NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TESTIMONY HEARING BEFORE THE CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION INT. NO. 211 - IN RELATION TO A BUS RAPID TRANSIT PLAN. FEBRUARY 10, 2015

Good morning, Chairman Rodriguez and members of the Transportation Committee. My name is Polly Trottenberg and I am the Commissioner of the New York City Department of Transportation (DOT). Today, I am joined by Eric Beaton, Director of Transit Development for DOT; and Peter Cafiero, Chief of Operations Planning at New York City Transit (NYCT). On behalf of Mayor de Blasio, I am glad to be here today to discuss Intro 211 and Select Bus Service (SBS) in New York City.

I want to thank Chairman Rodriguez and members of the Transportation Committee for your partnership in advocating for better bus service for New Yorkers. I also want to express my gratitude to Council Member Lander, the sponsor of Intro 211, for his vision of a fully realized Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) network. We support the concept of Intro 211 and want to work in good faith to make sure that the requirements and the timeframes match the next phase of SBS.

During the State of the City address, the Mayor discussed his vision for strengthening our neighborhoods and closing the inequality and opportunity gap by facilitating economic development and providing affordable housing throughout the five boroughs of New York City. Improving transportation options through our SBS program plays an important part in achieving these goals.

Furthermore, the Mayor reaffirmed his bold commitment to implement 20 SBS routes by the end of 2017. As part of the preliminary budget released yesterday, the City is allocating \$295 million towards the expansion of SBS, including \$55 million in expense funding through FY 2018 and \$240 million in capital funding through FY 2025. The capital funding includes \$84 million in new funding.

First, I would like to briefly discuss what we have accomplished already with the SBS program. In 2005, DOT and NYCT commissioned a study to implement five SBS routes throughout the City. Then in 2010, we released the BRT Phase II study, which identified an additional 16 corridors around the City appropriate for SBS improvements. Since the launch of the first SBS route in 2008, DOT and NYCT have successfully implemented seven SBS routes in the five boroughs –Fordham Road, Webster Avenue, 1st and 2nd Avenues, 34th Street, 125th Street to LaGuardia Airport, Nostrand and Rogers Avenues, and Hylan Boulevard. These seven SBS corridors carry over 200,000 passengers across the City daily – providing riders with faster and

more reliable service. We have seen an average 10% increase in corridor bus ridership and a 15% - 23% improvement in travel time for all SBS riders. Simply put – this is a program with proven results.

But from here, to reach the Mayor's goal of adding 13 additional SBS routes by the end of 2017, we need to more than triple our past pace of planning and implementation, and this is going to take lot of work. We are going to need the City Council's help and leadership as we work with communities.

Right now, we are actively engaging communities throughout the City in our planning process on four more potential SBS routes - 86th Street in Manhattan, Utica Avenue in Brooklyn, and Flushing-Jamaica and Woodhaven-Cross Bay Boulevards in Queens. To put our SBS outreach in perspective, by this summer, we will be doing outreach in nearly half of the community boards in the City on an SBS project, in addition to our continuing work with Community Boards all over the City on Vision Zero, Citi Bike and other programs.

In planning for SBS, we know that no matter how much technical skill our two agencies bring to the table, we need to work with local communities to find the best set of improvements on each route. That is why on each corridor, DOT and NYCT have engaged in an extensive community planning effort that includes outreach to bus riders, residents, neighborhood groups, community boards, local elected officials, merchant groups, and other stakeholders.

Now I would like to tell you more about the four projects we are currently working on. On 86th Street in Manhattan, outreach and design are underway to convert the M86 into an SBS route. The M86 is the busiest route in the City in terms of passengers per mile, carrying nearly 25,000 passengers daily over its length.

This is a classic example of a route that will be greatly improved by off-board fare collection. During rush hour, the lines to board the bus can extend an entire city block because so many people are waiting at each stop to get on the bus and then swipe their Metrocards. On this route, fare collection accounts for nearly 40% of bus travel time, and off-board fare collection will significantly reduce this. At the same time, we are working to enhance the bus rider experience by building expanded stations at key stops to provide seating and shelters without blocking the already busy sidewalks. We are working closely with the community and hope that these upgrades will be in place this spring.

Along Utica Avenue, the B46 bus route extends eight miles across Brooklyn. This route carries almost 50,000 passengers a day, making it the second busiest bus route in New York City, while providing a crucial connection to four subway lines and 30 other bus routes. Currently, major sections of this route are outside the reach of the subway network, as planned subway extensions to the corridor were never constructed.

Last year, DOT and NYCT installed a series of short-term improvements along the route, including bus lanes, loading zones, traffic signal changes, and left turn bays. This summer we will build upon that work and install off board fare collection along the route, extend the existing bus lanes, and activate Transit Signal Priority (TSP). Additionally, Utica Avenue is an example of how SBS improvements can also help accomplish the goals of Vision Zero. This corridor has one of the highest rates of injury from motor vehicle crashes in Brooklyn. Speeding is a major contributor to this problem and DOT has found that over 60% of vehicles on Utica Avenue are traveling above the speed limit, endangering other drivers, bikers, and pedestrians. By bringing SBS service to Utica Avenue, we can better organize traffic flow and improve safety for all users of the road. We expect full SBS service to begin by the end of the summer. We will also follow-up with a capital project that will build enhanced stations and reorganize some of the complex intersections, which will improve the customer experience and further enhance street safety.

The third project that we are looking to implement this year is in Queens along the Q44 route, which connects Flushing to Jamaica, and provides a needed interborough connection to the Bronx. The Q44 Limited and Q20 local routes on this corridor have a daily ridership of 42,000 passengers, making this also one of the busiest corridors in the City. Flushing and Jamaica are two of our key commercial centers, but traveling between them by subway means going in towards Manhattan and doubling back – and forget making the trip from the Bronx on the subway. There are many destinations along this route not served by the subway system, such as Queens College and other key locations in the Bronx.

We will use off-board fare collection, and install bus lanes in the areas where they are needed to help bus travel. We will also use Transit Signal Priority and a new congestion management system, Flushing in Motion – which can adjust signal timing patterns to address traffic conditions in real time. We will then follow up with a capital project to build better bus stations, and make other street design upgrades.

