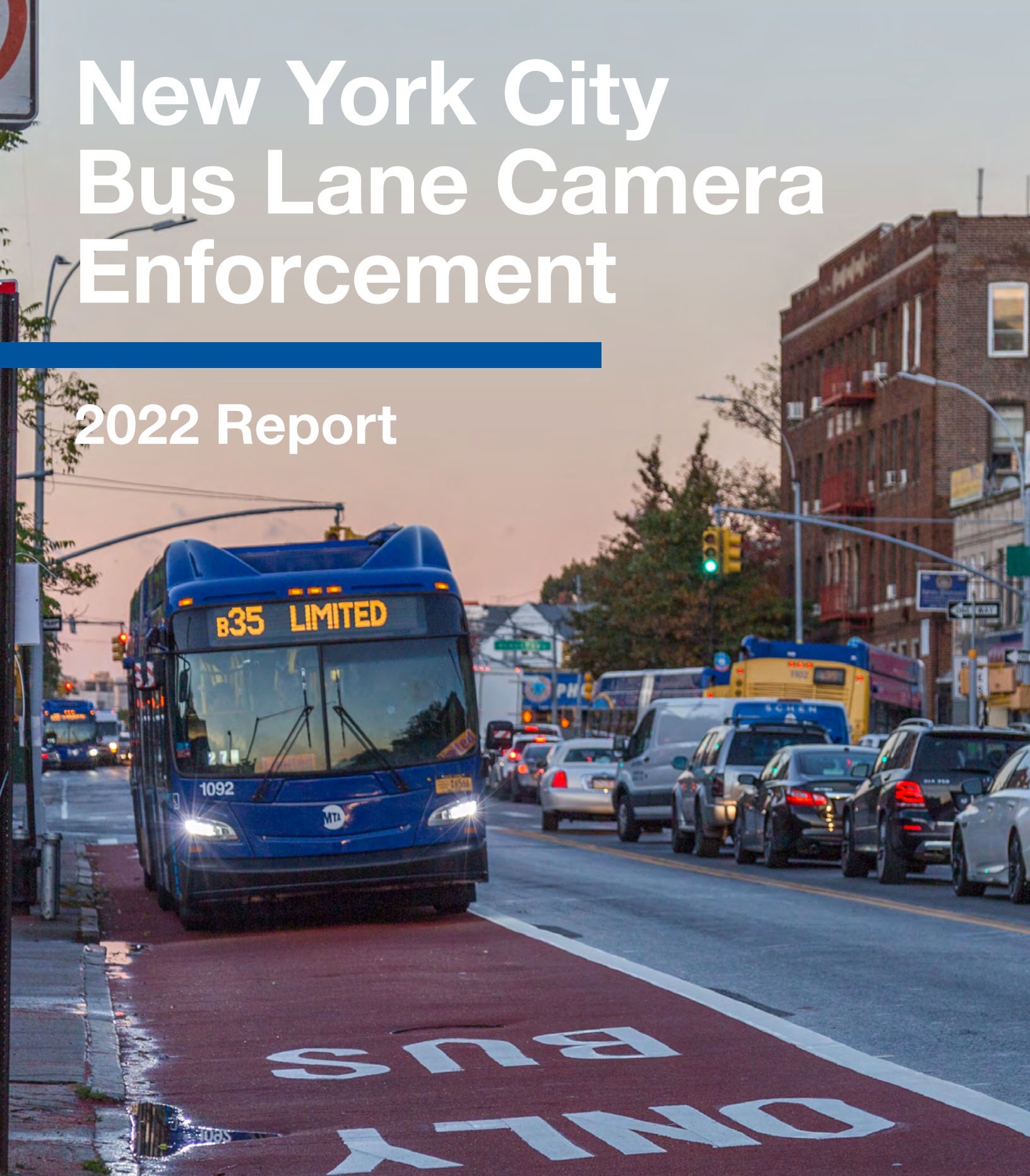


New York City Bus Lane Camera Enforcement

2022 Report





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Background

The New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) has a strong commitment to ensuring fast and reliable bus travel for New Yorkers. DOT, working closely with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), MTA New York City Transit (NYCT), and MTA Bus Company (MTA Bus), has installed over 150 miles of bus lanes around the city to allow buses on dozens of bus routes to bypass vehicular traffic. The effectiveness of these bus lanes relies on enforcement of traffic rules to keep them clear of other traffic.

