

Central Business District Tolling Program

Environmental Assessment – Public Hearings
August 25 – August 31, 2022



[mta.info/CBDTP](https://www.mta.info/CBDTP)

What is the Central Business District (CBD) Tolling Program?

A vehicular tolling program to reduce traffic congestion in the Manhattan CBD

As defined in the New York State MTA Reform and Traffic Mobility Act, vehicles would be charged a daily toll for entering or remaining in the Manhattan CBD, which is on and below 60th Street in Manhattan, excluding:

- The Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) Drive and the West Side Highway/Route 9A
- The Battery Park Underpass and any surface roadway portion of the Hugh L. Carey Tunnel connecting to West Street (the West Side Highway/Route 9A)

After covering Project-related capital and operating expenses, revenue collected would fund projects in the MTA 2020-2024 Capital Program and successor capital programs.



Map of Manhattan's Central Business District Tolling Program Area

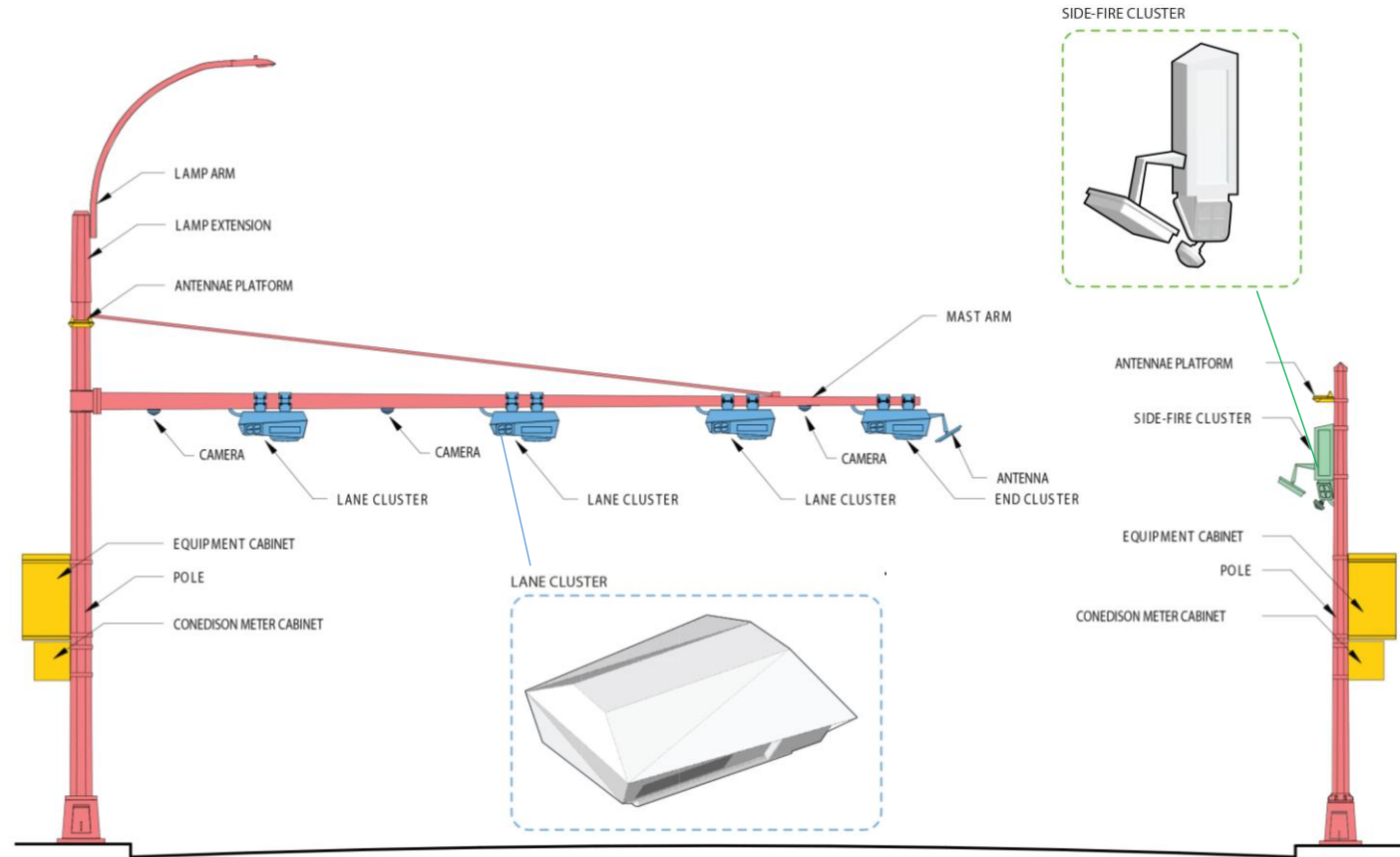
How would the Manhattan CBD Tolling Program work?

Locations for Infrastructure

- Detection points would be placed at entrances and exits to the Manhattan CBD.
- On the avenues, tolling infrastructure would generally be between 60th and 61st Streets.
- An algorithm would be used so those who stay on excluded roadways are not tolled.

How Customers Would Pay

- E-ZPass
- Tolls by Mail
- Future Third-Party Provider



Proposed Tolling Infrastructure and Tolling System Equipment

What would the benefits be?



Reduced vehicular traffic in and near the Manhattan CBD



Improved travel times within the Manhattan CBD, including for buses and deliveries



New source of local, recurring capital funding for subway, trains, and buses



Improved regional air quality

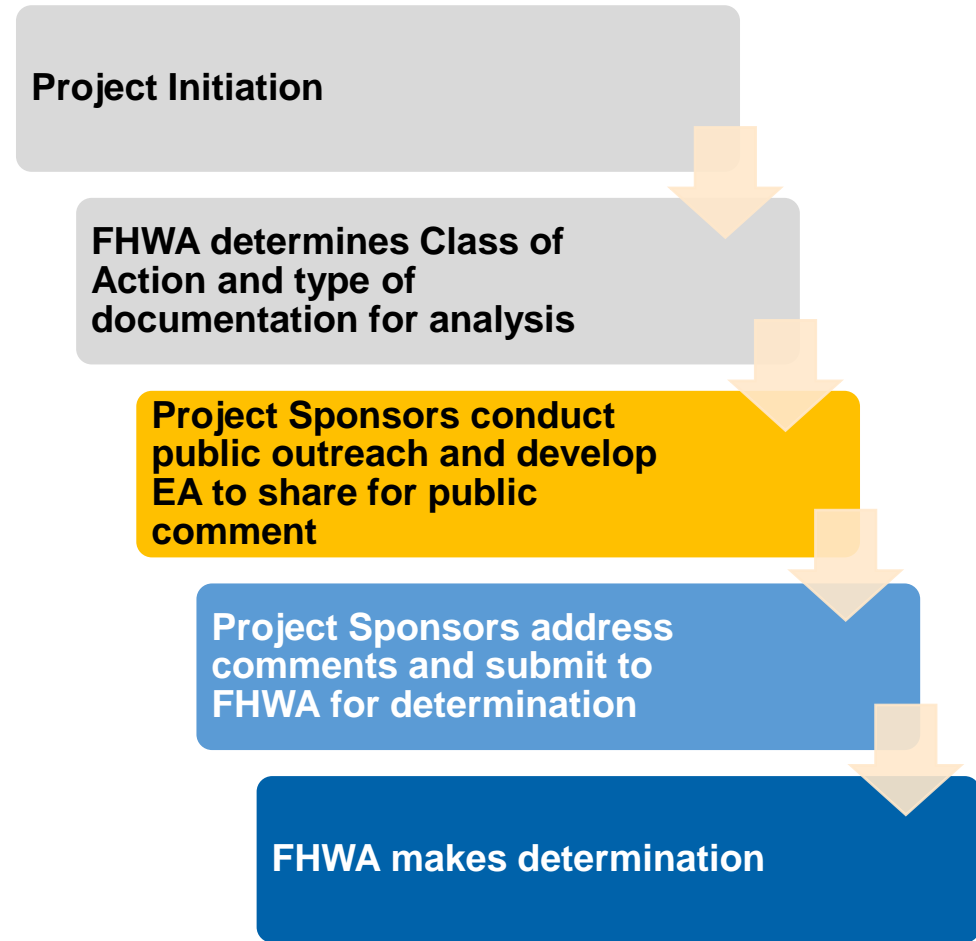
Why is an Environmental Assessment (EA) needed for this Project?