Finally, I want to talk about one more project, which will take longer to implement, but which I think will have even more substantial benefits, not just for bus riders, but for everyone in central Queens.

Because of the street geometry on Woodhaven and Cross Bay Boulevards, DOT and MTA have the opportunity to create a more expansive SBS route than the ones implemented to date, more like traditional BRT. This corridor has three to five travel lanes in each direction, and in some locations has more than 150 feet of public right of way. Woodhaven Boulevard is served by several local, limited, and express bus routes carrying over 30,000 people per day. There have been 24 traffic deaths along Woodhaven and Cross

Bay Boulevards since 2008, with high travel speeds, difficult turns, and long crossing distances for pedestrians all contributing to make this a street a high crash corridor.

The width of this street provides the opportunity to implement major enhancements to bus service through a bus route design that has yet to be used in New York City. The most important feature could be a dedicated bus lane physically separated from regular travel lanes and designed to have minimal conflicts with other vehicles. This design will be more complex than our other SBS projects, and will require a major capital project to implement, so we expect it to be completed by the end of 2017. We have already begun the robust outreach and design process with over a dozen meetings with local stakeholders and have many more to come.

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Additionally, we have asked the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to fund the first phase, project development, by submitting an application for the Federal New Starts program. This would allow us to begin using \$3 million of Federal funds as the first step in developing our detailed design and identifying our construction funding needs. We expect an answer from the FTA by August.

Implementing quality SBS projects requires not only planning and funding, but also a broad depth of political and community support. From early on the Woodhaven Boulevard corridor has been strongly supported by members of the Council, and many members have supported our other 7 SBS routes. However, to implement 20 routes by the end of 2017 is going to require all hands on deck at DOT and NYCT. We are also going to need the Council's help as we go out into communities to educate the public about the benefits of SBS and work through the planning and operational phases.

Our current plan is a good blueprint for where to expand SBS service to reach our goal of 20 routes. However, we need to make sure that we are not just adding lines to a map, but also incorporating the Mayor's new affordable housing plan, the proposed expanded ferry system, and better connections to our airports.

These new developments will be an integral part of planning for the eventual next phase of SBS that Intro 211 calls for. I look forward to working with the Council to both complete 20 SBS routes by the end of 2017 and to plan for future SBS expansion beyond 2017, as required by Intro 211. Thank you, Chairman Rodriguez and members of the Committee. We will be happy to answer your questions at this time.



TESTIMONY BY KEITH KERMAN DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

February 10, 2015

<u>Introduction</u>

Good afternoon Council Member Rodriquez, members of the Transportation Committee, and other members of the City Council. I am Keith Kerman, Deputy Commissioner of Citywide Fleet at the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS). I am here today to discuss the City's efforts to implement a car sharing program and to discuss Intro 597.

New York City operates 27,000 owned and leased vehicles, the largest municipal fleet in the United States. NYC maintains fleet units at 37 dedicated fleet repair facilities and has over 400 in-house fueling locations. We utilize approximately 841 distinct locations throughout the City to park our fleet. More than 1,600 City employees work full time in fleet repair and garage operations across the ten largest fleet operating agencies. In total, over \$760 million is spent annually on fleet related costs including acquisitions, repair, fueling and parts.

DCAS leads efforts to share and improve services across the ten major fleet operations involving the following City agencies: NYPD, FDNY, Correction, Sanitation, Environmental Protection, Parks, Transportation, Education, Health, and DCAS. In addition to these large agencies, over 40 agencies with smaller fleets are managed and serviced through DCAS.

One of the current focuses of DCAS's efforts is a series of safety and risk management projects that are part of the Mayor's "Vision Zero" initiative. DCAS is training all staff



TESTIMONY BY KEITH KERMAN DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

February 10, 2015

who operate vehicles in the subject areas of defensive driving, implementing new technology to monitor safety, and assessing ways to procure a safer fleet. DCAS also leads initiatives in sustainability, performance reporting, and emergency management. DCAS manages day-to-day services on a Citywide basis, including repair, fueling, auction, parts supply, car share, and claims management.

Car Share

As you may be aware, in July 2012 the City entered into a partnership with Zipcar to implement a car sharing service for City agencies. There are two distinct components to the services that are offered through the City's agreement with Zipcar. The first provides to all City agencies access to the vast inventory of privately-owned Zipcar vehicles in New York City in the same manner that any private citizen can access these vehicles. In 2014, City agencies spent approximately \$50,000 per month on Zipcar vehicles. Agencies which used Zipcar included DOT, DSNY, FDNY, Parks, ACS, DEP, DCAS, Landmarks, and the Mayor's Office.

Secondly, in addition to accessing private shared cars, the agreement also affords us the opportunity to install Zipcar's sharing technology, called "Fast Fleet", in City-owned vehicles. This technology allows City vehicles to be pooled and shared just like Zipcar, using card keys instead of car keys for opening the cars. Employees go online to reserve the vehicles. The City began the installation process in July 2012 and completed it mid-year 2013. In total, Fast Fleet is now available in 580 non-emergency light- duty sedan and SUV vehicles at Parks, DEP, Health, DCAS, and DOT.



TESTIMONY BY KEITH KERMAN DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

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The use of "Fast Fleet" technology has allowed the City to implement one of the largest public fleet share initiatives in the country. In so doing, we have learned a great deal about implementing this type of program. For example, effective car share requires easy and reliable access to the shared vehicles, whether private or City owned. The sharing of City-owned cars works best where agencies have a large number of vehicles parked in dedicated agency lots. We have also found that effective sharing of private cars works best where there is easy and convenient access to the vehicles. Moreover, a major advantage of sharing City-owned cars is that these vehicles have official license plates and markings, which makes it easier to perform official duties.

Both components of the car share initiative have been effective, enabling agencies to share City fleet units as well as obtain cars for short- term needs. Through Fast Fleet, the City has developed new types of reporting on the usage of fleet units that enable fleet managers to examine car use on a daily basis and study usage trends in a way that has never been achieved before. Over 1,800 City employees have enrolled to use either Zip or Fast Fleet vehicles.

