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**BETTER BUSES RESTART: MAYOR DE BLASIO ANNOUNCES MAJOR PROJECTS
TO SPEED BUSES DURING CITY'S PHASED REOPENING**

Renowned 14th Street Busway to be made permanent; 20 Miles of transformative projects to benefit hundreds of thousands of daily riders in South Bronx and Flushing

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio today announced nine major bus lane projects to give New Yorkers safe, reliable, and fast public transit options as New York City begins its phased reopening. The new busways and dedicated bus lanes will increase bus speeds and reliability along major corridors in all five boroughs and address concerns over the growth in vehicular traffic.

After a successful pilot last October, the popular 14th Street busway will be made permanent and bus lanes extended eastward. The City will also add a bus and truck priority treatment along Flushing's Main Street in Queens, and new bus lanes to serve critical transit connections along 149th Street in the Bronx. The nine projects combined will benefit nearly 750,000 daily riders.

“As New Yorkers head back to work, they’ll be relying on the bus more than ever – and I’m proud to offer them faster and more reliable options,” said **Mayor de Blasio**. “By replicating the 14th Street success story in other congested corridors, we can reduce traffic, increase mass transit service, and build a fairer and better New York.”

“As New York City emerges from the difficult days of COVID-19, our commitment to faster and more reliable bus service has never been more important, as buses serve a critical role — both in communities hit hard from the pandemic and by essential front-line workers,” said **DOT Commissioner Polly Trottenberg**. “We are proud to undertake transformational work on some of the busiest bus corridors in the city, including 149th Street in the Bronx and on 14th Street in Manhattan, where the busway has been such a tremendous success. We look forward to working with our partners at the MTA to get these transformational changes finished this year.”

Projects beginning this month include:

- 1) **149th Street, Bronx:** DOT will implement offset bus lanes for most of the 2.7-mile corridor from Southern Boulevard to River Avenue. 149th Street carries four bus routes with a total of 55,000 daily riders, and serves as a vital connection to 10 subway lines, the HUB, and Lincoln Medical Center.

2) **The 14th Street Busway, Manhattan:** The 14th Street Busway pilot has received international attention, as it has successfully increased bus speeds by as much as 24% and ridership by as much as 30%. The City will make this pilot project permanent. The project, which serves approximately 28,000 daily riders of the M14, combines blocks of exclusive access and standard bus lanes to provide bus priority from 9th Avenue to 1st Avenue. DOT will add 0.8 miles of new bus lane from 1st Avenue to Avenue C.

3) **Main Street, Flushing:** DOT will add a busway to a .3-mile northbound stretch of Main Street, where it meets the terminus of the 7 train. The street currently features bus and truck priority treatments in the southbound direction that have resulted in a 23% increase in bus speeds between 2017 and 2018. The enhancement will run along Main Street and Kissena Boulevard as it connects to Main Street and will continue to Northern Boulevard. Bus routes that travel along Main Street carry about 150,000 rides per day.

DOT, in collaboration with MTA, also announced that it will implement bus priority improvements on seven additional corridors in 2020, including bus lane or busway treatments at the following locations:

Busways:

- Main Street in Queens
- Jamaica Avenue in Queens
- 5th Avenue in Manhattan
- Jay Street in Brooklyn
- 181st Street in Manhattan

Bus lane projects:

- 14th Street in Manhattan (from 1st Avenue to Avenue C)
- 149th Street in the Bronx
- Merrick Boulevard in Queens
- Hylan Boulevard in Staten Island

DOT will engage with stakeholders on an ongoing basis to address issues in affected communities.

DOT will give bus priority to these corridors this year:

Busway Project	Borough	Streets	Length	Daily Rides
Main Street/Kissena	Queens	Sanford to Northern Boulevard	0.3 miles	150,000
Jamaica Avenue	Queens	Sutphin Boulevard to 168th Street	0.9 miles	225,000
5th Avenue	Manhattan	57th Street to 34th Street	1.1 miles	75,000
Jay Street	Brooklyn	Fulton Street to Tillary Street	0.6 miles	35,000
181st Street	Manhattan	Amsterdam Avenue to Broadway	0.6 miles	111,000
Total:			3.5 miles	596,000
Bus Lane Project				