Some roadways in the Manhattan CBD have received federal funds, so approval for tolling is needed from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires that when the significance of the effects is unknown, Federal agencies evaluate the significance of environmental effects of an action, in this case, the approval to toll.

As Federal Lead Agency, FHWA determined that an EA is the appropriate Class of Action for this project.

Since the Project could have effects on Environmental Justice populations, FHWA and the Project Sponsors incorporated enhanced public outreach and coordination with Federal and State resource agencies.



Project Purpose, Need, Objectives

Purpose

To reduce traffic congestion in the Manhattan CBD in a manner that will generate revenue for future transportation improvements, pursuant to acceptance into FHWA's Value Pricing Pilot Program (VPPP)

Need

- To reduce vehicle congestion in the Manhattan CBD
- To create a new local, recurring funding source for MTA's Capital Projects

Objectives

- Reduce daily vehicle-miles traveled (VMT) within the Manhattan CBD by at least 5 percent
- Reduce the number of vehicles entering the Manhattan CBD daily by at least 10 percent
- Create a funding source for capital improvements and generate sufficient annual net revenues to fund \$15 billion for capital projects for the MTA Capital Program
- Establish a tolling program consistent with the purposes underlying the New York State legislation entitled the MTA Reform and Traffic Mobility Act

Why toll the Manhattan Central Business District (CBD)?

Congestion in NYC consistently ranks among the worst in the United States

- Congestion costs 102 hours of lost time, equating to \$1,595 per year per driver in delay.
- Between 2010 and 2019, travel speeds fell 22% in Manhattan's CBD.
- Local bus speeds have declined 28% in the Manhattan CBD since 2010.
- The average speed of Select Bus Service (NYC's bus rapid transit service) routes in the Manhattan CBD is 19% slower than in the outer boroughs.

MTA's subway, rail, and bus systems must be repaired and modernized

Funding from the Project would support the 2020-2024 Capital Program (and successor programs) that prioritizes:

- Investing to improve reliability
- Committing to environmental sustainability
- Building an accessible transit system for all New Yorkers
- Easing congestion and creating growth
- Improving safety and customer service through technology



Environmental Assessment (EA)



Project Alternatives Evaluated in EA

No Action Alternative

- No program to toll vehicles in the Manhattan CBD
- No comprehensive plan to reduce Manhattan CBD congestion
- No annual, recurring funding for MTA capital programs

CBD Tolling “Action” Alternative

- Implement a tolling program, consistent with the Mobility Act, to toll vehicles entering or remaining in the Manhattan CBD
- Install tolling infrastructure, tolling system equipment, and signage within and near the Manhattan CBD
- Generate funds for MTA capital investments in subways, buses, and commuter railroads

Key Topics of the Environmental Assessment

Areas with Only Beneficial or No Adverse Effects

Transportation: Regional Transportation (4A)
Transportation: Parking (4D)
Social Conditions: Population (5A)
Social Conditions: Neighborhood Character (5B)
Social Conditions: Public Policy (5C)
Economic Conditions (6)
Parks and Recreational Resources (7)
Historical and Cultural Resources (8)
Visual Resources (9)
Air Quality (10)
Energy (11)
Noise (12)
Natural Resources (13)
Hazardous Waste/Contaminated Materials (14)
Construction Effects (15)

Areas with Potential Adverse Effects

Transportation: Highways and Intersections (4B)
Transportation: Transit (4C)
Transportation: Pedestrians and Bicycles (4E)
Environmental Justice (17)

(#) – denotes chapter in EA where this information can be found

CBD Tolling Alternative - Tolling Scenarios

Scenario						
A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Base Plan	Base Plan with Caps and Exemptions	Low Crossing Credits for Vehicles Using Tunnels to Access the CBD, with Some Caps and Exemptions	High Crossing Credits for Vehicles Using Tunnels to Access the CBD	High Crossing Credits for Vehicles Using Tunnels to Access the CBD, with Some Caps and Exemptions	High Crossing Credits for Vehicles Using Manhattan Bridges and Tunnels to Access the CBD, with Some Caps and Exemptions	Base Plan with Same Tolls for All Vehicle Classes

Potential Crossing Credits

Credit Toward CBD Toll for Tolls Paid at the Queens-Midtown, H.L. Carey, Lincoln, Holland Tunnels	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Credit Toward CBD Toll for Tolls Paid at the R. F. Kennedy, Henry Hudson, G. Washington Bridges	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No

Potential Exemptions and Discounts (Caps) on Number of Tolls per Day

Autos, motorcycles, and commercial vans	Once per day	Once per day	Once per day	Once per day	Once per day	Once per day	Once per day
Taxis	No cap	Once per day	Exempt	No cap	Exempt	Once per day	No cap
FHVs	No cap	Once per day	Three times per day	No cap	Three times per day	Once per day	No cap
Small and large trucks	No cap	Twice per day	No cap	No cap	No cap	Once per day	No cap
Buses	No cap	Exempt	No cap	No cap	Only transit buses exempt	Exempt	No cap

Approximate Toll Rate Assumed (Autos / Small Trucks / Large Trucks)

Peak Period	\$9 / \$18 / \$28	\$10 / \$20 / \$30	\$14 / \$28 / \$42	\$19 / \$38 / \$57	\$23 / \$46 / \$69	\$23 / \$65 / \$82	\$12
Off Peak Period	\$7 / \$14 / \$21	\$8 / \$15 / \$23	\$11 / \$21 / \$32	\$14 / \$29 / \$43	\$17 / \$35 / \$52	\$17 / \$49 / \$62	\$9
Overnight Period	\$5 / \$9 / \$14	\$5 / \$10 / \$15	\$7 / \$14 / \$21	\$10 / \$19 / \$29	\$12 / \$23 / \$35	\$12 / \$33 / \$41	\$7

CBD Tolling Alternative – Key Takeaways

Tolling the Manhattan CBD



Reduced traffic entering Manhattan CBD
Net benefit in congestion reduction for the region