<u>Intro 597</u>

The City has made great strides in the implementation of car sharing. We believe that it can be an effective tool in reducing the number of vehicles that are part of the City fleet while still meeting the transportation needs of City agencies. In fact, from 2012 to 2013, the City reduced its light duty non-emergency fleet by over 450 vehicles as part of its car



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sharing efforts, representing a reduction of 10% of non-emergency light duty vehicles. We agree with the Council that more can and should be done to build upon and expand these efforts, and while we support the goal of the legislation, there are several issues we believe the City Council should consider in the context of the goals of Intro 597.

First, the City's current car share program is focused on general passenger vehicles, mostly sedans and SUVs. In the fleet industry, these are referred to as light duty, Class 1 vehicles. The City currently uses approximately 4,500 active non-emergency light duty passenger units in this category. We believe that these vehicles are best suited to be included in any car sharing program that the City operates or that the City Council decides to implement through legislative action. We do not believe that private car sharing is an alternative that can be used for most crew work vehicles like pickups and vans which must be outfitted for their assignments, or for units like dump, rack trucks or garbage trucks. As currently drafted, Intro 597 does not make a distinction between the different classes of vehicles being utilized, and we believe the bill should be revised to address this distinction. We would like to collaborate with you on defining exactly which class of vehicles would be subject to this legislation.

In addition, as discussed earlier, the City currently uses both private car share services as well as car share technology for City-owned units. We believe that the legislation should be drafted so as to recognize and credit both types of car share for purposes of compliance. Car share using in-house City-owned units offers many important advantages over private cars for performing public functions and accessing City facilities.



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Finally, as mentioned above, the City has already implemented fleet reduction as part of its overall fleet management program. Parking, geographical and operational constraints limit the effectiveness of car share for some City functions and agencies. We would like to further discuss the fleet reduction targets to ensure that they are targeted and limited to areas which car share can support and do not negatively impact City operations.

Conclusion

Thank you again for allowing us to testify today about car share. We look forward to a continued dialogue with you and other members of the City Council. The Administration is excited about the opportunity to work with you to explore avenues for enhancing the City's current car sharing efforts, for we share the goals of wanting to make the City's transportation needs more efficient and having its program serve as a model for other municipalities.

I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

TRI-STATE TRANSPORTATION CAMPAIGN



NYC Council Hearing
Committee on Transportation
Testimony of Veronica Vanterpool, Tri-State Transportation Campaign
In relation to bus rapid transit plan/car sharing in NYC fleet

February 10, 2015

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. The Tri-State Transportation Campaign is a steering committee member of the BRT for NYC coalition, which was created in 2014 to advance bus rapid transit throughout NYC. With the launch of NYC's first Select Bus Service route in the Bronx in 2008, TSTC has supported and applauded the efforts of the NYC Department of Transportation and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority to expand Select Bus Service throughout the five boroughs. And we applaud the efforts of Mayor de Blasio, the NYC Council and the Progressive Caucus to elevate the need for SBS and BRT throughout NYC. We hope the Council will uphold the \$295 million pledged in the Mayor's executive budget.

With seven operational Select Bus Service routes, the BRT for NYC coalition has coalesced to advance the next phase of SBS with the implementation of bus rapid transit along the Woodhaven/Cross Bay Boulevard. BRT on Woodhaven could include physically separated bus lanes that facilitate unimpeded bus travel, street design changes that improve safety for all road users and signal technology that improves traffic flow for buses and vehicles alike.

While bus rapid transit is not a one-size fits all transit solution, one key element must be included to distinguish BRT from SBS--physically dedicated bus lanes. While there have been concerns expressed about the impact of a bus lane on vehicular traffic, such concerns should be measured against other information:

- Many residents in the Woodhaven/Cross Bay corridor drive because bus service is poor and limited;
 improved transit service will reduce the number of vehicles on the road
- Existing congestion in the corridor is also attributable to complex road design (left turn bays, inefficient merges, variable lane widths), poor interaction with pedestrians, inefficient signal technology and timing

Prioritizing bus service on Woodhaven aims to improve travel conditions for motorists as well. BRT is not anticar; it is pro-efficiency for limited and congested road space. According to the NYS Department of Transportation's Traffic Data Viewer, as many as 60,000 vehicles travel along sections of Woodhaven Boulevard and Cross Bay Boulevards (according to 2012 data). This volume of traffic poses environmental, safety, and quality of life concerns.

We applaud those in the Council who have heralded bus rapid transit as an issue of transit equity and are considering legislation to advance BRT. Given that the percentage of NY commuters spending an hour or more to get to work has increased by 20% over the past few years, and that 2/3 of this group make less than \$35,000, bus rapid transit is one of the most cost effective ways to connect NYC residents and workers with increased job access, housing opportunities, and improved communities.

Lastly, TSTC supports efforts to reduce the number of vehicles in the city's fleet via strategies such as the establishment of a car sharing program for city agencies (Intro 597). The proposed legislation aims to reduce the city's vehicular fleet by five percent, a promising initiative that will encourage the growth of car sharing programs throughout the city (especially in the outer boroughs), lead to reduced traffic, and improved traffic safety. Besides reducing operating and maintenance costs for the city's vehicular fleet, other costs savings abound; cities save on parking and gasoline and fees associated with unpaid fines and tickets given to municipal cars. Boston and Chicago contract with car sharing programs in several municipal departments and have seen a significant return on investment. Chicago reduced its fleet, yielding a savings of approximately \$7 million in three years; total expenditure was \$500,000.

Thank you.



February 10, 2015

Testimony of Jess Nizar, Senior Organizer at the Riders Alliance, regarding Int. 211.

Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to speak here today.

I'm Jess Nizar, Senior Organizer at the Riders Alliance. We are a grassroots organization of subway and bus riders—we bring transit riders together to speak up for better service at affordable fares and a stronger public investment in mass transit. Some of our members, bus riders who have extreme commutes, have been advocating for Bus Rapid Transit in their own communities, and we appreciate the opportunity to speak with the Council about why.

New Yorkers rely on public transportation, and the least wealthy New Yorkers rely on transit the most. And as more New Yorkers rely on public transit, the system is less able to serve people's day-to-day needs.

