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Press Release

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[MTA Headquarters](#)

IMMEDIATE

MTA Adds More Public Feedback Opportunities to Unprecedented Level of Outreach to Support First Queens Bus Network Redesign in 100 Years

Outreach Dates Confirmed So Far Touch Nearly Every Community in Queens; Amount of Submitted Public Feedback on Queens Network Redesign Exceeds Feedback Provided to Date for Other Boroughs' Network Redesigns

Draft Plan to Reimagine Queens Bus Service Aims to Shorten Commute Times, Speed up Rides, Increase Intermodal Connections and Add Frequency on Major Corridors to Benefit Majority of Queens Customers

Elected Officials, Transit Advocates Support Action to Improve Existing Queens Bus Service, Call Draft Plan 'Bold,' 'Ambitious'

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) today announced more opportunities for Queens residents to provide feedback on proposals for the Queens Bus Network Redesign as MTA New York City Transit seeks to redraw the borough's century-old bus system to better serve customers, shorten commute times, speed up buses, increase intermodal connections and provide more frequency and choices to travel within the borough and to Brooklyn, Manhattan and the Bronx. The draft plan released in December 2019 is part of an iterative customer-led process based on a study of Queens bus service, called the [Existing Conditions Report](#), as well as data on service, performance, ridership and demographics.

"Our citywide bus network redesign is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to redraw each borough's bus map to make it work better and for us to engage directly with our customers for their feedback on how to improve service," said **Craig Cipriano, Acting MTA Bus Company President and Senior Vice President for Buses of NYC Transit**. "We kicked off our borough-by-borough redesigns with express buses on Staten Island, where the redesign has resulted in faster speeds and reliability improvements thanks to unprecedented outreach efforts, quick response to customer feedback and continued support from stakeholders such as Borough President Oddo."

"I've gotten to know the NYC Transit team pretty well over the last 18 months of our SIM express bus redesign, and I find them to be responsive, dedicated public servants," said **Staten Island Borough President James Oddo**. "Our continued collaboration is unlike anything I've experienced in my time in public service. The system is far from perfect, but we're not done and we continue to improve things, even on a granular level. If anyone in my adopted Queens County (my wife is from there and I worked for the mighty Tom Ognibene) wants to discuss this important undertaking with me, I'd be happy to share our experiences with Staten Island being the first borough to undergo a modern-day bus system redesign."

Council Member Robert Holden said: "I understand that the MTA has a daunting task in redesigning the entire bus network in Queens County and citywide, and I appreciate its efforts. It is important to remember that this plan is a draft with no set implementation date, and all of us Queens residents must provide as much feedback and opinions as possible so that we can work together with the MTA to find the best final plan imaginable."

State Assemblywoman Nily Rozic said: "Queens bus network is long overdue for an overhaul that can provide reliable, accessible service for transit riders. Over the next few months I look forward to engaging with riders and the NYCT to deliver a final plan that meets Queens' transit needs."

State Senator John Liu said: "Fast, safe, frequent and efficient bus service is crucial in northeastern Queens, which lacks easy access to the subway. In order to get this important long-overdue redesign right, bus riders and the public at large should take every opportunity to provide input on the draft plan. In turn, the MTA must thoughtfully and clearly consider that input and incorporate elements wherever optimal. As with any major overhaul, some riders will be better off while others will feel worse off. The MTA must engender public trust and confidence through earnest diligence and honest transparency."

Riders Alliance Campaign Manager Stephanie Burgos-Veras said: "The MTA is on the right track toward a bold, generational redesign of the Queens bus network. Riders will benefit from the 'clean slate' approach which is already envisioning much better access from Queens to Brooklyn, the Bronx, and throughout the borough itself. Simplified routes and more frequent and efficient service are the right way to meet 21st century riders' needs."

TransitCenter Communications Director Ben Fried said: "The current Queens bus network is plagued by slow speeds and unreliable service — it has to change. Routes that have barely changed since the middle of the last century don't align with where people live and work today. With the release of its draft redesign of the Queens bus network, the MTA has put forward an ambitious yet pragmatic plan to overhaul Queens bus service. After reviewing the plan, we believe it has the potential to substantially improve bus performance and transit access for Queens residents."

Liam Blank, Tri-State Transportation Campaign advocacy & policy manager, said: "Bus riders need a system that keeps up with modern commuting patterns. The Queens bus network redesign comes at a crucial time for our city's transit network and the proposals laid out in the Draft Plan demonstrate a refreshing new approach to keep New Yorkers moving."