Discounts, crossing credits, exemptions



Higher toll rates

Higher toll rates



Greater degree of traffic reduction in Manhattan CBD, **BUT**
Increased traffic diversions, including increases along the Cross Bronx Expressway and Staten Island Expressway

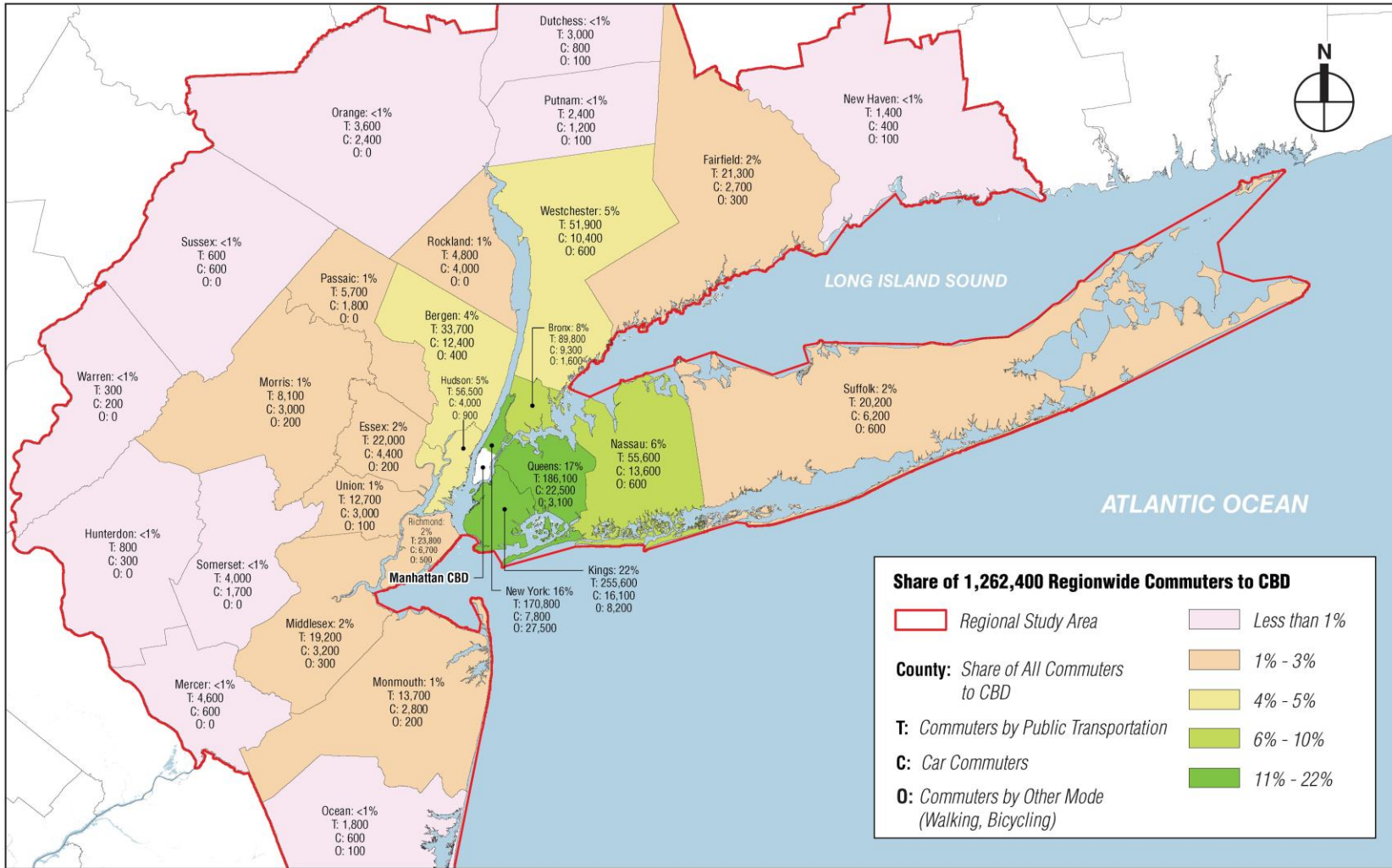
Crossing credits



More parity in total costs among different routes, **BUT**
Changes the balance of effects on traffic

- Less effect reducing traffic from Queens; much less effect reducing traffic from New Jersey
- Greater effect reducing traffic from north of 60th Street and Brooklyn
- More traffic at the Queens-Midtown Tunnel, the Hugh L. Carey Tunnel, and the Long Island Expressway

Where do commuters to the Manhattan CBD come from?



Map of 28 Counties Showing Percent of Commuters to the Manhattan CBD and Mode of Travel by County



Work Trips

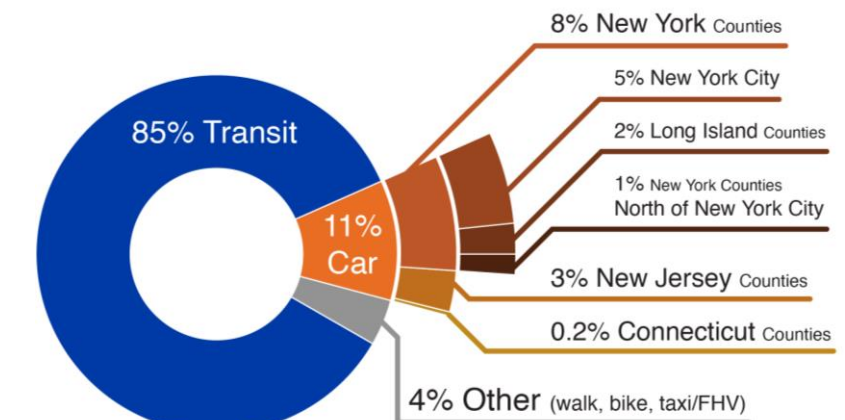


Figure Showing Percent of Work Trips to the Manhattan CBD by Mode of Travel and Trip Origin

Transportation: Regional Effects



Key Findings

All tolling scenarios

- Reduce the number of vehicle entries into the Manhattan CBD
- Reduce vehicle-miles traveled (VMT) in the Manhattan CBD

Area	% Increase or Decrease in Vehicles Entering
Manhattan CBD	-19.9% to -15.4%

Area	% Increase or Decrease in Daily VMT
Manhattan CBD	-9.2% to -7.1%
NYC	-1.5% to -0.7%
New York north of NYC	-0.8% to -0.2%
Long Island	-0.2% to 0.1%
New Jersey	0.0% to 0.2%
Connecticut	-0.2% to 0.0%

Transportation: Highways

Key Findings



Beneficial Effects



**Adverse Effects -
Mitigation Required**

Some locations would experience a decrease in congestion.

Three highway segments would experience adverse effects in the form of increased delays:

- Westbound LIE (I-495) near the Queens-Midtown Tunnel (*midday*);
- Approaches to westbound George Washington Bridge on I-95 (*midday*);
- Southbound/northbound FDR Drive between E 10th Street and Brooklyn Bridge (*PM*).

Mitigation

Project Sponsors will implement a monitoring plan, prior to the Project beginning, that identifies thresholds for adverse effects; if thresholds are reached as a result of the Project, the Project Sponsors will institute Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures, such as ramp metering, motorist information, and/or signage, at identified highway locations with adverse effects.