When our subway system was constructed and expanded, job growth happened primarily in Manhattan. Now, not only to jobs happen at all hours of the day, but they happen in all corners of the city—particularly in and between the other boroughs.

But our transit system hasn't caught up, which is why our commutes are getting longer—and it's low-income families in the outer boroughs that are hit the hardest.

Part of my job, is to meet with bus riders in neighborhoods far from the subway in Queens and Brooklyn—and talk about how their long commutes affect them. They're stranded waiting for the bus; sometimes 3 hours of their day is spent in transit rather than at home with their families, or earning money at work. Our transit system is failing some of the people who need it the most.

And that's why we need the City and the MTA to take creative steps to reduce people's extreme commute times.

Bus Rapid Transit does just that—at a minimal cost compared to building a subway, BRT provides faster, more reliable service to neighborhoods where people rely on the bus but it doesn't serve their needs. New York should be at the global vanguard of providing people with better, more equitable transportation options. BRT is one opportunity to do that.

BRT is not a logistical issue; it's a social justice issue for New York City. We appreciate the Council taking strong steps to move BRT forward and help literally hundreds of thousands of people who are spending too long on the bus and not enough time at work and at home.

Thank you.

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Testimony

of

Mark Henry, President/ Business Agent, Amalgamated Transit Union Local No. 1056 and

John Lyons, President/ Business Agent, Amalgamated Transit Union Local No. 1179; and Chair, ATU Legislative Conference Board.

To The

City Council Committee on Transportation, Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez, Chair February 10, 2015, 12:45 p.m.

Thank you for this opportunity to address this committee and comment on the Int. No. 211 which calls for a plan for bus rapid transit, commonly known by its acronym, "BRT." I am Mark Henry, President and Business Agent for Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local No. 1056. Local 1056 represents drivers and mechanics who work for MTA New York City Transit's Queens Bus Division. And I am John Lyons, President/ Business Agent, Amalgamated Transit Union Local No. 1179; and Chair, ATU Legislative Conference Board. ATU 1179 represents bus operators, mechanics and supervisors who work from the Far Rockaway and JFK Depots of the MTA Bus division (former Green Bus lines). As such, Locals 1056 and 1179 comment on the need to look both at our experience with the implementation of BRT to date and the broader issue of continuing shortfalls in transit and transportation planning.

Certainly the introduction of Int. No. 211 and this hearing demonstrate a recognition that investments in transportation infrastructure remains critical to our economy. At almost every opportunity discussing public transit, the ATU emphasizes that smartly investing in public transportation keys growth in the economy and job creation. Real estate and economic development interests recognized this when they supported extending the "7" Line from Times Square to the Far West Side and the Javits center or the LIRR east side access project.



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No doubt the sponsors of the legislation seek to encourage smart investments that support bus service improvements can realize improvements and growth sooner than those aforementioned and similar mega-projects. That's certainly the essence of BRT. We have roads; we have buses; why not explore building routes that cost much less, get in operation sooner and serves the public?

ATU continues to be at the forefront on advocating investments involving bus service; our comments – including at at state and city legislative hearings – on the MTA capital plan emphasizes that investing in more buses offers immediately relief.

Public transit, especially our buses, not only provides commuters with a way to go to and from work, it offers a vital link to the outside world for seniors, young people, people with disabilities, and people without cars.

For many New Yorkers public transit serves as the lifeline to shop, go to the doctor, attend worship services, visit family members, and do many of the things that enrich their lives. Working Families need safe, equitable and efficient transportation. In Queens, more often than not, that means buses.

Rather than limit a plan to BRT, which the City and MTA market as SBS- Select Bus Service, ATU strongly recommends an overall surface transportation plan that address overall bus service.

Any drive for BRT must not distract from the very apparent need to bolster local bus service, address congestion that hinders local, limited and express service and build new terminals where none exist in transit hubs such as downtown Flushing.

An overall plan would look at needs beyond BRT that also improve service.

The MTA still needs to restore service curtailed since 2010.

Why not expand bus service to operate 24 hours?

Introduce express bus service in Southeast Queens at the level that exists in Northeast Queens.

The current SBS schemes appears to ignore how introducing BRT from Rockaway to Brooklyn or Manhattan or Bronx, and Queens to Lower Manhattan, would spur economic and job growth.

The congestion and related issues that plague downtown Flushing cry for a Hub Bus terminus that Member of Congress Grace Meng had proposed a few years ago (at our impetus). The Flushing Area continues to have an ever increasing ridership as development increases throughout Flushing. We need the leadership from transit and transportation planners.

We must also bolster the Casey Stengel Depot (a NYCT Queens Bus Division Depot that serves Flushing communities) against flooding risks (We recall the urgent movement of buses there to "higher ground" in advance of Sandy.)

Since useful life continues to remain an issue, it places even greater importance on state of the art depots. The Far Rockaway (MTA Bus) Depot replacement/ rehabilitation remains priority for a facility still at risk to storms; bus operators and maintainers still work from trailers rather than appropriate locker facilities. [No plans exist to get this facility that was closed from Oct 2012-Feb 2013 up to pre-Sandy capacity; five new lifts built to service buses based there got "appropriated" when MTA built permanent office space for bus management there; roof work supposed to start July 2013, remains in limbo for 13 months with no clear start date. The lack of post Sandy improvements at Far Rockaway also inhibits the MTA's ability to provide service needed for the peninsula; this facility maintains limited ability to store or repair buses; instead MTA Bus currently uses its JFK depot in Jamaica on the mainland for the bulk of repair work.]

Local 1056 long advocated that the MTA modernize and expand its (NYCT Queens Bus Division) Jamaica Depot. The current depot functions at only 70% of the capacity needed to provide consistent and adequate bus service. While the MTA finally and recently acquired the land required for the project, the capital plan must accelerate this project to help the neighborhoods of Southeast Queens; at the Council hearing the MTA promised to disclosed those details.

The modernization and redesign of the 165st Street Bus Terminal across from the Jamaica Main Library will offer the many commuters who use this terminus a safe and accessible facility; the MTA plan does not address this infrastructure need.

