

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

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HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E: YDANIS A. RODRIGUEZ
Chairperson

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A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

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Michael Rivas (sp?), Vice President
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Paul De Maria

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Stephan Bowman

Corey Bearak, Policy and Political Director
Amalgamated Transit Union

Kevin Brady
New York City Transit

[sound check, pause]

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: [off mic]and
welcome to today's hearing of the City Council
Transportation Committee. I am Ydanis Rodriguez the
Chair of the Committee of Transportation. First, let
me recognize my colleagues who are here with us
today, Council Member Kallos, Chin, Koo, Reynoso and
Richards. [pause] Today we are here to examine the
state of our bus service in New York City, and to
discuss ways in which we can speed up bus trips by
making them more efficient, and better able to serve
the nearly three million people who use buses
everyday throughout the five boroughs. Our bus
system is by far the biggest in the nation. Yet, we
have many opportunities for improvement citywide.
Many countries and cities across the world have been
innovative in finding new ways to speed trips and
improve services—service that we can draw from. This
is clear when we—when bus ridership in New York is—
New York City is declining at a time when generally
speaking urban living and public transit usage
nationwide are on the rise. Even our subway system
is not a section experiencing a record high ridership
in recent years. Unfortunately, our bus system seems

to be lagging behind. Why is this? It seems clear that in many cases New Yorkers do not view buses as fast, reliable or convenient enough for them to count on to get them where they need to go. We know that not everyone is fortunate enough to live near a subway stop. For many, the bus is sometimes the only option. Compounding this issue is that many other aging and lower-income New Yorkers live in communities where the subway system does not reach areas known as transit deserts. Today is about finding new ways to re-invigorate our bus system so it can become a more attractive option for all New Yorkers. I would like to commend the NYC Bus Coalition Transit Center Riders Alliance, the Tri-State Transportation Campaign, Transportation Alternatives and the Trans (sic) Founders Campaign for their thoughtful solutions they have proposed to these very questions in their Turnaround Report this past summer. To start, re-imagine our bus route is in-intriguing ideas especially considering many of them having changed since they were services by a street car. We have routes in 2016 that mirror population maps of the 1940s. They have not kept with where people are living or traveling today.

Building or modifying routes around where people live and where those people need to travel to is a strong first step to increase ridership and cut travel time. Second, modernizing the fare payment in boarding process. We know from experience that lining up one of—one by one at a time for the bus to pay the fare with a Metro Card or change this is needless, inefficient and outer-outer (sic). We look forward to hearing more today about how the MTA's plan for the new fare payment system to replace the Metro Card might more modernize how we ride the bus. And if there are opportunities to pilot this analogy on some key routes to analyze its impact. Within this step we must finally solve the three-fare zone that requires some New Yorkers in an area such as Southeast Queens to take two buses and a train. This is unacceptable. We need to fix it, and we need to fix it today. Meaning they are paying twice within the same trip. This needs to end because we are charge—charging work—we are charging working—working class New Yorkers for our failure to connect them to the system. We are also looking forward to hearing about how we can better leverage new technologies to improve bus—bus travel in the city. Bus Time is a

great tool that is now available citywide to allow people to see real time bus arrival information right on their phone, and the new buses Governor Cuomo recently announced will have Wi-Fi charging stations and information screens. What else can New Yorkers expect in the near future when it comes to using technology to improve their reliability and efficiency of both service, including how we can avoid the bunching of buses that occur on a ride or route throughout the city, we unfortunately regular-regularize (sic). Of course, one of the most promising improvements to bus services in recent years has been the introduction of the Select Bus Services. The MTA and the DOT have worked hard together to bring 12-12 SBAs route to our city using tools like dedicated bus lanes, and off-board fare payments to speed up bus travel times throughout the city. We look forward to hearing about future plans for SBS. Can all SBS be Rapid Bus Transits as well as lessons learned from the experiences—from experience we with SBS so far, and how we can continue to incorporate aspects of the Bus Rapid Transit System across the globe including bus box (sic) on the streets, mounted cameras on buses to

