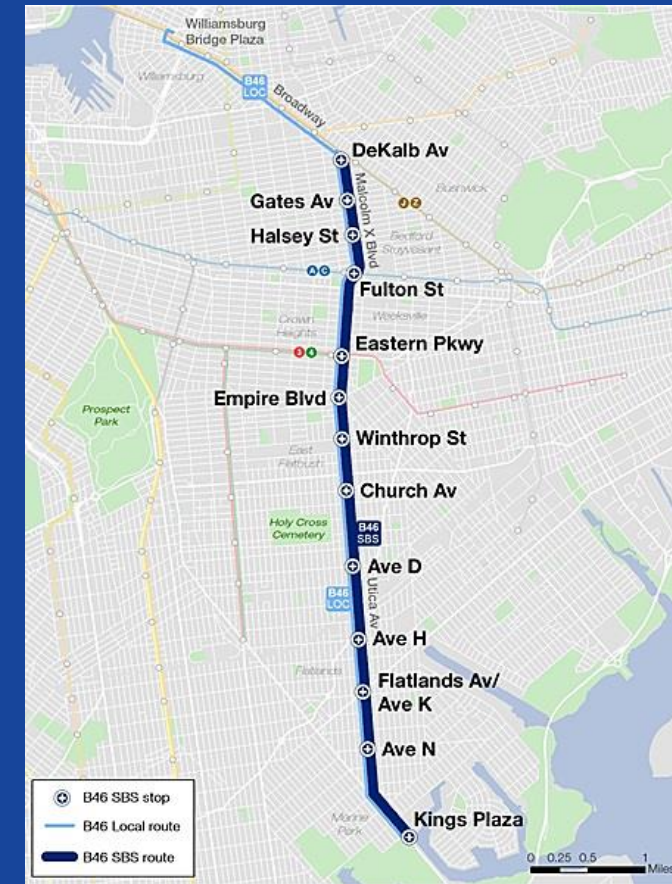# Utica Avenue Transit Improvements Study
## Study Update

Winter 2020

Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions

- Background & Problem Statement

- Purpose & Need / Study Goals

- Scope of Work

- Stakeholder & Public Outreach

- Other Relevant Projects

- Next Steps / Questions & Comments

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Background & Problem Statement

## **Background**:
History of Transit on Utica Avenue

- Existing subway lines were constructed with provisions to accommodate a possible future extension along Utica Avenue:
  - The Eastern Parkway Line (**2** **3** **4** **5**) at the Crown Heights-Utica Ave Station;
  - The Fulton Street Line (**A** **C**) at the existing Utica Ave Station

- A possible subway extension from the Eastern Parkway Line was designed in the 1960s but not built.

- Select Bus Service (SBS) was introduced along Utica Avenue in 2015, featuring off-board fare collection, dedicated bus lanes, and other capital investments to reduce travel time.

- Under Mayor de Blasio, the City of New York provided funding in the MTA Capital Program to further study transit improvements on Utica Avenue.

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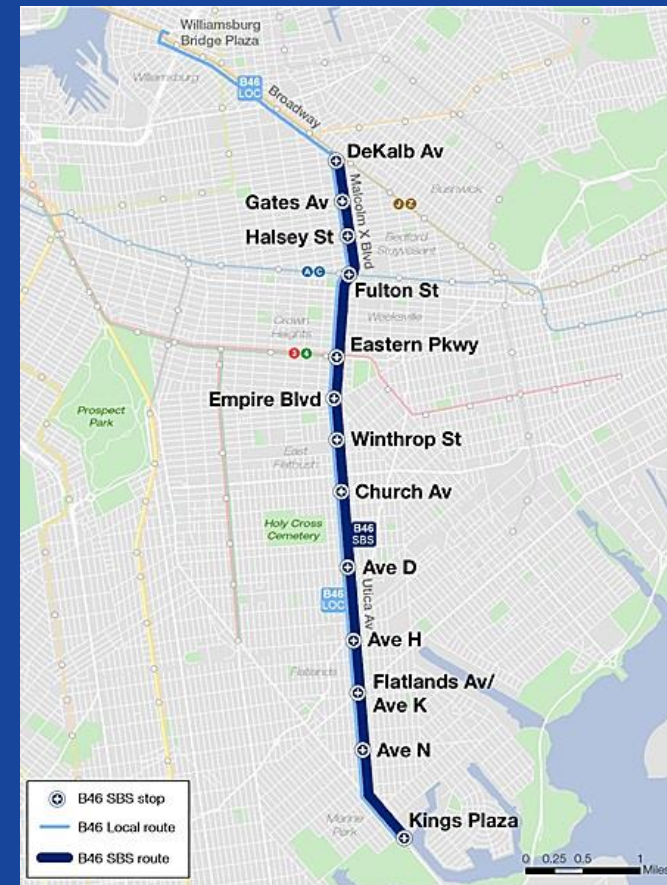
The Utica Avenue corridor is home to the **busiest bus routes in Brooklyn**