In the summer of 2010, New York City and the MTA were given legislative authorization to begin operating camera-based bus lane enforcement, which included the ability to enforce through both stationary and bus-mounted cameras. The authorizing legislation allowed camera-based enforcement only on specifically named Select Bus Service (SBS) corridors in each borough of New York City. Based on this authority, the City and the MTA initiated implementation of an enforcement system using stationary cameras mounted above bus lanes beginning in November 2010.

In 2019, State legislative authorization was extended to allow camera-based enforcement on all bus lanes within New York City, not just SBS corridors. With this broader authorization, the legislation also added restrictions regarding time, fine amounts, and enforcement methods. Bus lane cameras are permitted to issue violations

whenever bus lanes are in effect. A graduated fine program was also instituted, which lowers the base bus lane fine from \$115 to \$50. After the first violation, the fine amount increases for subsequent violations within a 12-month period to \$100 for the second offense, \$150 for the third offense, \$200 for the fourth offense, and \$250 for each subsequent offense. The 2019 modifications to bus camera legislation also extended authorization to 2025.

DOT installs and maintains fixed, street-mounted bus lane enforcement cameras to capture bus lane violations from stationary vantage points. These cameras have been installed along SBS corridors since the inception of the camera enforcement program in 2010. To broaden the reach of camera enforcement, MTA launched their Automated Bus Lane Enforcement (ABLE) on-bus camera program in March 2019. Both programs are subject to the same hours and fine structure, and violations from both programs are reviewed by DOT. DOT camera revenues remit to the New York City Department of Finance, while ABLE camera revenues remit to the New York City Transportation Assistance Fund, which the MTA can access to help fund its operations.

This report gives a basic overview of the implementation of both the DOT and MTA ABLE enforcement programs, including the outreach and education conducted, and discusses the violation results of the overall program. This report reviews the bus lane camera program through 2021.

MASKS REQUIRED

811



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WATERBURY
A CITY OF
OPPORTUNITY



220 Livingston Street, Waterbury, VT 05671
CITY OF WATERBURY



#57
#62
Public Water Supply

BUS LANE
BUSES ONLY
7AM-7PM
MON-FRI

Livingston



Outreach and Education

Prior to implementing the camera enforcement program, DOT and NYCT conducted a joint outreach and public education campaign to raise awareness of bus lanes and make sure that the rules of bus lanes are clear to the public.

NYCT conducted bus and subway ad and media campaigns to raise bus lane awareness, beginning in 2010 with the start of SBS on the M15 in Manhattan. At the same time, DOT distributed a brochure to drivers, bus riders, and community stakeholders along SBS corridors. The brochure is available at www.nyc.gov/buslanes; all information in the brochure is also available by calling 311. In addition, DOT and the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission continually work together to educate taxi and livery drivers, including direct messaging to drivers and fleet owners. DOT has also worked with the New York Police Department, AAA, the Motor Trucking Association, and local Business Improvement Districts to educate the public about bus lane rules.

DOT uses social media channels, including Facebook and Twitter, to announce when enforcement on a corridor goes into effect.

Bus Lane Camera Enforcement in Context

The Select Bus Service program, which combined camera-enforced bus lanes with a package of other bus improvement strategies tailored to each corridor, yielded significant bus speed improvements, between 15% and 31%, depending on the corridor. While camera enforcement has been a crucial element of those speed gains, it is difficult to isolate its effect relative to the effect of other strategies that were implemented simultaneously, such as off-board fare payment.

DOT initiated the Better Buses program in 2019 to further the goals of SBS on a broader array of bus corridors. As part of this initiative, which includes camera enforced bus lanes, DOT implemented the 14th Street Busway and Fresh Pond Road projects in 2019. After the Better Buses Restart program was announced in June 2020, DOT rolled out expedited bus priority projects to address the needs of essential and returning workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. These include the 181st Street, Jay Street, Main Street, and Jamaica-Archer busways, and bus lanes on 149th Street, Merrick Boulevard, and Hylan Boulevard.

Camera Operations

Under the City's traffic rules, bus lanes in New York City can be legally used by non-bus vehicles for several purposes, including making the next legal right turn, accessing the curb, or to avoid an emergency vehicle. As a result, the camera enforcement system needs to be able to differentiate between these legal activities and illegal uses of the bus lane before issuing violations. The systems therefore rely on the use of recorded video that is reviewed by trained camera operators before a violation is issued.

