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Press Release

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NYC Transit

IMMEDIATE

MTA New York City Transit Launches Comprehensive 'Clean Slate' Redesign of Queens Bus Network

Officials Discuss Details of Planning Process to Come at Monday Meeting at Borough Hall

MTA New York City Transit has launched the comprehensive, 'clean-slate' redesign of the entire Queens bus network, with the first of numerous public meetings held last night and a schedule for more set to be announced soon. The historic undertaking between New York City Transit and the MTA Bus Company is part of a broader effort to rapidly bring reimagined bus service to the entire city's bus network, which serves more than two million riders per day.

Last night's Borough Board meeting, which took place at Queens Borough Hall in Kew Gardens and was attended by senior MTA personnel as well as Queens Borough President Melinda Katz and other Queens officials, set forth a presentation detailing the fast-tracked public outreach and planning process to come. That process will be informed by public input solicited at several public meetings and through in-person and online surveys over the coming months. Ultimately, that public input combined with several other sources of data and analysis will lead to a comprehensive redesign of the borough's local and express bus network.

Three open houses have already been scheduled and are included at the bottom of this release, with several more expected to be announced soon. The Open House phase of the redesign wraps up in June, with an Existing Conditions Report set for release in August and a Draft Plan of the reimagined routes expected to be unveiled before year's end. The final plan, set to be released after the completion of a comprehensive study of existing travel and demographic conditions, is expected next spring.

Queens is the third borough to undergo a bus network redesign, with similar efforts already having led to positive improvements in Staten Island where bus speeds have already increased by up to 12 percent. A draft redesign plan is also set to be released as early as next month following a similar public input process in the Bronx. As part of New York City Transit President Andy Byford's plan to modernize New York City Transit, the bus networks in all five boroughs will be reimagined. More information about the Queens redesign is available here: new.mta.info/queensbusredesign. More information about the Bronx redesign is available here: new.mta.info/bronxbusredesign.

"The Queens bus network has not substantially changed in decades and the people of Queens deserve better. I'm immensely proud to begin the process of bus network modernization in the city's largest borough," said President Byford. "The reality is that as our city changes, so too must our bus routes. It's imperative that New York City Transit do its part to keep up with the rapid and changing nature of growth in one of the city's most bus-dependent boroughs. Bus network modernization is absolutely critical to the continued success of Queens and I look forward to being a part of it."

Upcoming public input sessions, whose dates and locations will be announced soon, will encourage customers to think about the future bus network as a clean slate. Riders will work in tandem with MTA bus planning experts to examine critical questions that will help inform the eventual redesign. Those questions encourage customers to consider host of factors, including providing high-frequency service to high-ridership areas while also providing adequate service throughout the borough, and balancing specialized direct services with a grid of fast, efficient routes.

Transit officials will also conduct rider surveys, and are already soliciting public feedback online through the project website linked above.

Eventually, MTA will incorporate rider feedback into a draft plan which will undergo its own round of public outreach before a final plan is composed incorporating that feedback.

In addition to community feedback, MTA's assessment of Queens's bus routes will include a thorough review of all local, SBS, and express bus service in the borough. Planners and MTA officials will also conduct analysis of both current and future market needs, travel trends, and current bus performance and reliability. Collectively, all of this work will help identify which areas are in need of enhancements such as bus priority signaling technology.

The goal of a modernized bus network is to provide higher frequency, high capacity bus service throughout the borough's major corridors. Achieving that goal will require straightening bus services that are excessively circuitous, limiting route redundancy while adding service where needed, and bolstering off-peak service and coverage.

Upcoming Queens Open Houses

The Rockaways—Peninsula Library: Tuesday May 7th from 7:00 to 9:00 PM.

92-25 Rockaway Beach Boulevard

Rockaway Beach, NY 11693

Flushing—Flushing Library: Tuesday, May 21st from 6:30 to 8:30 PM

41-17 Main Street

Flushing, NY 11355

Jamaica—Central Library: Tuesday, May 28th from 7:00-9.00PM

89-11 Merrick Blvd

Jamaica, NY 11432

Fast Facts about Queens Bus service

- 77 local, limited and SBS bus routes with approximately 700,000 average weekday customers
- 30 express bus routes with approximately 14,000 average weekday customers
- Queens local bus ridership has declined 2.5% between 2016 and 2017
- Queens express bus ridership is down 1% between 2016 and 2017
- Bus speeds continue to decline – 3% slower since 2015 at 8.9 mph