B46 and B46 SBS:

- Accommodate approximately 44,000 daily riders

- Provide a vital north-south transit link

- Connect to subway lines on Eastern Parkway, Fulton Street, and Broadway, and 30 bus routes

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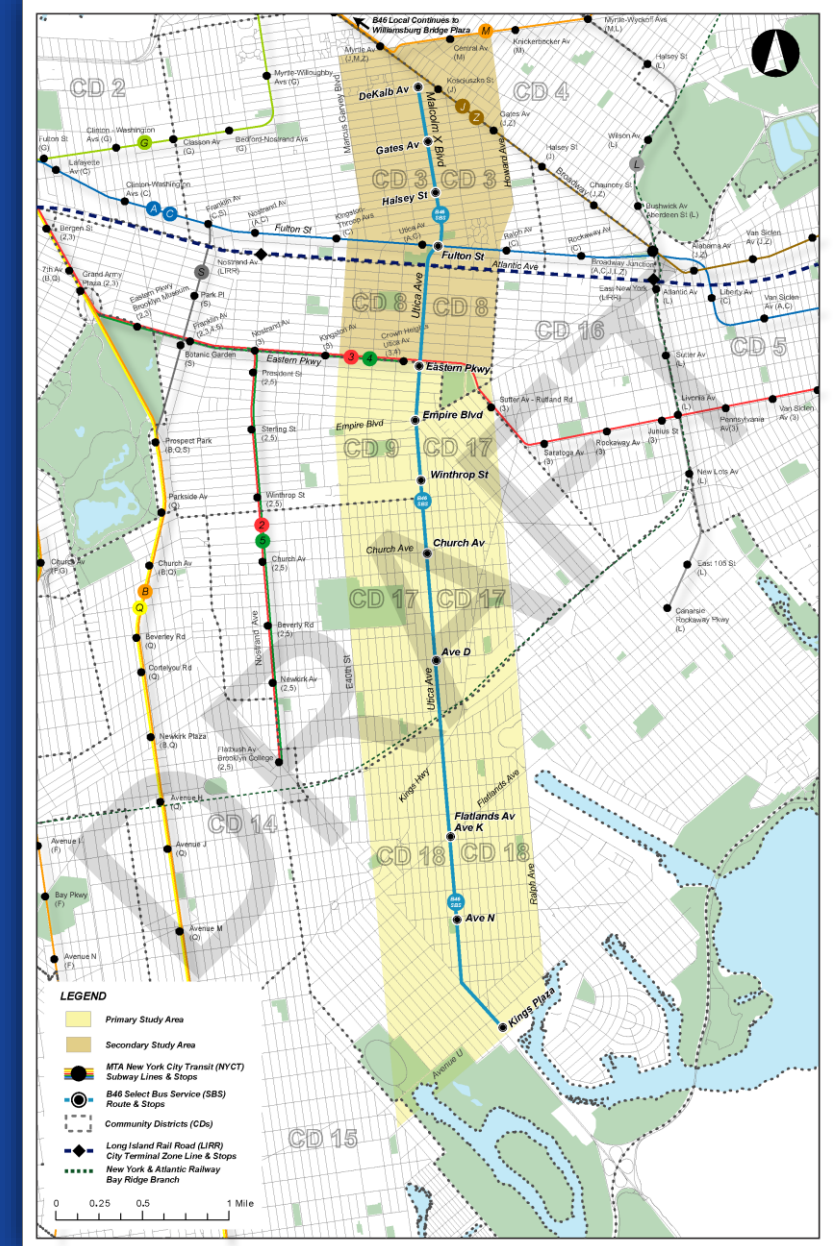
Problem Statement:
Utica Avenue Transit Issues

Challenges regarding travel to, from, and within the Utica Avenue corridor include:

- **Reliability:** Double parking, loading/unloading, and bus bunching result in added wait times for customers.