Investing in bus infrastructure also empowers the MTA to focus on better use of its bus lines to serve intra-borough needs – the essence of BRT – rather than just funneling riders to subways and rail. As you may not be aware Queens can be a two fare zone if the MTA fails to make Metro Cards available to more vendors in the neighborhoods as residents often still pay two fares to commute about Queens or to New York City.

The MTA must continue to add service in areas of Queens that desperately need the mobility that public transit affords taxpaying New Yorkers. Two Center for Urban Future reports evidence the need to expand public transits options needs for residents in Queens, Brooklyn and Far Rockaway. The MTA also needs to reconsider plans to deploy more "articulated" buses.

ATU recommends improving the legislation modeling on the City Charter's planning provisions. In the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure – ULURP – and community boards the Charter recognizes the crucial utility of public input and review. It also invests in the Borough Presidents responsibility to develop Strategic Policy Statements.

Transportation planning in Queens - and throughout the City - certainly requires a strategic look.

A planning approach, whether it be borough hall task forces or DOT/MTA driven planning group, can bring the aforementioned players, the bus operator unions, the riding public, community groups and our elected leaders together and press for the fixes, and more importantly, improvements. This can't happen too soon. See how recasting Int. No. 211 to plan for local, limited, express and BRT services makes the most sense.

And let us not forget that some things can be done almost immediately. The MTA must deploy more buses to meet service needs during rush hours; this includes starting some buses further along a route to allow more riders get a timely ride. Including this obvious path to improvement in transit plan puts the needed pressure on the MTA.

Looking at the Woodhaven/ Cross Bay SBS corridor, as an example, the planning to date falls short in several regards. The greatest need remains how best to enhance local service along the Woodhaven/ Cross Bay Corridor. Thus any bus study should not start with SBS but with the need to improve bus service. In fact the SBS scheme would decrease the local service that requires enhancement. Further, a review of bus service along the corridor indicates few rides go the entire route end to end. In fact, the overwhelming number of rides involve getting on and off at points in between.

The Flushing Jamaica scheme raises a host of issue that get better introduced as part of an overall bus plan for Queens. The duplication of service apparent in many SBS schemes should not be entertained. Providing a seat on a bus will always trump arriving five minutes faster to a destination.

Dedicated bus lanes, as currently is done in another borough, and off-bus fare collection – two hallmarks of SBS – might make sense for introduction beyond SBS schemes.

Int. No. 211 stands for piecemeal does not work; improving it to more broadly induce better bus service best serves the needs of New York.

ATU Locals 1056 and 1179 will continue to advocate a better scheduled service for Queens and so should these committees and the Council as a whole. Thank you for this opportunity to share the views of ATU and advocacy for the communities we serve. We welcome and look forward to be part of further discussions concerning this legislation and the paramount need to improve local, limited and BRT service.



WORKING FAMILIES ORGANIZATION

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TESTIMONY ON INTRO 211

JANEL QUARLESS, NEW YORK WORKING FAMILIES LEGISLATIVE MANAGER NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

February 10, 2015, 1:00pm

Thank you Committee Chair and members of the committee for convening this hearing. My name is Janel Quarless. I am the Legislative Manager for New York Working Families. I'm honored to have this opportunity to testify on behalf of our communities that need a transit solution that not only addresses the needs of today, but also those of the future. Full Bus Rapid Transit is that solution. Toward that end, in collaboration with advocacy, policy, labor and business groups, WFP has been serving on the "BRT for NYC" steering committee that calls for full featured Bus Rapid Transit to address transportation inequality.

BRT can increase low-income New Yorkers' access to quality jobs, good education, and health care services spanning multiple boroughs. As the city's working class and working poor move to outer borough neighborhoods due to the serious dearth in affordable housing, it pushes these residents into transportation deserts and (ex) two-fare zones, away from the city's core. Low-income New Yorkers rely heavily on public transportation, but their current options are often unreliable, take too long, and do not get them where they need to go. BRT will provide riders in the outer boroughs with fast and reliable transit that preserves curbside parking and creates safe walking conditions. This is especially true for multi-lane thoroughfares like Woodhaven Boulevard that prove to be most dangerous for all road users but where fuller-scale BRT is most feasible. BRT is also known to boost sales for local businesses through the increased foot traffic it helps generate. Take Fordham Road's Bx12 Select Bus Service route: Local business activity along that corridor increased by 71% in its first three years of operation.

I also come as to you as a frequent bus rider today. As a user of the B44 Nostrand Avenue Select Bus Service, I have seen first hand how modest changes to bus service can deliver significant benefits for riders. The combination of off-board fare collection, bus lanes that are off set from the curb, and bus bulb stations where sidewalks have been widened to allow buses to pull in and out of stations without having to pull over, all have led to noticeable time savings and eases in the flow of traffic overall. Full-featured BRT builds on improvements of the existing SBS routes — buses would travel in protected exclusive bus lanes in the center of the roadway, incorporate traffic signal coordination while riders would benefit by level boarding at BRT stations, all which lead to travel time improvements for buses and drivers alike.

BRT will improve the city's economic vitality, increase safety and efficiency for all buses, cars, pedestrians and bicyclists while providing access for millions of New Yorkers. We value the Council's willingness to lead on transit equity. Buy in from stakeholders and those directly impacted are imperative especially from communities that are traditionally shut out which include environmental justice groups and NYCHA residents. Thank you.



JR THE RECORD

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Transforming Our Streets for All Road Users Testimony on Intro. 211

Contact: Alana Miller, Policy Manager, Transportation Alternatives

Tuesday, February 10, 2015

Good afternoon Chairman Rodriguez and members of the Transportation Committee. My name is Alana Miller, and I am the policy manager at Transportation Alternatives – New York City's advocate for safe streets, biking, walking and public transportation.

I am here today to address Intro 211 and the creation of a citywide plan to redesign our streets to include Bus Rapid Transit. We urge the City to consider this as an opportunity to comprehensively include safety improvements and transportation options for all road users. We have more than 115,000 supporters in our network, most of whom take public transportation, walk, or bike every day. It is crucial that our streets reflect their needs.