Two types of violation monitoring equipment have been used to date. DOT has implemented a fixed location camera system. In the fixed system, two cameras are mounted above the bus lane. Each camera system contains two video cameras. One is placed mid-block and the other is placed at the intersection. The midblock camera captures if the vehicle is traveling in the bus lane and not making any right turn to leave the lane, such as entering a driveway. The intersection camera captures the vehicle traveling through the intersection for a total of 200 feet without making a left turn. The cameras provide a high-quality view of the rear of a vehicle, clearly showing the vehicle's license plate, but not showing the driver of the vehicle. Both cameras clearly showing both potential actions in the bus lane, and also showing other activity on the street that might have forced a vehicle to use the bus lane. If a vehicle other than a registered bus continues through either of the cameras without turning right, these cameras identify a potential violation.

Through 2021, fixed bus lane cameras were installed at 191 locations along the following corridors:

Brooklyn

Bedford Avenue*
Church Avenue
Flatlands Avenue
Fulton Street
Glenwood Road
Jay Street
Kings Highway
Nostrand Avenue*
Pennsylvania Avenue
Rogers Avenue*
Smith Street
Utica Avenue*

Bronx

149th Street
East 161st Street
East 163rd Street
Fordham Road
Webster Avenue

Manhattan

181st Street
125th Street
14th Street*
1st Avenue*
207th Street
23rd Street*
2nd Avenue*
34th Street*
3rd Avenue
42nd Street
5th Avenue
86th Street*
Allen Street*
Broadway
Lexington Avenue
Madison Avenue

Queens

Archer Avenue
Beach 59th Street
Broadway
Cross Bay Boulevard
Fresh Pond Rd
Hillside Avenue
Hoffman Drive
Jamaica Av
Main Street
Merrick Boulevard
Queens Boulevard
Rockaway Beach
Boulevard
Rockaway Parkway
Sutphin Boulevard
Woodhaven Boulevard

Staten Island

Hylan Boulevard

* Mobile cameras also in use through 2021

Between City Fiscal Year 2018 and Fiscal Year 2021, inclusive, the capital cost of furnishing and installing camera hardware for DOT system was \$11,187,265, and the operating cost was \$36,665,352.

The MTA system consists of on-bus mobile cameras, which were first tested in a NYCT pilot program in 2010-2011 and then fully implemented under the ABLE banner in 2019. There are currently 123 buses equipped with ABLE cameras, across seven routes. These routes are the B44 SBS, B46 SBS, M14 SBS, M15 SBS, M23 SBS, M34 SBS, and M86 SBS. MTA intends to enable approximately 300 additional buses with cameras in late 2022. Red roadway paint augments the visibility of the lanes but does not serve a regulatory function. The cost to date through 2021 of furnishing and installing ABLE hardware is \$2,516,383.20.

For the mobile camera system, equipment is installed on buses to read the rear license plates of vehicles stopped in the bus lane as the bus passes the vehicle and uses GPS to mark that location. To issue a violation under this system, two buses must observe the same vehicle stopped at the same GPS location, and the two buses must make this observation at least five minutes apart. This ensures that violations are not issued to vehicles making an expeditious drop-off in the bus lane. Because this system records only standing violations, it does not duplicate the fixed camera system, which captures primarily driving in the bus lane violations. The DOT cameras and the ABLE cameras are each best suited to a specific type of violation, so the continued rollout of both programs is central to increasing the effectiveness of bus lanes.

Bus lanes are regulated by signage posted on most blocks.