- **Connectivity:** Many trips require a transfer between bus and subway.

- **Overall Travel Time:** Issues with reliability and connectivity contribute to long trips and slow speeds.

- **Accommodation of Future Growth:** Increased transit capacity and accessibility are necessary to support future growth of a mix of uses along the corridor.

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Purpose & Need / Study Goals

Project Purpose and Need:
Utica Avenue Transit Issues

The project **purpose** is to **define a set of options**, in the form of investment packages, that could improve mobility to, from, and within the Utica Avenue corridor in the year 2035.

- Evaluate different **modes and alignments** for transit improvements **on Utica Avenue**

- Package with complementary off-corridor **subway investments along the Eastern Parkway, New Lots Avenue, and/or Nostrand Avenue Lines (2 3 4 5)**

There is a **need** for **transit improvements** to increase reliability, reduce travel times, enhance connectivity, and accommodate future growth along the corridor.

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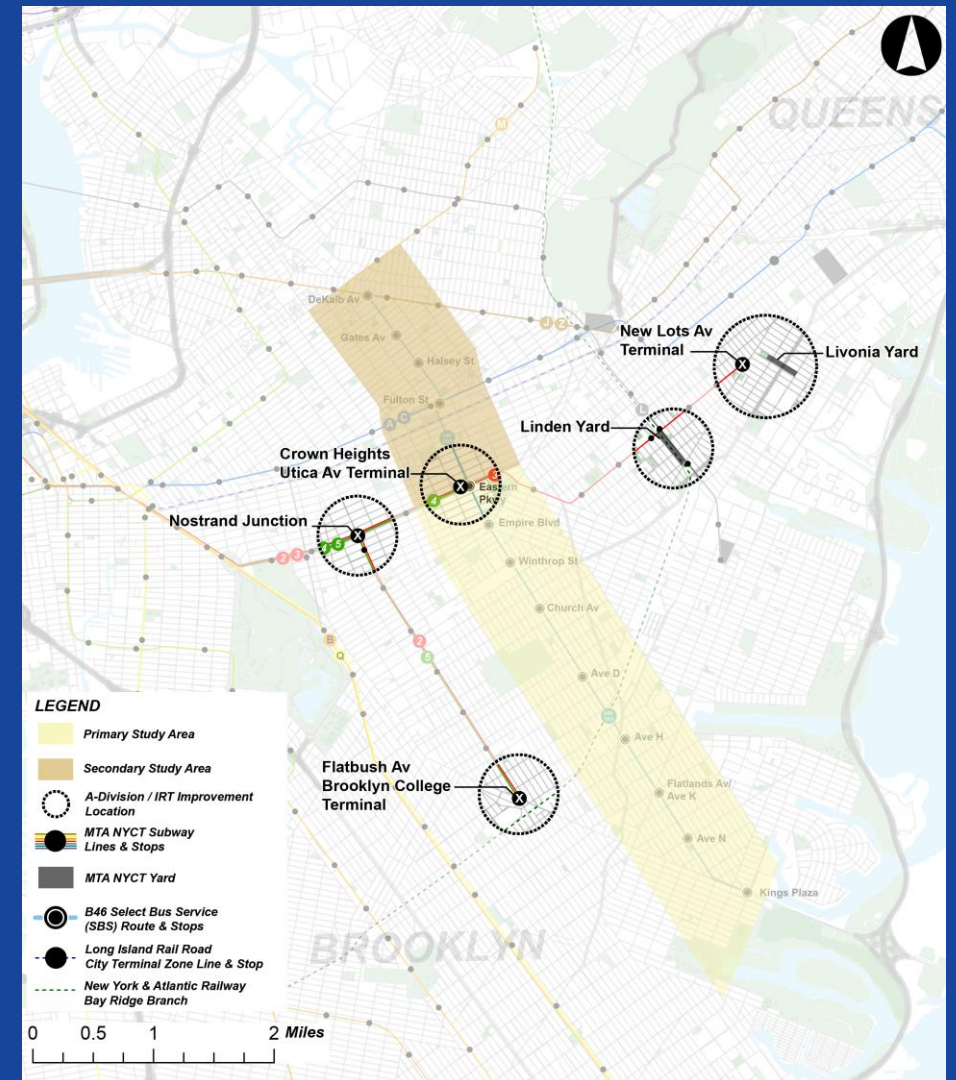
Study Goals

