorkers age 65 and older — still backs the ban by a 54% to 35% margin.
- 3) Asked in their own words why they support the ban, New Yorkers cite four major themes:
 - **Protecting public safety** by reducing risks to riders, pedestrians, cyclists, and the horses themselves.
 - **Protecting horse welfare** by ending what many view as an inhumane practice.
 - The belief that horse-drawn carriages **no longer belong in a modern, densely populated city.**
 - **Supporting a just transition** by helping affected workers find new jobs and retiring carriage horses to appropriate homes.
- 4) **74% of respondents say they saw, read, or heard about the death of Romanch Mahajan**, the young man killed in a horse-drawn carriage incident in Central Park last month, a high level of awareness.

Topline

1. In what year were you born? [CALCULATED INTO AGE GROUP]

| | |
|-------|-----|
| 18-29 | 21% |
| 30-44 | 28% |
| 45-54 | 15% |
| 55-64 | 15% |
| 65+ | 21% |

2. Which state or territory do you live in?

| | |
|----------|------|
| New York | 100% |
|----------|------|

3. Which county do you live in?

| | |
|--------------------------|-----|
| The Bronx | 15% |
| Kings (Brooklyn) | 30% |
| New York (Manhattan) | 21% |
| Queens | 28% |
| Richmond (Staten Island) | 6% |

4. What is your gender?

| | |
|----------------|-----|
| Man | 46% |
| Woman | 52% |
| Non-binary | 1% |
| Another gender | 1% |

5. Which of the following best describes your race and/or ethnicity?

| | |
|---|-----|
| White (not of Hispanic or Latino origin) | 32% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 27% |
| Black or African American | 20% |
| Asian | 16% |
| Middle Eastern or North African | 1% |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | 0% |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 0% |
| Another race or ethnicity | 2% |
| More than one race or ethnicity | 1% |

6. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

| | |
|--|------------|
| Less than high school | 4% |
| High school graduate or equivalent (e.g., GED) | 35% |
| Some college, no degree | 12% |
| Associate degree (e.g., AA, AS) or vocational degree | 8% |
| Bachelor's degree (e.g., BA, BS) | 23% |
| Graduate or professional degree (e.g., MA, MBA, JD, MD, PhD) | 18% |
| | |
| Non-College (Total) | 59% |
| College+ (Total) | 41% |

7. For statistical purposes only, what is your total annual household income before taxes?

| | |
|------------------------|-----|
| Less than \$25,000 | 13% |
| \$25,000 to \$49,999 | 21% |
| \$50,000 to \$74,999 | 16% |
| \$75,000 to \$99,999 | 8% |
| \$100,000 to \$149,999 | 17% |
| \$150,000 to \$199,999 | 7% |
| \$200,000 to \$499,999 | 14% |
| \$500,000 or more | 4% |

8. Are you or is anyone in your household a member of a labor union?

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| Yes, I am | 18% |
| Yes, someone else in my household is | 9% |
| No | 73% |

9. Do you approve or disapprove of the way each of the following are handling their jobs?

| | Strongly approve | Somewhat approve | Neither approve nor disapprove | Somewhat disapprove | Strongly disapprove | Don't know enough to form an opinion | Total Approve | Total Disapprove | Net Approve |
|------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|------------------|-------------|
| New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani | 37% | 19% | 11% | 7% | 21% | 5% | 56% | 28% | +28 |
| Governor Kathy Hochul | 15% | 27% | 20% | 10% | 20% | 9% | 42% | 30% | +12 |
| The New York City Council | 9% | 25% | 22% | 13% | 13% | 17% | 34% | 26% | +8 |
| City Council Speaker Julie Menin | 5% | 16% | 22% | 9% | 11% | 37% | 21% | 20% | +1 |

10. How much have you seen, heard, or read about the following news story:

A tourist being killed in a horse-drawn carriage incident in Central Park.

| | |
|---|-----|
| I could describe it in a lot of detail | 20% |
| I could describe a few things about it | 27% |
| I remember seeing or hearing something about it | 27% |
| I have not seen, heard, or read anything about it | 26% |

11. There is legislation before the New York City Council that would ban horse-drawn carriages in New York City.

The bill would require retired carriage horses to be placed in appropriate homes and prohibit them from being sent to slaughter. It would also provide job training and placement assistance to help carriage drivers and other affected workers find new jobs.