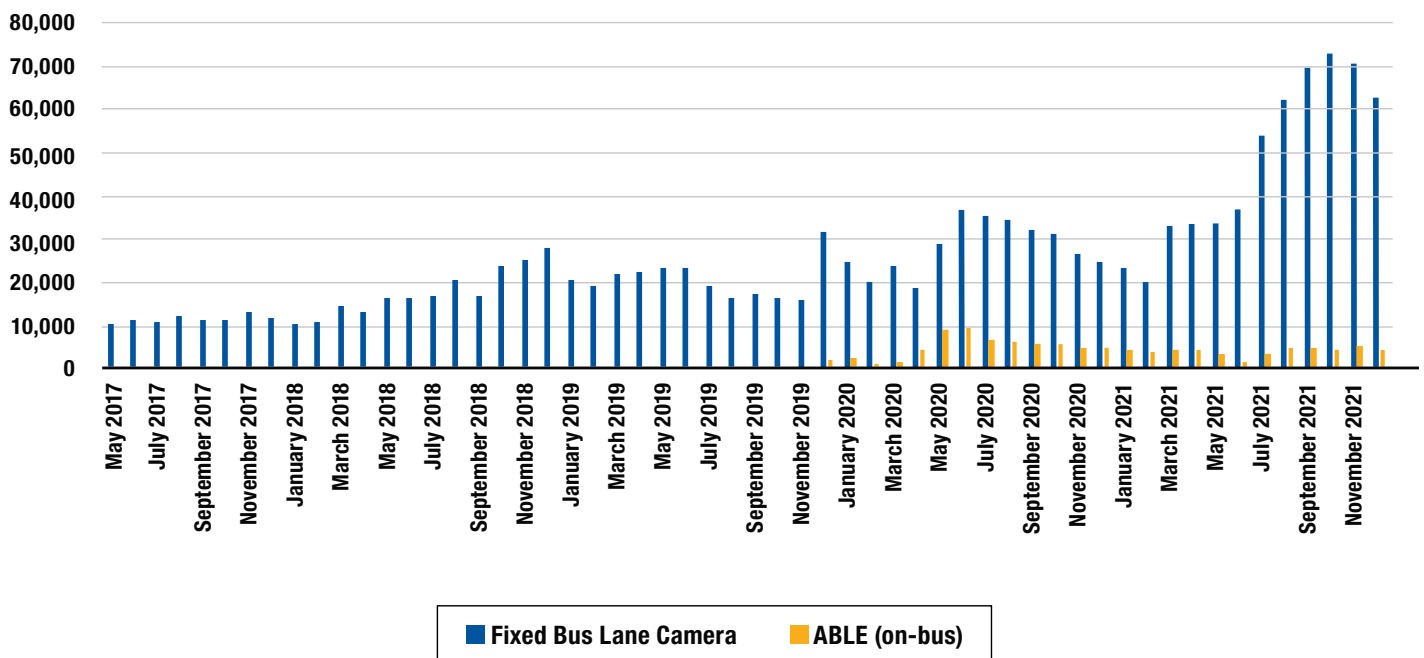
Program Results: Violations and Adjudication

Under both the DOT and MTA bus lane camera enforcement programs, notices of liability are sent out by DOT. These notices of liability include information about the date, time and location of the violation, a photo of the vehicle recorded, and a link to a website with a personalized PIN that allows the video of the violation to be viewed. The notices of liability are then sent to the New York City Department of Finance (DOF) for adjudication. DOF adjudicates all traffic violations for the City and has developed a high quality process to adjudicate the violations identified through the bus lane camera program.

The previous bus lane camera report presented violation data up through the end of April 2017. From May 1, 2017 through December 31, 2021, 1,585,496 violations were recorded by the bus lane camera enforcement system, and an equal number of notices of liability were issued. A monthly breakdown of these violations is provided in Table 1.

Since the progressive fine structure was implemented in February 2020, 16% (94,941) of unique plates and 20% (196,705) of total Notices of Liability were repeat violations for a single vehicle.

Monthly Breakdown of Violations Recorded by the Bus Lane Camera Enforcement System May 2017 to December 2021





A total of 505 unique cameras recorded these violations, including 382 (two per site) fixed bus lane cameras and 123 on-bus mobile cameras.

551,852 fixed bus lane camera violations were issued in 2021¹. Of these, a total of 41,333 fixed camera violations (or 7%) were challenged. 30,263 violations (or 73% of the challenged total) were ruled guilty, 8,267 violations (or 20%) were ruled not guilty, and 2,803 (or 7%) were ruled guilty with a fine reduction.

For the MTA on-bus mobile camera program, 49,492 violations were issued in 2021. 2,918 of these violations (or 6%) were challenged. 2,918 violations (or 67% of the challenged total) were ruled guilty, 1,109 violations (or 26%) were ruled not guilty, and 320 (or 7%) were ruled guilty with a fine reduction.

The total amount of revenue collected as a result of violations issued by the full program during 2021 was \$40,346,376.71, comprised of \$36,059,445.61 from the fixed camera program and \$4,286,921.10 from the on-bus cameras. In total, this amounts to about \$67 per violation issued. This figure accounts for the graduated fine structure, late payment penalties, and violations dismissed or otherwise not paid to date.

¹ Previous reports have included data on violation adjudication for three previous years. 2021 data only is provided here as data on violations for 2019 and 2020 were not made available by NYC Department of Finance.