Goal 1: Improve **mobility and connectivity** through the provision of new or enhanced transit options

Goal 2: Maximize consistency with **local and regional plans**

Goal 3: Enhance access to employment and activity centers and support **economic growth**

Goal 4: Maximize **operational and cost effectiveness**

Goal 5: Minimize adverse **environmental impacts**

Goal 6: Promote a **resilient and redundant** transit network

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Scope of Work

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Scope of Work:

Overview

- Define various **modal options as transit solutions** to improve the customer experience

- Evaluate Utica Avenue improvement options using an **Alternatives Analysis process**

- Assume different **land use scenarios and ridership potential**

- Analyze transit improvements along Utica Avenue and within the existing subway system **independently and grouped**

- End product: identify and evaluate a set of five investment packages
  - **Range of investment levels**

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Define Various Modal Options as Transit Solutions

Evaluate **different transit modes** on their ability to achieve the Study Goals

Example: Cleveland HealthLine

Example: Hudson-Bergen Light Rail

Example: NYCT Subway

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

- Full physical separation from traffic with corresponding traffic restrictions

- Robust station amenities; signal preemption; etc.

- Avoid problems that degrade SBS service

Light Rail Transit (LRT)

- Similar to BRT with respect to operational characteristics and benefits, with different vehicles, propulsion technology, etc.

Subway

- Extension from existing Eastern Parkway or Fulton Street subways

- Options include fully underground or transition to elevated

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Alternatives Development and Screening

Transit Alternatives:
For each transit mode under consideration, different alternatives will be evaluated against the Study Goals, including different alignment options, terminal locations, etc.

Land Use/Ridership Scenarios:
Different *land* use scenarios—each with different ridership potential—are under development to accompany the different modal options.

End Result:
Five different transit investment packages will be defined and paired with corresponding ridership scenarios.

We are here

Flowchart:
- Preliminary Alternatives → (Initial Fatal Flaw Screening) → Long List of Alternatives → (Long List Screening) → 6 Short List Alternatives → 5 Investment Packages
- Land Use Scenario Development → 3 Ridership Scenarios & Ridership Evaluation → 5 Investment Packages

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Stakeholder & Public Outreach