Do you support or oppose the proposed legislation to ban horse-drawn carriages in New York City?

| | |
|----------------------|------------|
| Strongly support | 44% |
| Somewhat support | 24% |
| Somewhat oppose | 11% |
| Strongly oppose | 9% |
| Not sure | 12% |
| | |
| Total Support | 68% |
| Total Oppose | 20% |
| Net Support | +48 |

[IF STRONGLY SUPPORT OR SOMEWHAT SUPPORT]

12. In your own words, why do you support the proposed legislation to ban horse-drawn carriages in New York City?

[SHOWING SELECT VERBATIM OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES, ALPHABETIZED BY RESPONSE, LIGHTLY EDITED FOR GRAMMAR AND SPELLING]

“Aside from the cruel treatment of horses, it creates a safety problem in the park and causes the paths to be littered with horse waste.”

– Brooklyn Man, White, Age 38

“Banning them is good for the horses, safer for people. Phase it thoughtfully with support for workers/horses. NYC has evolved.”

– Staten Island Man, White, Age 36, Union Household

“Because anything that kill can kill a human being instantaneously & unexpectedly needs to be investigated...Especially when it can be prevented...I could not imagine my life ending because I chose to go on a hose carriage ride.”

– Queens Man, Black, Age 37

“Cruel to animals. Bad for other Central Park users. Tourists have plenty of other iconic NYC activities.”

– Brooklyn Man, White, Age 41, Union Household

“I like the horses it's a throwback to old New York but its time has come and it's time to move on.”

– Bronx Man, Latino, Age 41

“I support banning horse-drawn carriages because I am concerned about the horses' safety and well-being. Busy city traffic, extreme weather, and recent horse deaths show that the risks can outweigh the benefits, and there are more humane alternatives for tourism.”

– Manhattan Woman, Asian, Age 23, Union Household

“I support the ban primarily due to public safety concerns, highlighted by a recent tragic death. I also believe it's the right step for animal welfare, as the current conditions for carriage horses are inhumane and outdated.”

– Manhattan Man, White, Age 41

“I support the proposed legislation to ban horse-drawn carriages in NYC because it is inhumane and unfair to the poor horses to force them to ride people around, and if the horse becomes startled or afraid it can cause an accident and put many people’s lives at risk.”

– Queens Woman, Latino, Age 41

“I think the horse-drawn carriages are unethical and shouldn’t be allowed—I understand that they’re part of the charm and history of New York but I think in 2026 we’ve aged out of it and it’s unfair to the animals.”

– Manhattan Woman, White, Age 29

“It is 2026. Horses should no longer be forced to endure busy city streets for tourist photos. The heat, noise, traffic and stressful conditions are not good for the welfare of these animals.”

– Queens Woman, White, Age 42, Union Household

“It is cruel for the horse to pull a carriage and also dangerous.”

– Bronx Woman, Black, Age 40, Union Household

“It would end a situation that is dangerous for both horses and people using the park, but at the same time address the issues of what will happen to the horses and their drivers.”

– Manhattan Man, White, Age 71

“It's a cruel practice. Tourists have enough to do in the city. Having horses overheat and be used the way they are is unnecessary.”

– Brooklyn Woman, White, Age 40

“New York is no longer in the 1800s we don't need horses on the streets.”

– Queens Man, Latino, Age 42

“Protects horses, improves animal welfare, supports humane retirement, and helps affected workers.”

– Manhattan Man, White, Age 44

“Safety is the first objective if the horse drawn carriage cannot be safe for its riders and for the pedestrians, it should be banned.”

– Manhattan Man, Latino, Age 62

“Since the horses will still remain alive and the carriage riders will get a new job, seems like a win-win. Plus, the horse carriage rides are for tourists mostly and an unnecessary activity in NYC, in my opinion.”

– Brooklyn Woman, Black, Age 48

“The horse drawn carriage is an outdated NYC attraction. There have been rumors of mistreatment of the horses for years. The death of an innocent passenger should be the end.”

– Bronx Man, Latino, Age 50

“They are dangerous, smelly, inhumane to the horses, and incompatible with city traffic. Also expensive!”

– Queens Man, White, Age 43, Union Household

“This is long overdue!! We need it NOW. My heart breaks every time I see those poor horses and the fact that they’re back to work already after one died a few weeks ago and a kid died the following week is insane. It is inhumane and abusive to make them work like this and it’s ridiculous that they haven’t already been banned! Justice for these poor horses. I am very passionate about this and so is everyone I know honestly. Poor babies. Please please please pass this bill!!!!!! Would be the best thing city council has done since banning broker fees!!!!!”

– Manhattan Woman, White, Age 26