From Deadly Streets to "Complete Streets"

Currently our city's largest streets, arterials, are designed like highways that prioritize private vehicle use over any other form of transportation. And at a deadly cost. While these streets make up only 15% of our road network, they account for 60% of fatalities for people on foot and bike. Why? Bad, outdated design.

Furthermore, this design results in hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers stuck in traffic with long commutes and terrible transportation options.

Our city's largest streets should be vibrant, "complete streets" that incorporate Bus Rapid Transit, protected bike lanes and pedestrian safety islands. Transforming these streets will benefit all New Yorkers by enhancing safety and expanding options.

Conclusion

This Council has shown an incredible commitment to safer streets and more transportation choices. The work done over the last year illustrates the power of building upon proven innovations and growing demand for safer and better transportation options.

In 2015, the city must commit to transforming our most hazardous major corridors with "complete street" redesigns that include dedicated lanes for Bus Rapid Transit and better bus service, along with protected bike lanes and pedestrian safety islands. Overhauling these arterial roadways will benefit all New Yorkers by enhancing safety and connecting more communities across the five boroughs with existing and emerging job centers.



Testimony of Zipcar Anthony Fatone, Regional General Manager, New York New York City Council // February 10, 2015

Good afternoon, Chairman Rodriguez and members of the Transportation Committee. We would like to thank you for both organizing this important hearing and for inviting us here to testify today.

Founded in 2000, Zipcar operates the world's leading car sharing network. Zipcar provides the freedom of "wheels when you want them" to its over 900,000 members, giving both individuals and city employees a convenient, cost-effective and simple alternative to car ownership.

As all of you are probably aware, Zipcar's self-service vehicles are available on-demand in hundreds of garages throughout the five boroughs. Members can reserve cars by the hour or by the day at rates that include gas, insurance and other costs associated with car ownership.

Outside of the New York City area, Zipcar operates a fleet of vehicles in 30 major metropolitan areas in the United States, Canada and Europe. Through our *Zipcar for University* program, we operate on more than 400 college and university campuses, and we serve thousands of small business owners through our *Zipcar for Business* program.

Something that you may not be aware of is the fact that aside from Zipcar's robust individual membership program in New York City, we have been operating our *FastFleet* program within the city since 2012, a significant car sharing program with the City of New York through the Department of Transportation of the Department of Citywide Administrative Services.

Unlike any other car-sharing program, we are able to offer two unique products that no other company has the ability to offer. These products are FastFleet and Zipcar for Government.

The FastFleet program is one in which seamlessly integrates Zipcar software and equipment into existing City-owned vehicles. From that point on, the



car operates exactly as an individual Zipcar membership would operate. For an example, one of the employees from DCAS needs a car to travel to a meeting. The City employee would log on to the Zipcar FastFleet portal unique to that program, enter the time and date when they need the vehicle and our technology will allow them to choose the type/class of vehicle needed for the job or the closest in proximity to their location.

To access the vehicle, the employee would use a custom designed fleet sharing card, very similar to a Zipcard. We have nearly 600 vehicles in the FastFleet program across five agencies in the City of New York.

The second product is *Zipcar for Government* which compliments *FastFleet* by providing City agencies with access to thousands of Zipcar vehicles wholly owned, insured, and maintained by Zipcar in the New York area; we even cover the cost of gas for *Zipcar for Government* vehicles. This program has the ability to significantly reduce an agency's overhead for getting their employees to and from where they need to be.

Because of the success of the program in New York, we would love to expand both of the two products to additional City agencies and employees. Zipcar not only sees this as a sustainable measure that ties into the both the Administration's and Speaker Melissa Mark Viverito's goal of reducing emissions but also in line with Vision Zero which would reduce the number of cars on the road and the congestion associated with overcrowded streets.

Zipcar's model of round-trip car sharing is proven to support these goals – third-party validated research data shows that every Zipcar takes up to 15 privately owned vehicles off the road, reduces vehicle miles traveled and reduces personal CO_2 emissions by between 1,100 and 1,600 pounds per year.

We support the legislation at hand and look forward to continuing our relationship with the City of New York.

Testimony of Anthonine Pierre before the New York City Council Transportation Committee Int. 211 February 10th, 2015

Hello, my name is Anthonine Pierre. I was born and raised in East Flatbush and I currently live in Old Mill Basin in Brooklyn. I have lived near Utica Avenue my whole life and I know first-hand the plight of bus riders and the need for Bus Rapid Transit on the B46 bus line. I'm also a member of Riders Alliance and the Lead Organizer at the Brooklyn Movement Center — a community organizing group that brings together residents of Bed-Stuy and Crown Heights to identify issues of importance to them, build power and improve conditions in their community.

47,000 people who take the B46 on Utica Ave every day — the second highest ridership in the entire city. I wonder how many thousands of other people, like me, opt to take dollar vans because of subpar B46 service. Regardless of the time of day, it is common for buses to bunch in packs of four and five, resulting in long wait times and overcrowding. Making a choice to wait for the bus is a gamble — riders are rolling dice on whether or not we'll be on time for work, picking up children from school, or even getting to the supermarket before closing time. Me and my neighbors in Mill Basin, Flatlands, East Flatbush and Crown Heights who have chosen the reliability of dollar van service over the B46 are essentially paying a tax for living in a two-fare zone poorly served by public transportation. Paying the \$2 dollar van fare once or twice a day easily amounts to over \$100 per month. This is often paid in addition to the \$112 many of us pay for unlimited metrocards to access other buses and trains. I've witnessed firsthand how successful BRT service has been in transforming the commute on the B44 line on Nostrand and New York Avenues. A line that was once overcrowded, unreliable and extremely slow is now one of the best options to get from Bed-Stuy to Flatbush — what used to be a 30 minute ride is now takes half the time.

My neighbors and I deserve better. For me, BRT means less time on the bus, and more time with family and friends. BRT offers tangible change—it's cost-effective, it can be implemented quickly—and means that thousands of people will be better connected to the resources they need. It would be a novel and revolutionary concept for communities of color in the outer boroughs to receive the public transportation service we expect when we buy our unlimited metrocards every month. I ask you to support the passage of Intro 211 to create a BRT network across the city so that all New Yorkers have quality transit options.