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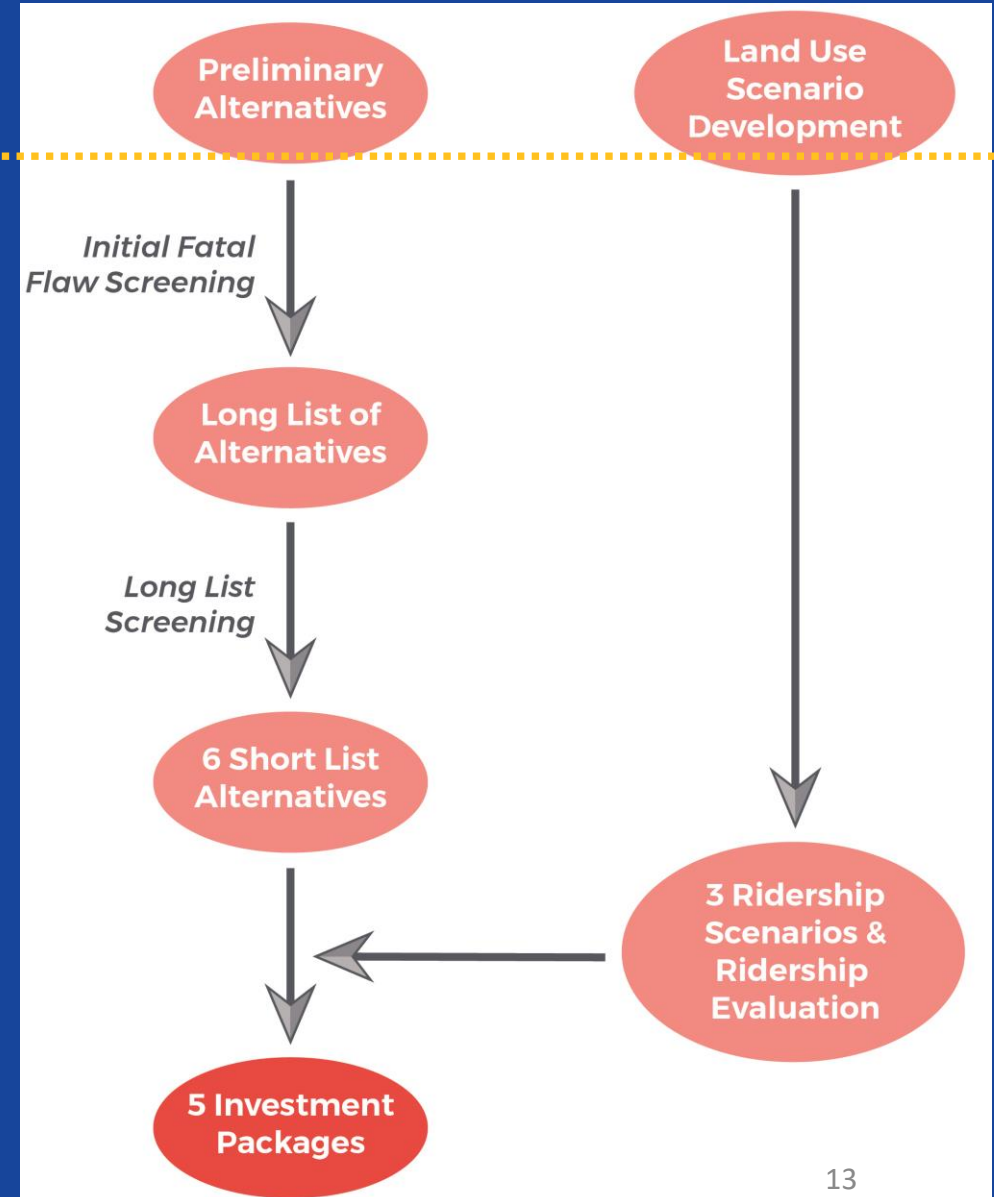
Overview of Stakeholder & Public Outreach

- The **Study Website** allows for individuals to provide feedback about their travel experiences along the Utica Avenue corridor, as well as submit comments and recommendations for the study.

  https://new.mta.info/system_modernization/utica_avenue

- A **Transportation Intercept Survey** was conducted in the first half of 2019, which included a survey of customers within and in the vicinity of the Utica Avenue corridor. The purpose of the survey was to understand current travel patterns by mode—including trip purpose, travel time, origin/destination, etc.—as an input to the development of travel demand forecasts for the study.

Summary of Website Comments Received to Date

- **Support for transit improvements** along Utica Avenue to address current challenges and accommodate future growth

- **Sharing of personal travel experiences**, including opinions that buses are slow and unreliable, buses/subway are overcrowded, etc.

- **Support for subway extension** and improvements to the existing subway system

- **Ideas for potential subway extension**, including alignments, termini, station locations, connections to different subway lines, and options for underground vs. elevated structure

- **Ideas for other transit improvements** besides a subway extension, as well as feedback on introduction of articulated buses on B46 SBS

- **Request for additional information** on Study

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Transportation Intercept Survey

Intercept surveys were conducted in person using a tablet computer provided by the Study Team.