Post-implementation, the Project Sponsors will monitor effects and, if needed, Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority (TBTA) will modify the toll rates, crossing credits, exemptions, and/or discounts to reduce adverse effects.

Truck Traffic

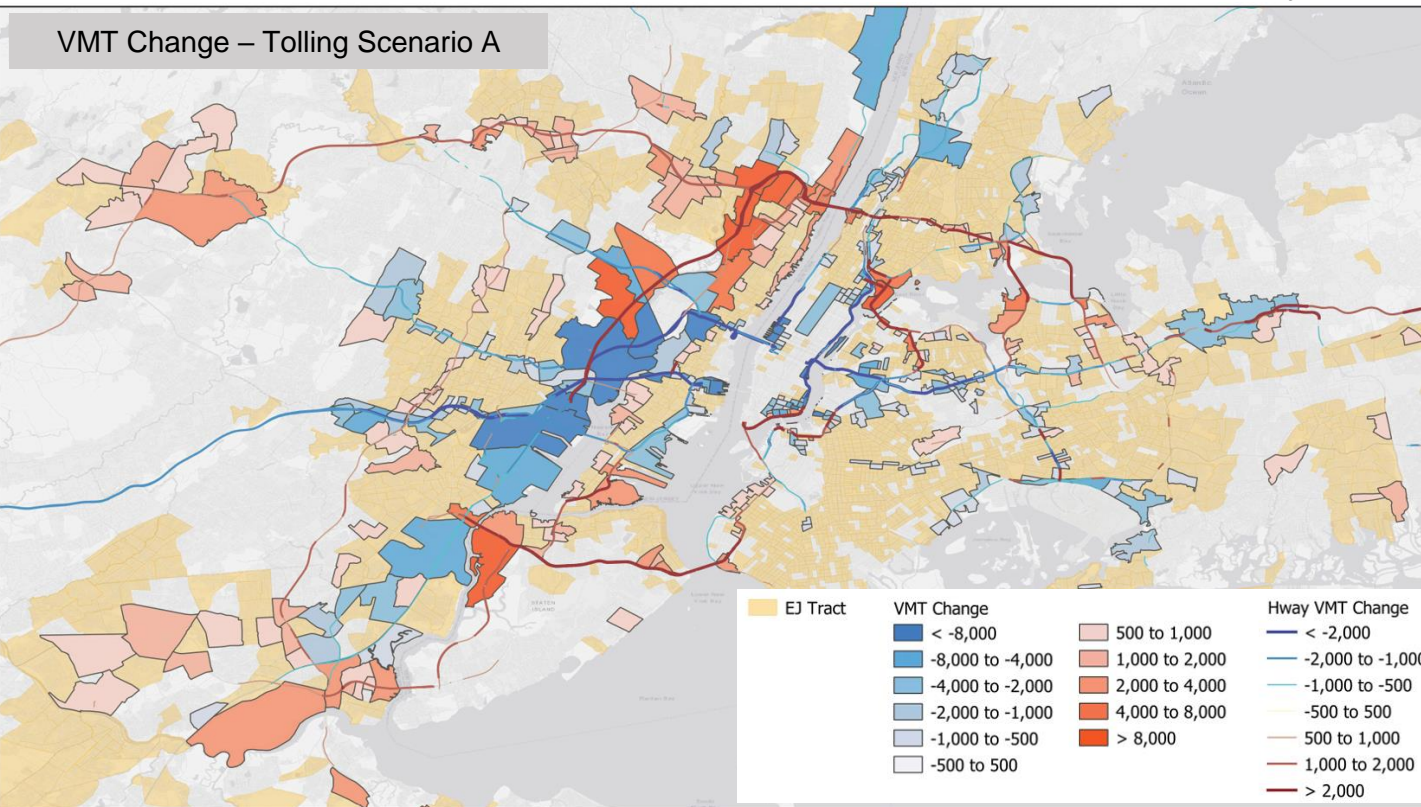
Key Findings

VMT increases would occur on the Cross Bronx Expressway as a result of traffic diversions. While there would be no adverse effect related to air quality, members of EJ communities raised concern, and additional analysis was performed at their request to determine how many trucks were responsible for the projected increase.



Response to Outreach

VMT Change – Tolling Scenario A



Increased Daily Number of Trucks

Location	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Cross Bronx Expressway at Macombs Rd	509	704	170	510	378	536	50

In response to concerns raised during public outreach, Tolling Scenario G was added to the original 6 scenarios. By charging all vehicles the same toll rate as cars, instead of charging trucks more, diversions would be reduced along with the relative incremental number of trucks.

Transportation: Local Intersections



Beneficial Effects



Adverse Effects - Mitigation Required

Key Findings

Most intersections – would experience decreases in delay

Tolling Scenarios D/E/F – 4 out of 102 intersections would experience adverse effects in the form of increased delay at certain times

Mitigation

Project Sponsors will monitor those intersections where adverse effects are identified and implement appropriate signal timing adjustments to mitigate the effect, per NYCDOT's normal practice.

Changes in Intersection Delays (Tolling Scenarios D/E/F) After Signal Timing Adjustments (seconds)				
Location	EJ	AM	MD	PM
Trinity Place & Edgar Street	No	0.6	7.7	1.1
E 37th St & 3rd Ave	No	0.7	5.1	1.3
E 36th St & 2nd Ave	No	-4.7	3.6	3.4
125th Street & 2nd Avenue	Yes	2.9	0.9	11.2

Transportation: Transit

Key Findings

Reduced roadway congestion would result in reliable, faster bus trips

Increase in transit ridership of 1%-2% systemwide for travel to and from the Manhattan CBD

No adverse effects from increased ridership on any lines or transit stations, but in some scenarios increased ridership could adversely affect passenger flows at certain stairs and escalators

Mitigation

Tolling Scenarios E/F. TBTA will coordinate with NJ Transit (NJT) and Port Authority of NY & NJ (PANYNJ) to implement monitoring plan with thresholds for pedestrian volumes on Station Stair 01/02 in Hoboken Terminal; if thresholds reached, TBTA will coordinate with NJT and PANYNJ to implement signage and wayfinding

All Tolling Scenarios. TBTA will coordinate with MTA NY City Transit (NYCT) to implement monitoring plan with thresholds:

- 42nd St & Times Square, stair ML6/ML8 - if threshold is reached, center handrail will be removed and riser adjusted
- Union Square Subway Station, escalator E219 and Flushing & Main St Subway Station, escalator E456 - if threshold is reached, increase escalator speeds from 100 fpm to 120 fpm
- Court Square, stair P2/P4 - if threshold is reached, construct new stair to increase capacity



Beneficial Effects



**Adverse Effects -
Mitigation Required**

Transportation: Pedestrians and Bicycles



Adverse Effects - Mitigation Required

Key Findings

Increases in passengers at transit hubs, but no adverse effects

Some increases in bicycle trips overall and near transit hubs, but no adverse effect

Outside the Manhattan CBD, increased transit usage at individual stations would not adversely affect pedestrian conditions on nearby sidewalks, crosswalks, or corners

In Manhattan CBD, 2 crosswalks/1 sidewalk adversely affected

Mitigation

Project Sponsors will implement monitoring plan with threshold for action; if the threshold is reached, pedestrian space will be increased, and obstructions will be removed or relocated