enforce bus lanes, and transit signal priority at stop lights to make our buses move more seamlessly throughout the city. New York City is well known for having one of the best public transit systems in the world. It is one of the biggest and it operates 24/7. A lot of attention gets paid to how we are going to expand and enhance our subway system to meet the needs of a growing city, and rightly so. But, as we all know, our city and the State's budget can ill afford the multi-billion dollar project that even a few stops in a station can cause. These projects are costly, time consuming and have serious impacts on neighborhoods. The most efficient way to connect transit desert in New York City is by taking a real focus to our buses. From assisting in from assisting in citywide approach and implementing solutions that we know work. We now know this because thankfully we do—we do not need to reinvent the wheel here. The answers are there in cities across the country and even here in New York City there's great, you know, great ideas in the work, and in the work. Let's be smart and deliberate and then start implementing some changes in earnest so we can make the lives of New

2 Yorkers better across the board. I would like to
3 welcome the representative of the MTA and the DOT who
4 are here with us today. Thank you for being here,
5 and for all the contributions that you do in the two
6 agencies. Before Asking the Committee Council to
7 administer the affirmation, I'd like to recognize
8 also Council Member Costa Constantinides, and now I
9 ask our committee counsel to administer the
10 affirmation, and then invite the MTA by the DOT to
11 deliver their testimony.

12 LEGAL COUNSEL: Please raise--raise your
13 right hand. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the
14 whole truth--

15 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: [interposing]
16 Sorry.

17 LEGAL COUNSEL: --and nothing but the
18 truth in your testimony before the committee today,
19 and to respond honestly to council member questions?

20 PANEL MEMBERS: [off mic]

21 LEGAL COUNSEL: Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: You may begin.

23 CRAIG CIPRIANO: Good morning Chairman
24 Rodriguez and members of the City Council. My name
25 is Craig Cipriano, and I am the Executive Vice

President for Buses at the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. Joining me today are Michael Rivas (sic), Vice President of Operations and Sarah Wyss, Senior Director of Bus Service Planning. I would first like to start off by expressing our deepest condolences to the family—family of Anna Colon, who was struck by one of our buses on Tuesday in Manhattan. At the MTA, safety is our highest priority. We firmly believe in line with the City's Vision Zero Initiative that no fatality is inevitable. We committed to proactively addressing pedestrian safety and later in my testimony I will outline some our safety initiatives. By way of background, in 2004 the City and the MTA agreed to transfer responsibility of operating all our franchise of seven private bus companies to the MTA leading to the creation of the MTA Bus Company. Subsequently, many changes have been made to bring service levels up to MTA standards resulting in 20 million additional annual riders, improved reliability and service quality. Together, the MTA had the largest bus system in North America, and our group—and represents the second—second largest transportation system in the United States surpassed

only by our own subway system. Today, the MTA operates a total of 5,025 fully accessible buses providing services to 790 million annual customers at 28 bus depots across the city, and employing over 18,000 people in our bus operations. With 237 local and limited routes, 74 express routes and Select Bus Service along 11 corridors, we carry 2.5 million passengers on an average week day. To put that into perspective, that's both the entire population of the City of Chicago. There are many challenges that come with providing reliable, quality bus service in one of the most vibrant densely populated urban areas in the world. As the New York City Department of Transportation Strategic Plan in 2016 says: With a record population of 8.5 million residents, 60 million annual tourists in a county with over four million jobs in the five boroughs, it's no wonder that New York streets and roadways are extremely congested. As a result of increased traffic and slower bus speeds, many riders choosing the subway over buses and cars and they've got to sail by both. It's important to note that although average weekly bus ridership has declined by 2.7% in 2011 to 2015, the decreases have been concentrated on routes that

overlap the subway for most or part of the route.

This is particularly true in Manhattan where traffic

congestion is terrible. Weekday ridership on most

the bus routes with high or medium subway overlap

decreased by 9.3% in 2011 to 2015 compared to an

increase of 1% on local routes with subway overlap.

Conversely, weekday ridership on MTA bus local

service, which is comprised almost entirely of routes

that have low overlap at subway routes in the outer

boroughs increased 4.1% in 2011 to 2015.