Summary of Transportation Intercept Survey Respondents

- 5,318 total survey responses across five different modes of travel

- About 60 percent of respondents were female

- Nearly 70 percent of respondents identified as "non-Hispanic/Black"

- More than 60 percent of respondents reported having no vehicle in their household

Survey Responses by Mode of Travel

Mode	Percent
Bus	42%
Subway	38%
Commuter Van	2%
Pedestrian	11%
Automobile	7%

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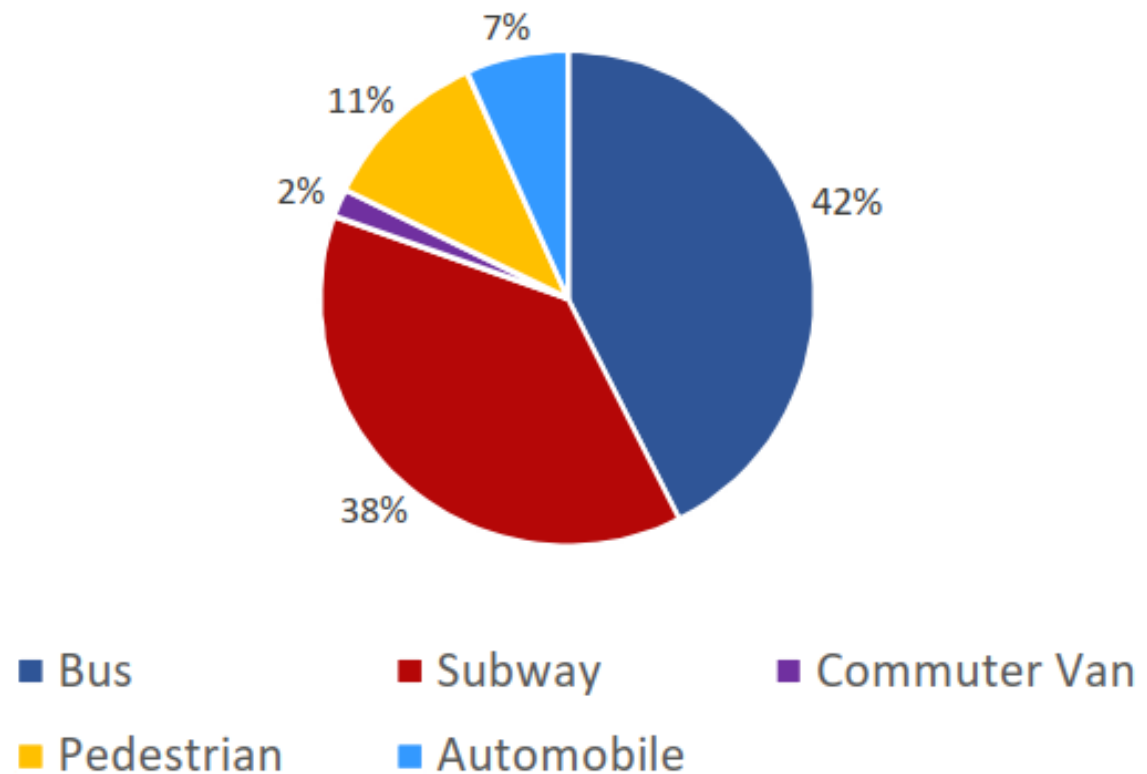
Survey Respondents: Home and Work Locations

Respondents generally lived in the study corridor and worked in the expected employment locations of Manhattan and Downtown Brooklyn
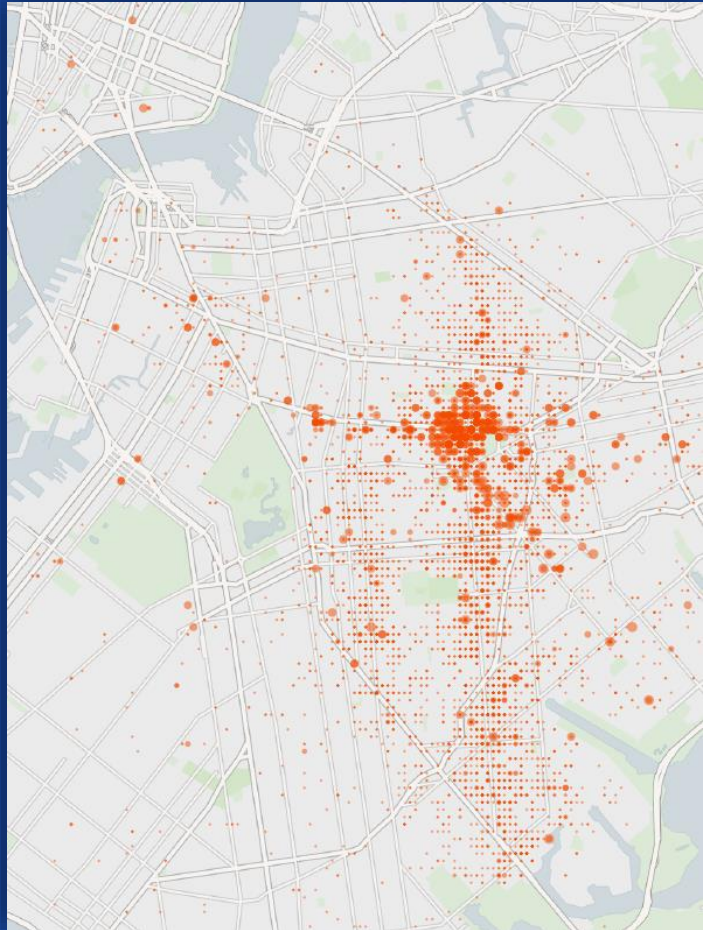
Home Locations