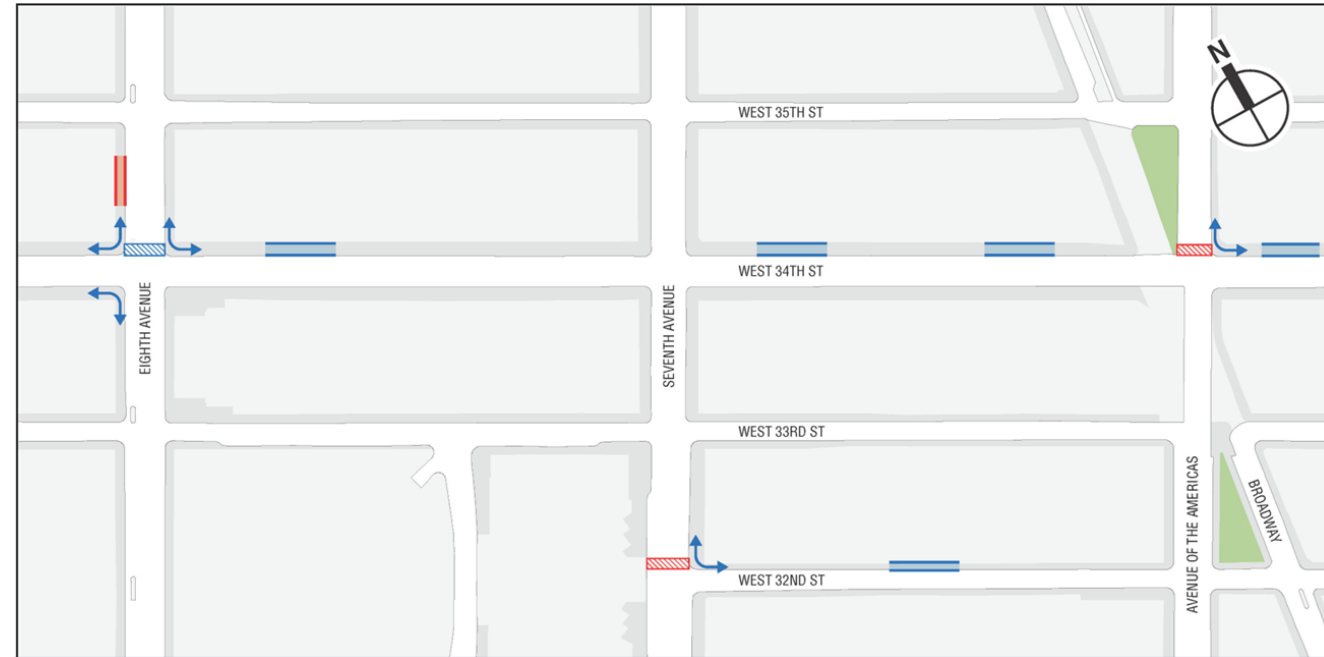


Figure Showing Adverse Effects at Crosswalk and Sidewalk Locations

Parking & Social Conditions: Population Characteristics & Neighborhood Character



Beneficial Effects



No Adverse Effects



Key Findings – Social Conditions

Improvements in travel time and safety; reduced vehicle operating costs; reduced emissions

No adverse effects on:

- Neighborhood character or access, given existing transit network and minimal trip changes
- Travel to employment within the Manhattan CBD and reverse-commuting from the Manhattan CBD
- Traffic patterns on local streets
- Community facilities and services



Key Findings - Parking

Reduction in parking demand within the Manhattan CBD

Increased parking demand at subway and commuter rail stations and park-and-ride facilities outside Manhattan CBD

Increase at any individual location would not be large enough to result in adverse effects from the Project

Economic Conditions

Key Findings

Increased productivity, as well as safety improvements

No adverse effects to any particular industry or occupational category in the Manhattan CBD

Depending on tolling scenario, the toll could reduce taxi and For-Hire Vehicle (FHV) revenues in the Manhattan CBD; the industry would remain economically viable overall, though individual drivers could be adversely affected



Beneficial Effects



No Adverse Effects



Energy and Noise

Key Findings – Energy

Reductions in regional energy consumption as a result of reductions in VMT

Key Findings – Noise

Assessed 102 intersections and all the crossings into the Manhattan CBD

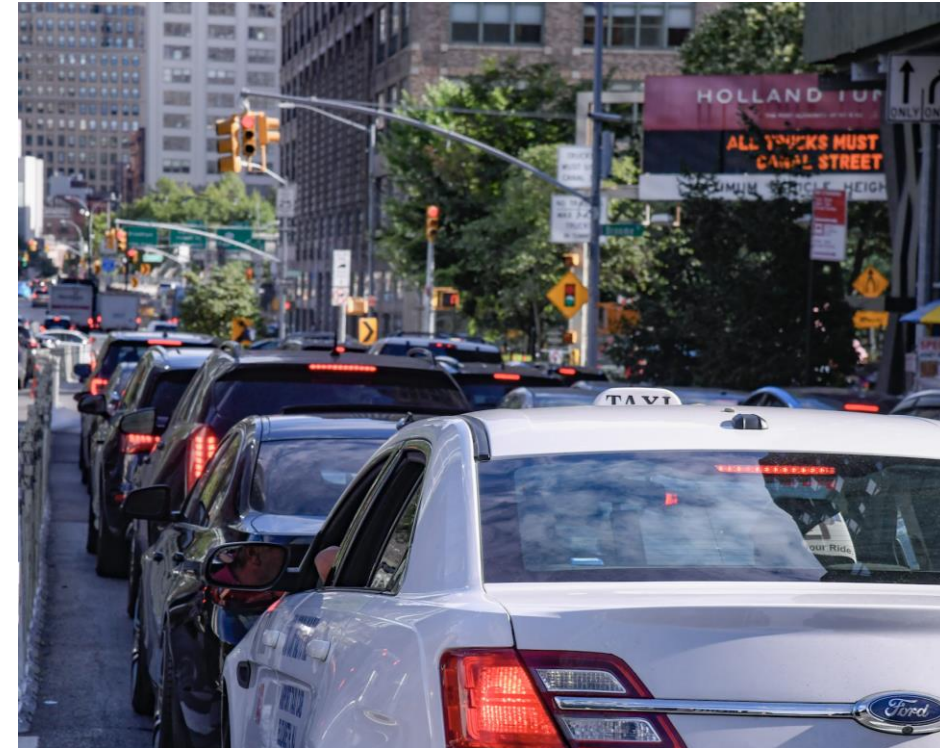
Imperceptible increases or decreases in noise levels resulting from changes in traffic volumes



Beneficial Effects



No Adverse Effects



Air Quality

Manhattan CBD Tolling Alternative, 2023
Projection (Tolling Scenario A)



Beneficial Effects



Response to Outreach

Key Findings

Regionally, air pollutants would be reduced, including precursors to greenhouse gases

No local exceedances of air quality standards

Enhancements

NYCDOT will coordinate to expand the New York City Community Air Survey network of air quality monitors; this will be supplemented by a small number of real-time monitors for Particulate Matter 2.5.

Based on feedback during outreach for the Project, MTA will prioritize Kingsbridge and Gun Hill Bus Depots, both located in and serving primarily environmental justice communities in Upper Manhattan and the Bronx, when electric buses are received in MTA's next major procurement of battery electric buses.