Jaqi Cohen, NYPIRG Straphangers Campaign Director, said: "Queens bus riders want what all New Yorkers want, access to fast and reliable transportation. The MTA has taken a bold and ambitious approach towards overhauling its outdated bus network in Queens, which until now hasn't

changed much to suit the needs of riders. While the plan is still in draft form, the Queens network redesign has the potential to positively transform the way that hundreds of thousands of Queens residents travel, work, and live.”

The Queens Bus Network Redesign’s draft plan addresses customer input and concerns that were expressed during public outreach of the redesign’s Existing Conditions report, which sought to accurately depict the status, operations and flaws of the current Queens bus network using customer feedback, ridership and demographics data, and service performance and operations data. The redesign’s goals included:

- Improving service reliability
- Improving bus speeds
- Expanding bus priority such as bus lanes and use of traffic signal priority technology by working with New York City Department of Transportation (NYC DOT)
- Improving traffic enforcement through use of MTA’s automated bus lane enforcement initiative and close collaboration with NYC DOT and NYPD
- Improving connectivity at population centers and destinations, at intermodal transfer locations, and at emerging residential and commercial developments
- Balancing bus stop spacing from an average of 850 feet apart to 1,400 feet by consolidating or removing closely spaced or under-utilized bus stops. On average, a bus takes 20 seconds to more than 1 minute to pull into a bus stop and then reenter traffic. NYC Transit bus stops are the closest-spaced in the country, some of which are as close as two blocks apart. When reviewing candidates for stops, NYC Transit considers factors such as geography and proximity to schools, colleges, hospitals, community centers, libraries or senior centers
- Improving connections between areas with high densities of residents with mobility impairments and existing and future accessible subway stations
- Working with the NYC DOT to improve bus stop accessibility and customer amenities such as shelters, bus bulbs and real-time digital service information signs

Before proposing the Queens draft plan, the MTA conducted a thorough study of the existing bus network, surveyed customers in person and online, provided nearly 11,000 informational pamphlets, and hosted nine open houses, 12 street outreach events, 11 meetings with civics groups and seven community boards to gather feedback on customers’ commuting patterns and itinerary suggestions. The MTA also took into consideration the results of nearly 2,000 online customer surveys specific to the Queens redesign. The study identified areas to target for change, such as neighborhood route improvements, individual route improvements to provide more direct service, balanced stop spacing and improved crosstown connections.

The draft proposal seeks to completely redraw the bus routes, which were mostly unchanged since they were converted from old trolley lines from the turn of the 20th century or consolidated from private bus companies that began serving Queens in the 1910s. Many of those companies served three central hubs in Queens, leading to three separate spoke-and-wheel networks to Flushing, Jamaica and Long Island City that severely limited coverage area. The draft plan takes into consideration the service performance of each bus route, the speed, ridership and reliability on key corridors, and how individual routes contribute to the larger network. Recommendations were developed in collaboration with NYC DOT, with focus given to identifying key corridors where roadway treatments and traffic signal improvements can be implemented to expand bus priority and better support sustainable, all-day bus service. The details of NYC DOT’s proposed bus priority plan for Queens are included in the draft plan for the Queens Bus Network Redesign.

LEARN ABOUT IT

The Queens Bus Network Redesign draft plan is available to review on the MTA’s dedicated website for the project:

<https://new.mta.info/queensbusredesign>. The website includes many interactive features to encourage customers to comment on the draft plan, such as:

- [The full draft plan](#) with individual profiles for every route in the proposed new network
- [A comparison chart](#) showing existing route compared to the new routes proposed in the draft plan
- [A web-based app called Remix](#), which displays a map of the proposed new network with interactive features allowing the public to explore the proposals on the map and leave comments on specific routes and stops
- [MetroQuest](#), an online survey to leave comments on the draft plan

TALK ABOUT IT

The redesign process is iterative, and the MTA is meeting with community boards and civic associations and hosting public workshops throughout February and March to provide customers with information on the proposals in the draft plan. Residents can ask questions and provide feedback on the proposed redesigned routes and bus stops. Some meetings include presentations of the draft plan and others are interactive workshops, allowing customers to drop in at their convenience.

Confirmed outreach events are listed below, with newly added dates denoted in **bold** with an asterisk (*). Additional events, including civic association or community board meetings, will be added to the Queens Bus Network Redesign website as they are confirmed. For updated information on community board meetings, visit: <https://www.queensbp.org/community-boards/>

***Wednesday, Feb. 3, 6 p.m. (presentation with U.S. Rep. Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez)**

American Legion Hall

89-02 91st Street, Woodhaven

***Wednesday, Feb. 3, 6 p.m. (presentation)**

Queens Community Board 2 transportation committee
Sunnyside Community Services
43-31 39th Avenue, Sunnyside

Tuesday, Feb. 4, 6-8 p.m. (MTA public workshop)