Work Locations

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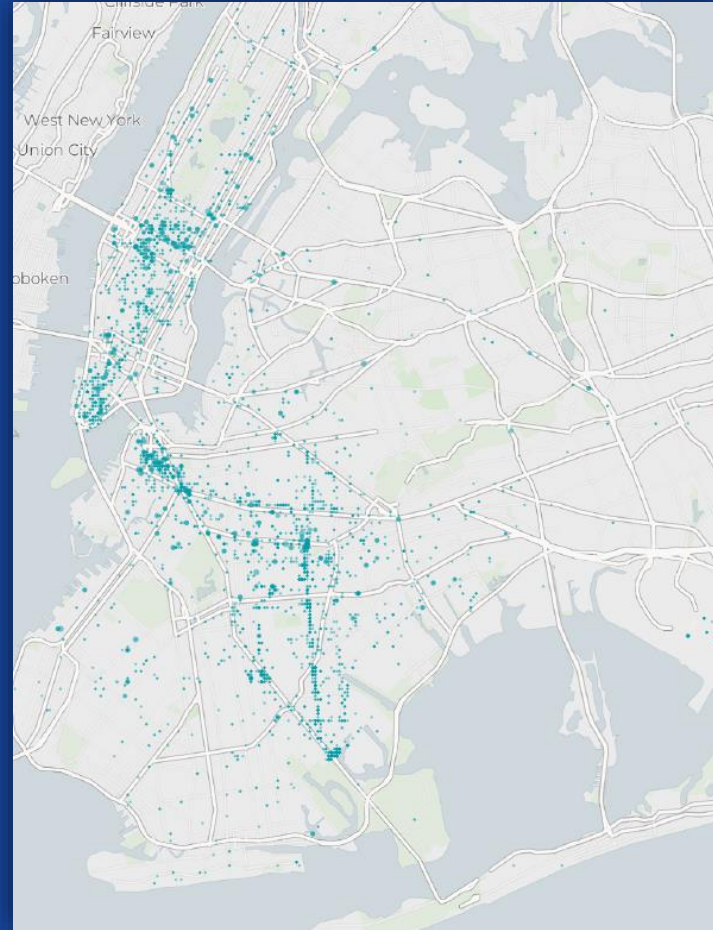
Other Relevant Projects

Other Relevant Projects:
Brooklyn Bus Network Redesign

- Project kicked off in October 2019

- Collaboration between NYCT and NYCDOT

- A holistic, clean-slate look at Brooklyn bus service to deliver more frequent, reliable service

- Full assessment of all local, SBS, and express bus service in the context of future market needs and travel trends

- Goal of improving customer experience

https://new.mta.info/brooklynbusredesign

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Next Steps / Questions & Comments

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Next Steps:
Utica Avenue Study

Continue Ongoing Work:

- Define land use scenarios

- Define and evaluate subway operational improvements for 2 3 4 5

- Summarize current travel demand incorporating results from the Transportation Intercept Survey

Conduct initial screening of Utica Avenue transit improvement alternatives

Utica Avenue Transit Improvements Study
Study Update

Winter 2020