Environmental Justice (EJ)



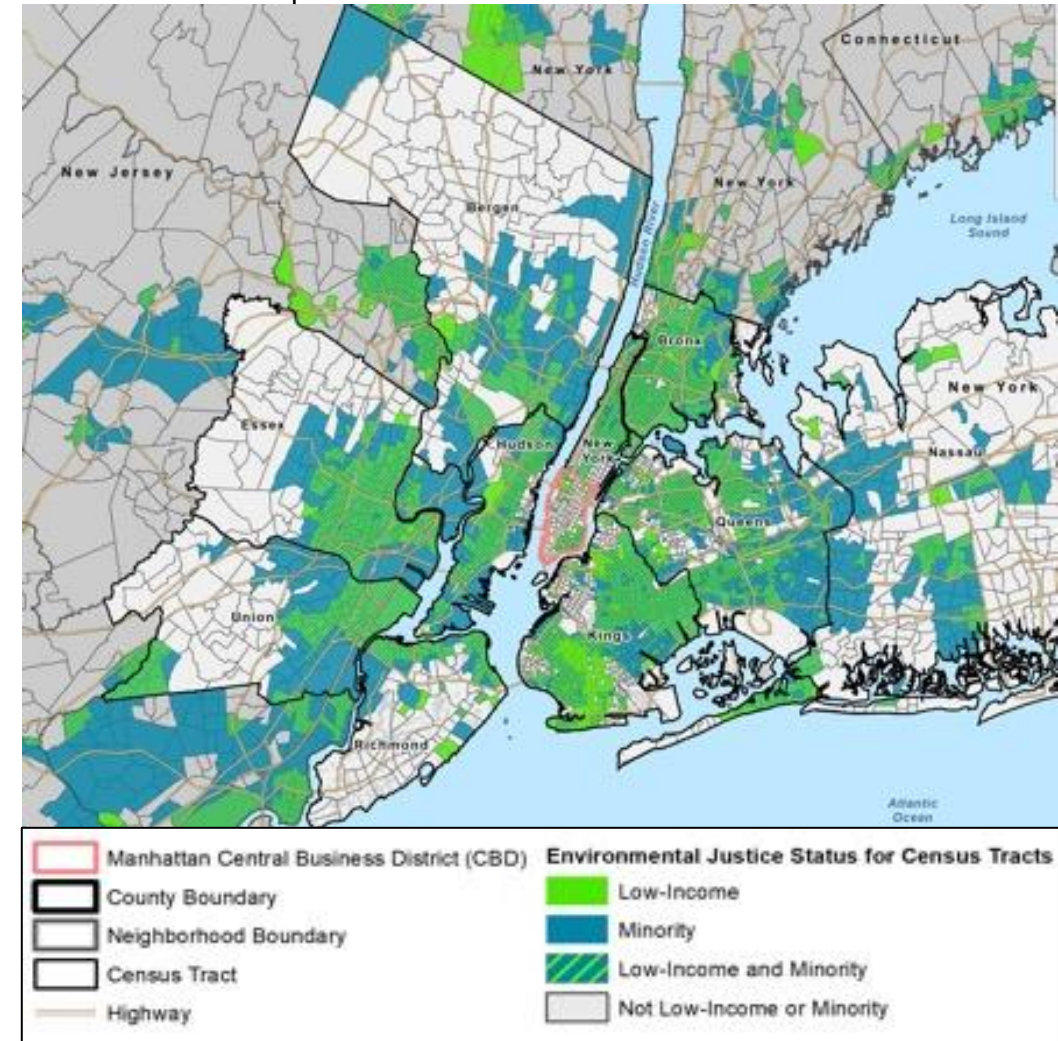
Adverse Effects Mitigation Required

Key Findings

The Project would have the potential for disproportionately high and adverse effects on:

- **Low-income drivers** who do not have an alternative transportation mode for reaching the Manhattan CBD
- **Taxi and For-Hire Vehicle (FHV) drivers in New York City**, many of whom identify as part of an EJ population (in Tolling Scenarios that toll their vehicles more than once per day)

Map of Environmental Justice Census Tracts



Environmental Justice: Low-Income Drivers



Adverse Effects Mitigation Required

Mitigation

Tax credit for CBD tolls paid by residents of the Manhattan CBD whose NY adjusted gross income for the taxable year is less than \$60,000; TBTA will coordinate with NYS Department of Taxation and Finance (NYS DTF) to ensure availability of documentation needed for drivers eligible for credit

TBTA will post information related to the tax credit on the Project website, with links to the NYS DTF website to guide eligible drivers to information on claiming the credit.

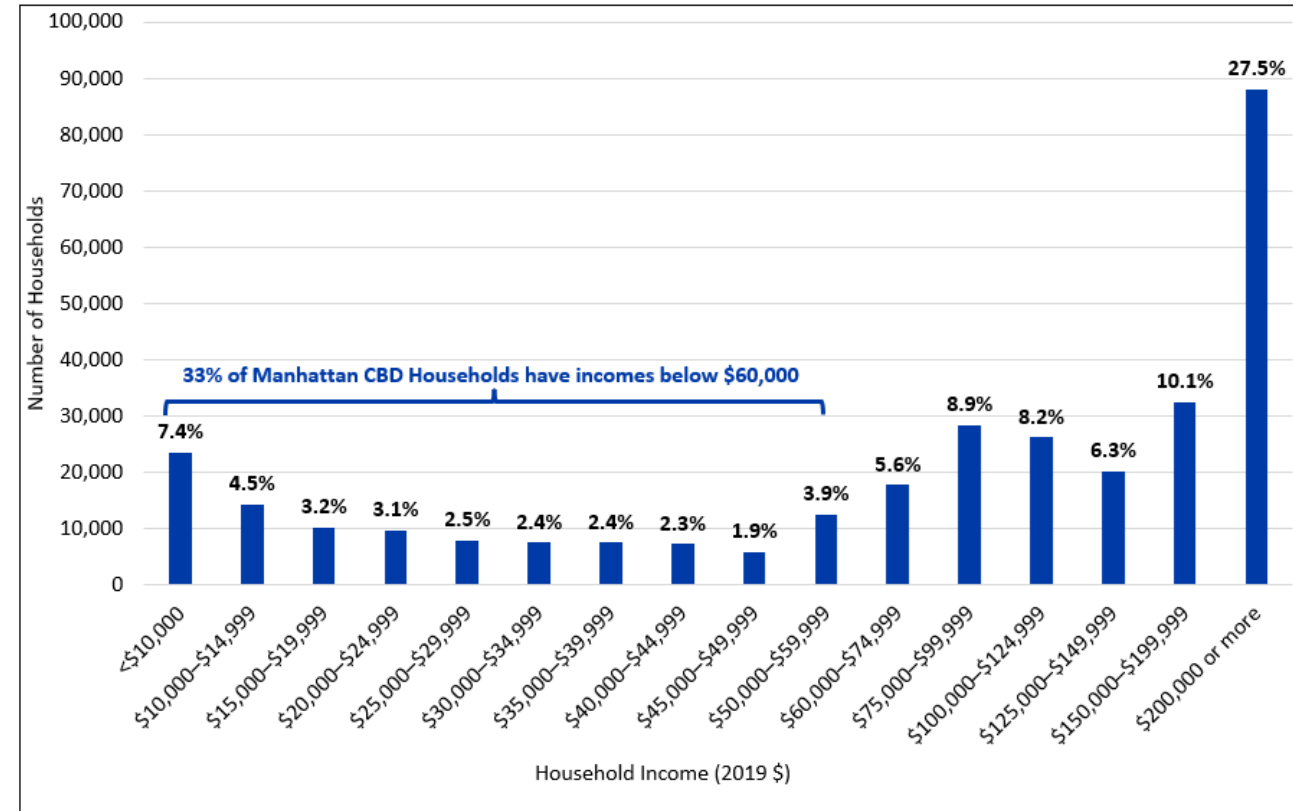
TBTA will eliminate the \$10 refundable deposit required for E-ZPass customers with no credit card linked to their account.

