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Press Release

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NYC Transit

IMMEDIATE

Redesigned Staten Island Express Bus Network Reaps Service Improvements, Faster Buses and Increased Reliability in First Year since Launch

1 Year of Data Proves Success of New SIM Network Driven by Unprecedented Engagement with Customers and Local Stakeholders

Data Shows Consistent Improvements Across All Service Metrics, Customer Satisfaction

Photos from a Customer Meet-and-Greet to Mark the Anniversary are Available [Here](#)

One year after MTA New York City Transit implemented a complete redesign of the Staten Island express bus network, newly released data is showing that express bus service between Manhattan and Staten Island has steadily improved across all metrics thanks to an unprecedented level of engagement with the MTA among customers, labor partners, local agencies and elected officials.

"The Staten Island express network redesign has been a success, with a year's worth of data showing solid improvements in every measure of customer service and bus performance," said NYC Transit President Andy Byford. "Our Staten Island customers were incredibly engaged throughout the process, and we are grateful for their advocacy, their commitment to us and the redesign, their patience, and for sharing their feedback that continues to inform our express bus operations and customer service initiatives. We'd like to thank everyone who is involved in this process, including our labor partners at ATU Local 726, NYPD, NYCDOT, and especially Borough President Jimmy Oddo, who continues to work with us very closely to keep this momentum going."

The Staten Island express bus redesign was implemented in August 2018 to improve long and unreliable commutes between Staten Island and Manhattan. Utilizing trip performance data, ridership profiles and extensive customer input, NYC Transit concluded that the most effective way to make substantial improvements would be to undertake a comprehensive reorganization of the network. The redesign streamlined trips with more direct routing that took advantage of transit priority street designs, balanced stop spacing, minimized routes on local streets, and allowed NYC Transit to effectively redistribute resources to areas where they were most needed.

The redesign increased both the span and frequency of service for SIM customers, adding 121 more trips every weekday, 76 more trips every Saturday and 50 more trips every Sunday than the previous express bus network provided. Customers now have more options during off-peak hours and weekends across numerous routes, and more service with three new routes. Since the redesign, ridership on the Staten Island express bus network, which serves nearly 36,000 customers each weekday, stayed relatively unchanged, bucking a years-long national trend of declining bus ridership.

Other improvements in SIM service from the network redesign include:

- **MORE TRIPS:** We added 121 trips every weekday, 76 trips every Saturday and 50 trips every Sunday compared to the previous network, including off-peak and weekend service.
- **MORE ROUTES:** We added three new routes – the SIM11, SIM33C and SIM9
- **MORE SERVICE:** We extended route spans – increased the amount of time a route operates – on the SIM1, SIM34 and SIM4/4C
- **FASTER BUSES:** In July 2019, average SIM bus speeds were 5.5% faster, or 17.2 mph, compared to 16.3 mph in June 2018 under the old network. Average SIM speeds are going up, to 17.2 mph year-to-date from 15.7 mph for the same period in 2018.
- **MORE RELIABLE:** In spring 2019, 71.2% of customers finished their trip within 5 minutes of the scheduled time, up from 63.9% in spring 2018.
- **SHORTER WAITS:** In July 2019, SIM customers waited for shorter periods -- 1m15s beyond their schedule wait time -- at stops compared to 1m40s under the old network last July.
- **LESS CROWDING:** In July 2019, 30 weekday trips and 2 weekend trips had standees, compared to 42 weekday trips and 5 weekend trips under the previous network in July 2018.
- **IMPROVED TRANSIT PRIORITY:** NYC Transit and MTA Bridges & Tunnels are working closely with NYPD and NYCDOT to keep traffic moving near the Hugh L. Carey Tunnel during evening peak hours. The

multi-agency collaboration began in fall 2018 has led to faster bus speeds by 29%, increasing to 8.2 mph in July compared to 6.3 mph last fall.

- **HARNESSING NEW TECHNOLOGY:** Seat availability information for Staten Island express buses is now available [online](#) and via the [MYmta smartphone app](#). The technology was first tested by a select group of SIM customers who provided feedback during the bus network redesign, and the feedback from SIM customers will guide the larger rollout of the technology to include all MTA buses.

NYC Transit approached the redesign with a customer-led focus and held multiple community open houses and a public hearing, conducted customer surveys on buses and at stops, and hosted online surveys for those who were unable to provide feedback in person. NYC Transit worked closely with riders, local community members, elected officials, advocates, partner agencies such as NYPD, NYC DOT and MTA Bridges & Tunnels, and the ATU Local 726 bus operators' union, led by Danny Cassella.

"We appreciate the hard work and dedication shown by our employees throughout the Staten Island express bus redesign," said Craig Cipriano, Acting President of MTA Bus Company and Acting Senior Vice President of NYC Transit's Department of Buses. "Thanks to our Road Operations team who, with our union partners, used their daily experience to help identify issues and improve SIM service to best meet the needs of our customers. Our collaborative efforts with Borough President Oddo has also been instrumental in the success of our new SIM network. This was the first of our ongoing bus network redesigns and demonstrated MTA's commitment to a process that resulted in tangible improvements for our customers."

The lessons learned from the Staten Island express bus redesign are being applied to borough-wide express and local bus network redesigns that are underway in the Bronx and Queens as part of [NYC Transit's Fast Forward](#) modernization plan to improve service. These redesigns are also customer-focused, drawing on community outreach and feedback to complement NYC Transit's analyses of current bus routes, future residential and business developments, customer travel itineraries and surveys. The bus network redesign for Brooklyn will launch in coming months, followed by the local bus network redesign on Staten Island.

Staten Island Borough President James Oddo said: "For the past year, we have worked every day to get this right, to be accountable, and we continue to do so. We have conference calls with the MTA and ATU 726 twice weekly, and every day my team scours social media for issues that we forward to the MTA. We are better off today under the 'SIM' system than we would have been under the old 'X' system, and the data shows that. We still have more work to do to make this a better network for more riders, and I will continue to be a vocal advocate to change some of the structural realities that plague commuting in New York City."

ATU Local 726 President Danny Cassella said: "The Staten Island express bus network today is a significant improvement over the old network, and its success shows that the MTA is open to feedback and collaboration. We are very proud of the work we have done and that the data backs up what we see and hear on the streets and in our buses every day."

For more information on the Staten Island express bus network redesign, including service and schedule updates, click [here](#).

For more information on the Bronx local and express bus network redesign, including the redesign's proposed draft plan, click [here](#).

For more information on the Queens local and express bus network redesign, including a project timeline and how to get involved, click [here](#).