TESTIMONY FROM THE ASSOCIATION FOR A BETTER NEW YORK TO THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL

February 10, 2015

The Association for a Better New York (ABNY) is a 43-year old civic organization that promotes the effective cooperation of public and private sectors to improve life for all New Yorkers.

New York City's transportation network is one without comparison across the nation and the world, transporting millions of passengers to and from work every day. Though our city strives to continue to improve services for all who live and work here, disparities exist across the system that put undue burden on the commutes of certain groups of New Yorkers more than others. In fact, more than 875,000 New Yorkers commute at least an hour each way, with two thirds of that group earning less than \$35,000 a year.

Bus Rapid Transit has emerged as a sensible solution to this transportation challenge. BRT, as a mass transit option that combines the permanence, speed, and reliability of rail with the flexibility of buses, and all at the fraction of the cost of a subway system, can be a real solution to reducing long and unreliable commutes for hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers living in our city's most underserved neighborhoods. BRT's merits lie in both its economic development and its community benefits. From a fiscal standpoint, BRT will maximize taxpayers' dollars because, at a cost of \$19 million per mile, it is far more affordable than, for example, the \$3 billion per mile cost of Phase 1 of the Second Avenue subway. Businesses will also undeniably benefit from BRT, offering employees and customers a safer, more convenient method of transportation to their place of business. From a community standpoint, BRT stands to improve the quality of life for New Yorkers of all ages. BRT can help students get to school faster and seniors and people with disabilities get quicker access to health services and hospitals. BRT can also be a resilient alternative to subway systems during massive system outages, like the ones following Hurricane Sandy.

BRT has been a proven success in dense urban areas all around the world, from Bogota Colombia, to Guangzhou China, and Select Bus Service, a limited form of BRT which has already been introduced on select corridors throughout New York City, has been warmly received by many New Yorkers because of reduced traffic volumes as well as reduced travel times.

The public benefits New Yorkers stand to gain through Bus Rapid Transit are substantial, and we believe this mass transit option should be implemented.

Testimony
of
Emily December
before the
New York City Council Transportation Committee
on
Int. 211
February 10th, 2015

Hello my name is Emily December and I am a student and college assistant at Queens College. I'm from Woodhaven, Queens and I've taken the buses along Woodhaven Boulevard for most of my life. I remember before the MTA how there was only one option-the Green Line Q11-while the Q53 zoomed past in the central lanes. I endured long lines and more irritated commuters. And today, even though we have four bus options, I still have to deal with crowded buses in the morning on my way to school. Buses are unreliable and slow--and because of that my commute is an hour and a half-twice as long as it should be.

Woodhaven Boulevard is like a freeway--in fact, it's the most dangerous streets in queens for pedestrians--and it's in my backyard. In my neighborhood--the population is increasingly getting older so we must ensure that pedestrians are not hit because they ran out of time when crossing. Or that parents have one less thing to worry about-paying the bus fare-when boarding the bus with their children. Or that a worker will be able to have more time to get ready in the AM for work. And crowded buses are a safety concern especially for women during rush hours because it can increase their chances of getting sexually harassed or assaulted.

Bus Rapid Transit is the only way to ensure improvement for everyone--especially the 30,000 bus riders who use it everyday. As a working class woman of color who is concerned for her community, I ask you to consider this bill and the impact it could have on the thousands of bus riders across the city. I represent those who have to work long hours, who go to school to learn, who take care of their families, take care of themselves, and take care of their communities. For me, Bus Rapid Transit means that I'll have more quality time at home rather than on the bus--that me and my neighbors won't have to treat our quality of life as a tradeoff for our commute. I want a better commute for the high price we pay. We must be invested in the quality of life of all of these commuters and caring about someone's well-being is a non-partisan issue. Please consider voting for Intro 211 to support Bus Rapid Transit--for the greater good of NYC and the thousands of bus riders stuck in transit.

Thank you.



New York City Council Committee on Transportation Hearing on Intro 211-2014 Testimony of Joan Byron, Director of Policy, Pratt Center jbyron@prattcenter.net 718-636-3468

Pratt Center thanks the Committee for this opportunity to testify on Bus Rapid Transit, a transit mode for which we have advocated since 2007 as the best hope for providing equitable access for the now 879,000 New Yorkers who travel over 60 minutes to work each way. Disparities in access are widening and deepening as gentrification pushes more and more families out of neighborhoods that enjoy relatively good access to the subway system, and as the de Blasio administration moves forward with rezonings that are integral to its housing plan, increasing density in neighborhoods where existing transit is already overburdened and inadequate. A new report by the NYU Rudin Center confirms our analysis of the link between transit and access to opportunity, especially for the new Yorkers who need that access most. ¹

We applaud the work of New York City's Department of Transportation, in partnership with the MTA, to build on the foundation of the seven Select Bus Service routes that have already improved trips for hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers. And we support the work of the agencies to both accelerate the implementation of new routes, and at the same time to improve upon the model and add features that will make SBS faster, more reliable, and a better experience for those who rely upon it.

We call upon the Council to support the agencies in engaging members of communities that will benefit from SBS – residents, workers, students, and seniors, as well as the institutions and businesses that need access to their employees, clients, and customers. We want to recognize DOT in particular for its willingness to respond to genuine concerns – but also urge them not to grant veto power over improvements that will serve thousands of bus riders to the much smaller number of people who don't use transit.