TBTA will increase promotion of existing E-ZPass payment and plan options.

TBTA will work with MTA to increase outreach/education on eligibility for existing discounted transit fare products/programs.

The Project Sponsors will establish an Environmental Justice Community Group that will meet on a bi-annual basis, with the first meeting six months after Project implementation, to share updated data and analysis and hear about potential concerns.

Percent of Those Eligible for the NYS Tax Credit for CBD Tolls Paid



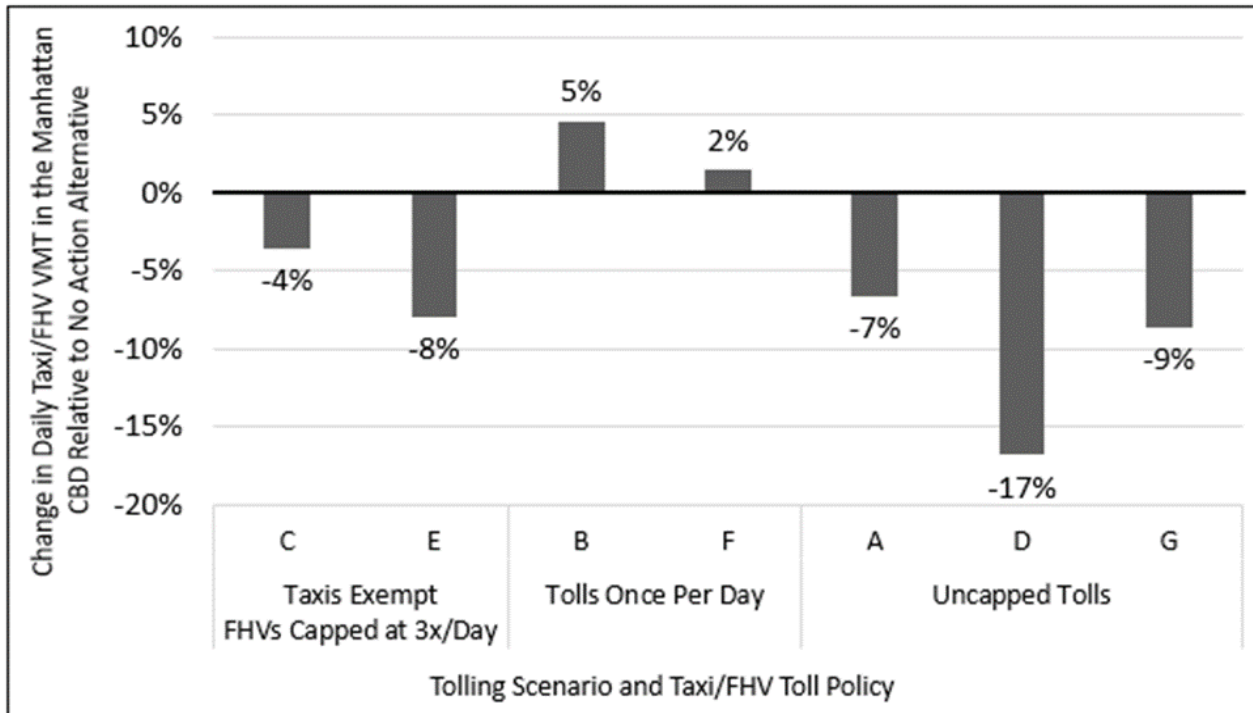
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2015-2019 5-Year Estimates

Environmental Justice: Taxi and FHV Drivers



Adverse Effects Mitigation Required

Change in Daily Taxi/FHV VMT in Manhattan CBD (CBD Tolling Alternative Tolling Scenarios Compared to No Action Alternative)



Mitigation

(NYC taxi and/or FHV drivers if a tolling scenario is implemented with tolls of more than once per day for their vehicles)

The Project Sponsors will work with appropriate city and state agencies so that when passengers are present, they pay the toll, rather than the driver.

TBTA will work with MTA NYCT to institute an Employment Resource Coordination Program to connect drivers experiencing job insecurity with a direct pathway to licensing, training, and job placement with MTA or its affiliated vendors at no cost to the drivers.

For those who may not want a commercial driver's license, TBTA will coordinate with MTA NYCT to submit a request to the Federal Transit Administration for a pilot program that will help increase eligibility of taxi and FHV drivers to use their vehicles to provide paratransit trips, and MTA NYCT will implement this program if approved.

Construction Effects



What: Replacement of existing poles or installation of new poles and mast arms, excavation and construction of foundation(s), placement of new support poles or structures, attachment of tolling system equipment, and restoration of the roadway, sidewalk, or ground surface

Where: Streets and sidewalks

Duration: Approximately 1-2 weeks, per location

Key Findings

Typical street construction that would be of short duration

Temporary disruptions to traffic and pedestrian patterns

Temporary noise disruption at nearby land uses such as residences and businesses

The Project Sponsors would require the contractor to develop and comply with plans and procedures to minimize construction effects.

No parks and recreational resources, and no historic or cultural resources would be adversely affected.

Rendering of Tolling Infrastructure



Visual Resources



Infrastructure: Similar in form to streetlight poles, sign poles, or similar structures already in use throughout New York City; signage similar in size and character to signs already present; color would match existing light pole colors

Equipment: Tolling equipment clustered into single enclosures to reduce visual impact; cameras would use infrared illumination at night so no visible light needed

Rendering of Tolling System Equipment on Existing Infrastructure

Key Findings

Neutral effect on viewer groups and no adverse effect on visual resources

Infrastructure and equipment would be similar in form to streetlight poles, sign poles, or similar structures already in use throughout New York City.



Section 4(f)

A *de minimis* impact is one that, after taking into account any measures to minimize harm (e.g., avoidance, minimization, mitigation), results in either:

- A Section 106 finding of no adverse effect or no historic properties affected on a historic property; or
- A determination that the project would not adversely affect the activities, features, or attributes qualifying a park, recreation area, or refuge for protection under Section 4(f).