14th Street	Manhattan	1st Avenue to Avenue C	0.8 miles	28,000
149th Street	Bronx	Southern Boulevard to River Avenue	2.7 miles	55,000
Merrick Boulevard	Queens	Hillside Avenue to Springfield Boulevard	6.4 miles	35,000
Hylan Boulevard	Staten Island	Lincoln Avenue to Nelson Avenue	6.6 miles	30,000
Total:			16.5 miles	148,000
Grand Total			20 miles	744,000

"A permanent and expanded 14th Street Busway is the kind of forward-thinking transportation policy that our city needs as we re-open," said **Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer**. "The 14th Street Busway has increased bus ridership and decreased travel time, and so this news is something that makes me proud, as the first elected official to publicly support the Busway. I am also encouraged to see that bus improvements are coming to 5th Avenue, and I am happy to see that my call to implement a busway for 181st Street been heeded. I commend Mayor de Blasio and Commissioner Trottenberg for today's announcement making the 14th Busway permanent and for implementing 20 miles of bus lanes throughout the city."

"As we begin phase one of reopening, it is vital that we take this opportunity to move further towards being a more accessible city. More bus lanes mean less crowding, faster and more predictable trips, fewer cars, and cleaner air for everyone. I thank the Mayor and DOT for expediting these projects, and I encourage them to continue to reimagine and reinvest in the reliable public transit that is the lifeblood of our city," said **Senator Liz Krueger**.

"Creating more space for public transportation will only further assist rapid bus transit. This is critical in City like New York where we rely on public transportation," said **Assembly Member Harvey Epstein**. "Especially during COVID 19, having better and quicker bus service will continue to strengthen the needs of NYC residents and the residents of my community."

"As our communities continue to recover from their battle with COVID-19, I am pleased to know improvements are coming to South East Queens, said **Assembly Member Alicia Hyndman**. "Well known as a transportation desert, our busy hubs of Merrick Blvd and Jamaica Avenue carry our community to and from home. I look forward to working together to increase the reliable service in the area."

"Our public transit system is the lifeblood of this city," said **Assembly Member Dan Quart**. "As New York City reopens and people start returning to work, we must ensure New Yorkers have access to safe and dependable transit. A new busway along 5th Ave will go a long way toward speeding up commute times and reducing overcrowding on MTA buses in Midtown East."

"Buses will remain vital to a successful reopening of the City as New Yorkers start going back to work. We have been calling for additional bus lanes as part of the reopening and I support initiatives that continue to identify different areas where we can expand our bus services. We need to create the right mechanism to include the small business community so that they can also benefit from this initiative," said **Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez, Chairman of the Transportation Committee**. "I expect that this is only a start and that we will continue expanding bus lanes in all underserved communities like Northern Manhattan and the Bronx. I

will also continue working alongside my colleagues, City Hall, the MTA, and advocates to ensure we restore funding to bus related initiatives.”

"The 14th Street Busway has been a resounding success. We are pleased to see it made permanent, and that more busways will soon be coming online. New Yorkers deserve a bus commute without being stuck in endless car traffic," said **Transportation Alternatives Executive Director Danny Harris**. "Our streets must be a tool toward the city's recovery, and we look forward to working with the Department of Transportation to bring more bus-only corridors across the five boroughs."

"As New York reopens, the City is taking a monumental leap forward for millions of bus riders," said **Danny Pearlstein, Policy and Communications Director at Riders Alliance**. "The COVID pandemic proved how essential buses are and yielded major speed and reliability improvements for riders in healthcare, grocery, pharmacy and other critical roles. With today's commitment, the City makes an important stride toward cementing those gains and putting riders first on busy streets. The projects announced today are a big step in an equitable recovery that will help reconnect our city and get New Yorkers moving together again."

"This fast action from Mayor de Blasio and DOT will help hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers who rely on transit. Busways are exactly what essential workers and other transit riders need to stay mobile as the city emerges from the depths of the pandemic," said **David Bragdon, Executive Director of TransitCenter**.

"This is an incredibly important step forward to improving bus service for hundreds of thousands of riders," said **Nick Sifuentes, Executive Director of Tri-State Transportation Campaign**.

"During the height of the coronavirus pandemic, even as most New Yorkers sheltered in place, we saw buses crowded with essential workers traveling to and from hospitals, warehouses, grocery stores, and other critical services that allowed us all to stay home and stay safe. We owe it to them to keep buses moving quickly, and bus lanes are the most important part of improving bus service and reducing crowding. And as millions of New Yorkers start returning to work, we cannot cram more cars onto our already congested streets. Making bus service more efficient will make buses safer, reducing crowding and allowing us all to better physically distance on transit."

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