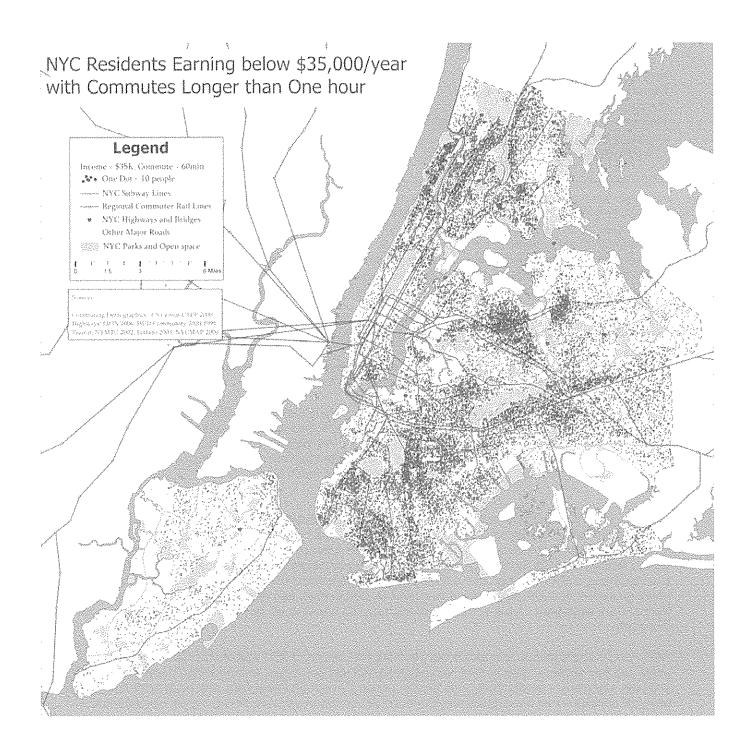
We hope that DOT and MTA will not only continue to upgrade existing bus routes to SBS but to introduce it on new corridors, making efficient connections for what are now difficult inter-borough trips, and bring transit to corridors that now lack any meaningful transit option. We identified eight such corridors in our report, *Mobility and Equity for New York's Transit-Starved* Neighborhoods. Linden Boulevard in Brooklyn is an example; a BRT route on this wide, dangerous street could connect residents of 6400 public housing units, a hospital cluster employing over 20,000 people, four north-south subway lines, and the Sunset Park waterfront – on a corridor that now has NO transit at all, not even a local bus, over much of its length.

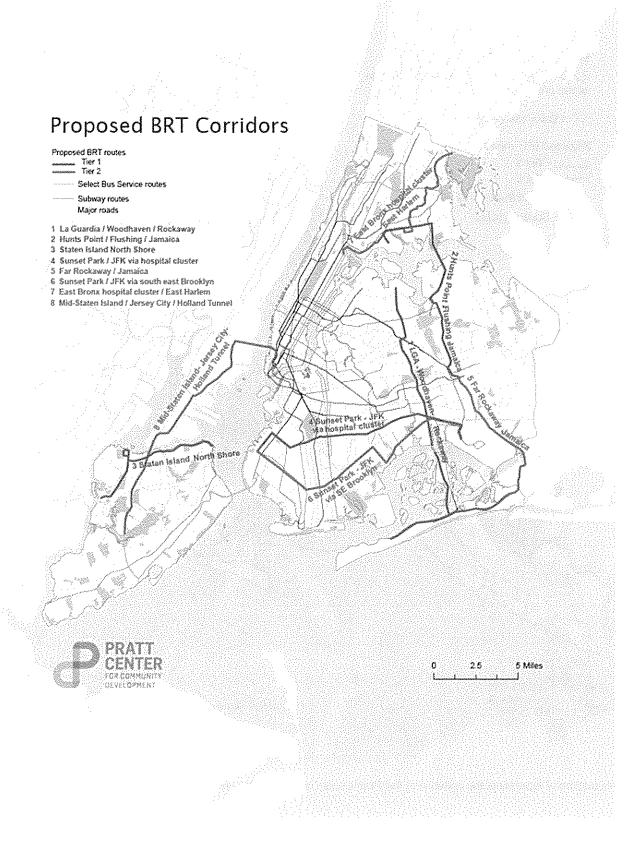
DOT should also continue to improve the planning and design of BRT stations to make them more than oversized bus shelters. SBS should have stations, not just bus stops, with protection from the weather and with amenities – newsstands, safe bicycle parking, information displays, and access for riders of all physical abilities – that make them neighborhood anchors and catalysts for economic development.

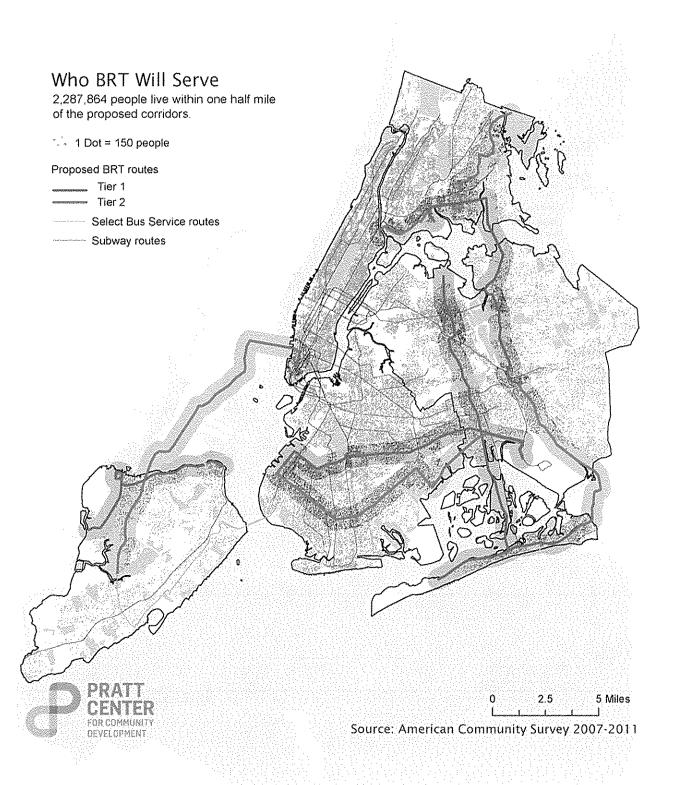
Street design and bus operations, as well as bus operator training, need to prioritize keeping SBS (and all bus routes) in service to all users, *especially* during bad weather when walking is difficult. Snow removal needs to allow buses to pull up to the curb, so that riders, especially seniors and wheelchair users, aren't forced to navigate snowbanks to get to the bus.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and discuss in depth the ways that transit disparities amplify inequality in New York City, and the ways that a robust Bus Rapid Transit system can help to address them.

¹ http://wagner.nyu.edu/rudincenter/2015/02/mobility-economic-opportunity-and-new-york-city-neighborhoods/







This testimony represents the opinions of the Pratt Center, and is not the official position of Pratt Institute.

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