De Minimis Impact

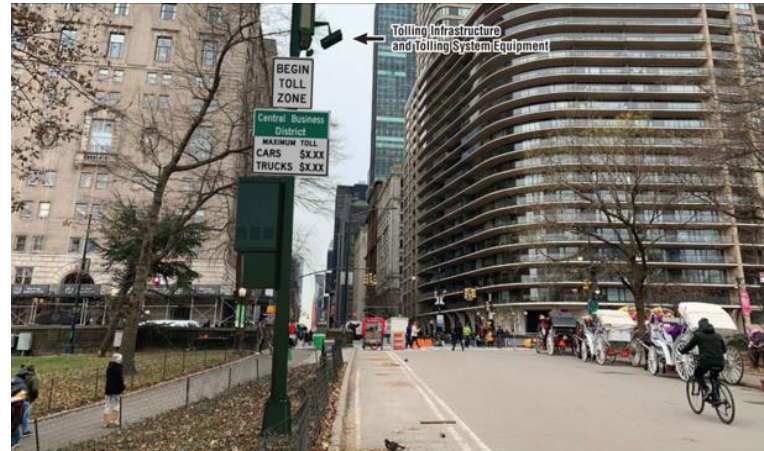
Key Findings

FHWA intends to find that the CBD Tolling Alternative would have a *de minimis* impact on Central Park and the High Line

- The CBD Tolling Alternative does not result in adverse effects pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act
- The CBD Tolling Alternative “does not adversely affect the activities, features, or attributes that qualify the resource for protection under Section 4(f)”
- FHWA has concurrence on its proposed finding from officials with jurisdiction over Central Park and the High Line
- FHWA will consider public input on its proposed finding received during this public review of the EA



Northeast view of East Drive in Central Park
Near Grand Army Plaza



South view of West Drive in Central Park
Near 7th Avenue



North view of High Line
at 10th Avenue and W 30th St

Infrastructure and signs shown in photos are renderings, not actual installations

Additional Enhancements

Ongoing Data Collection and Reporting

- Ongoing monitoring and reporting of potential effects
- Data collected in advance and after implementation
- Formal report issued one year after implementation and then every two years
- Reporting website will make data, analysis, and visualizations available in open data format to the greatest extent possible, with updates provided on at least a bi-annual basis as data become available and analysis is completed

Prioritizing Equity in Bus Service Improvements

- New York City's buses serve a greater share of low-income/minority households than other modes, including subways.
- MTA developed a new approach that combines considerations of equity and air quality to identify Equity Priority Areas.
- Equity Priority Areas are used to target improvements/investments to promote equity and access to opportunities in transit-dependent, historically marginalized and underserved areas.
- TBTA will work with NYCT to address areas identified in the EA where bus service could be improved as the Brooklyn and Manhattan Bus Network Redesigns move forward (Bronx already done; Queens in progress).



Public Outreach

Public Outreach

Early Public Outreach Meetings

10	Public Outreach Meetings
9	EJ Outreach Meetings
3	EJ Technical Advisory Group Meetings
2	EJ Stakeholder Working Group Meetings

Statistics from Early Enhanced Outreach

Total Registered Participants	1,066
Speakers	398
YouTube Views (to date)	14,000+
Number of Early Comments Received	7,300+

Environmental Assessment Public Hearings

Public Hearing #1	Thu, August 25, 2022	5 PM
Public Hearing #2	Sat, August 27, 2022	10 AM
Public Hearing #3	Sun, August 28, 2022	1 PM
Public Hearing #4	Mon, August 29, 2022	1 PM
Public Hearing #5	Tue, August 30, 2022	5 PM
Public Hearing #6	Wed, August 31, 2022	10 AM

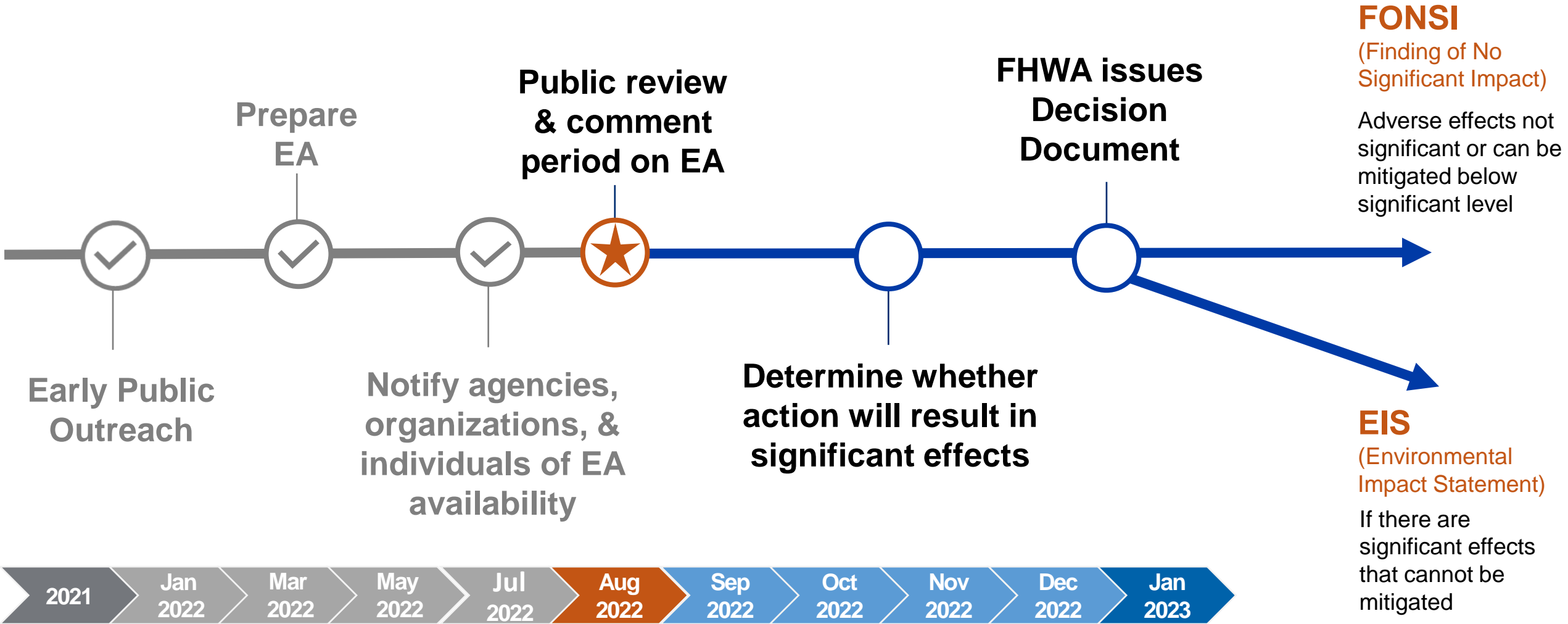
EJ Stakeholder Working Group

Meeting #3	Fri, August 19, 2022	1PM
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EJ Technical Advisory Group

Meeting #4	Mon, August 22, 2022	1PM
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NEPA Next Steps



How to Submit Comments



Public comment period is open until September 9, 2022

If you would like to submit written comments, you may do so in the following ways:



Project website: mta.info/CBDTP

Email: CBDTP@dot.gov

Email: CBDTP@mtabt.org

Mail: FHWA – NY Division, Re: CBDTP
Leo W. O'Brien Federal Building
11A Clinton Ave, Suite 719
Albany, NY 12207

Mail: CBD Tolling Program EA
2 Broadway, 23rd Floor
New York, NY 10004

Phone: 646-252-7440

Fax: 212-504-3148 [Attn: The CBDTP Team]