Jacob Riis Settlement

10-25 41st Avenue, Long Island City

Wednesday, Feb. 5, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (MTA public workshop)

RISE/Rockaway Waterfront Alliance

58-03 Rockaway Beach Boulevard, Far Rockaway

Thursday, Feb. 6, 7-8:30 p.m. (Community Conversation)

Rockaway YMCA

207 Beach 73rd Street, Arverne

***Tuesday, Feb. 11, 6-8 p.m. (presentation)**

Queens Community Board 12 transportation committee
York College, Faculty Dining Room

94-20 Guy R Brewer Boulevard, Jamaica

***Wednesday, Feb. 12, 7 p.m. (presentation)**

Queens Community Board 6

Kew Gardens Community Center

80-02 Kew Gardens Road #202, Kew Gardens

***Wednesday, Feb. 12, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (presentation)**

P.S./I.S. 49

63-60 80th Street, Middle Village

***Thursday, Feb. 13, 6:30 p.m. (presentation)**

Queens Community Board 1 transportation committee

45-02 Ditmars Boulevard, LL suite 1025, Astoria

***Thursday, Feb. 13, 7 p.m. (presentation)**

Queens Community Board 13 transportation committee

Jean Nuzzi I.S. 109

213-10 92nd Avenue, Queens Village

***Wednesday, Feb. 19, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (presentation)**

Queens College

65-30 Kissena Boulevard, Flushing

***Thursday, Feb. 20, 7-8:30 p.m. (MTA public workshop)**

Korean Community Services of Metropolitan New York

203-05 32nd Avenue, Bayside

***Tuesday, Feb. 25, 7:30 p.m. (presentation)**

Queens Community Board 5 transportation committee

Christ The King School

68-02 Metropolitan Avenue, Middle Village

***Tuesday, Feb. 25, 7 p.m. (presentation)**

Queens Community Board 14 transportation committee

Knights of Columbus

333 Beach 90th Street, Rockaway Beach

***Wednesday, Feb. 26, 6:30 p.m. (presentation)**

Queens Community Board 7 transportation committee

Union Plaza Care Center

33-23 Union Street, Flushing

***Thursday, Feb. 27, 7-8:30 p.m. (MTA public workshop)**

Cross Island YMCA

238-10 Hillside Avenue, Bellerose

***Wednesday, March 4, 6-8 p.m. (presentation)**

Elmhurst Hospital

79-01 Broadway, Elmhurst

***Thursday, March 5, 7-8:30 p.m. (presentation)**

Poppenhusen Institute

114-4 14th Road, College Point

***Thursday, March 12, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (workshop)**

August Martin High School

156-10 Baisley Boulevard, Jamaica

***Tuesday, March 16, 7-8:30 p.m. (presentation)**

Queens Community Board 8 transportation committee

Hillcrest Jewish Center

183-02 Union Turnpike, Flushing

***Wednesday, March 18, 7-8:30 p.m. (presentation)**

Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church of Whitestone

12-01 150th Street, Whitestone

***Thursday, March 19, 7-8:30 p.m. (presentation)**

North Shore Towers

272-48 Grand Central Parkway, Floral Park

WHAT'S NEXT?

After the workshops, the MTA will incorporate community and customer feedback to craft a proposed final plan for the Queens Bus Network Redesign. The proposed final plan will be released in 2020, with additional community outreach events scheduled to solicit a final round of public feedback as well as a public hearing. The final plan must be approved by the MTA Board before implementation.

Presentations that were given to the public, the Queens Borough Board, community boards and other interested parties are also available at new.mta.info/queensbusredesign.

Under the [Fast Forward plan](#) to improve bus service, NYC Transit is redesigning the bus networks in every borough of New York City, starting with the Staten Island Express Bus Redesign that was implemented in August 2018 and has resulted in tangible improvements in bus speeds and reliability, and increases in frequency and trips. The MTA has released the proposed final plan for the [Bronx Bus Network Redesign](#), and recently launched the [Brooklyn Bus Network Redesign](#).

ABOUT THE CURRENT QUEENS BUS NETWORK

- The network has a total of 77 bus routes within a widespread system that has three centers in downtown Flushing, downtown Jamaica and Long Island City. The current average bus speed is 8.7 miles per hour, continuing an overall borough-wide slowdown since 2015.
- About 52 percent of Queen's 2.3 million residents rely on public transit for their daily commutes. Eleven percent of those commuters rely solely on buses.
- More than 94 percent of Queens residents live within a five-minute walk of a bus stop.
- Bus stops in Queens are spaced very close together, leading to frequent bus stopping and longer commutes. Many stops are 500 to 1,000 feet apart, which is shorter than the average bus stop spacing systemwide and far closer than peer transit systems worldwide.