Importantly, the key to increasing fees is to

internally increase ridership as our continued

partnership in New York City DOT. Using a toolbox of

best practices, improving bus lanes, bus lane

enforcement, first vaults (sic), traffic signal

priority, greatest spacing between bus time, real

time bus information, and off-board fare collection,

and all door boarding on SBS routes, we can reverse

the trend of declining ridership. In fact, together

with New York City DOT we have already successfully

done so on certain routes, and that I will address

shortly. For the benefit of those in the room, who

may not be familiar with division of responsibilities

between the MTA and New York City DOT, DOT maintains

the roadways and road mapping, sidewalks and street furniture such as bus shelters, way finding signs, new countdown clocks and benches that are all part of the bus riders' experience. The single best illustration of our partnership with New York City DOT is our Select Bus Service or SBS, which has increased bus speeds by 10 to 25%. One example is the BS-41 route where average ridership increased by 28% after implementation of SBS. Buses on the BS-41 now travel at an average speed of 9.5 miles per hour as compared to 7.8 miles per hour beforehand, an improvement of 22%. Bus lanes and other traffic improvements utilized on SBS routes have also benefitted local bus routes along Shay Corridor such as the eastbound BX-15 and the—and M-100, which share a corridor with the M-60 SBS along 125th Street in Manhattan. This has shown travel time reductions of 7 to 20% since bus lanes were added to 125th Street. Vital features of SBS include off-board fare collection, all-door boarding, camera enforced bus lanes, and distinctive branding. Customers purchase or pay for tickets from the on-street furnishing, and the board an S—and SBS bus using all doors. Given the high ridership of most SBS routes, this approach

greatly reduced road time resulting in reduction in overall travel time. It's important to note that off-board fare collection and all-door boarding is most beneficial on routes with heavy ridership. However, these features come at significant costs. The per route cost for SBS typically requires \$3 million in capital costs primarily for off-board fare machines, and \$2.3 million annually associated recurring costs with enforcing fare payment, revenue collection and maintenance of on-street fare machines. We serve over 100 miles of prioritized bus lanes across the city. There are still ample opportunity to integrate bus priority initiatives, and to street redesign projects. As New York City DOT seeks to prioritize mobility by allocating more street space for walking, biking and buses, we embrace the opportunity extended by them to allocate our largest share of New York's congested streets to bus service. In the last eight years we have launched 12 SBS bus routes on 11 corridors with several routes in development. The most recent is the La Guardia Link Q70 SBS, which began on September 25th, and provides direct service between La Guardia Airport and two regional transit hubs that connect

the five southern (sic) lines, the Long Island Railroad and seven bus lines. Expanding the use of TSP, is another is another key element in our partnership in New York City's DOT. As New York City DOT made the traffic signals capable of communicating with our buses, we rolled out the necessary on-board infrastructure on seven corridors with two more launching soon. Our goal is to install TSP enhancements on the rest of the fleet beginning in 2018. Based on our experience with SBS, the combined use of bus lanes, TSP and off-board fare collection significantly improved bus fees on high ridership routes. As part of our effort to improve reliability the MTA is constantly re-evaluating bus routes in order to serve areas where the demand is higher. To ensure adequate schedule of frequency and travel time on all bus routes, the MTA reviews express buses annually whereas is local, limited and SBS weekly routes are reviewed every two years or as issues come to our attention through real time data and feedback. We then adjust capacity and running time accordingly. We invest \$7 million each year on route optimization to account for increased travel times, which are related to decreasing bus fees. We also look at

available data from fare cars and other sources to identify travel and operational issues as well as underserved and growing markets. Service has been enhanced to introduce each several growing-to reach several growing markets, and developing neighborhoods that provide important connections between new residential communities, commercial development areas, and transportation hubs such as the airport, the Williamsburg, Greenpoint and Long Island City Waterfront, the Gateway Center Mall, the Hutchinson Metro Center and Manhattan's Far West Side.

Ridership has been steadily increase our routes servicing these locations and continued growth is expected as more development occurs along the corridors. In our routes serving La Guardia Airport weekday ridership increased 8.1% in 2011 to 2015. In 2010, we undertook a comprehensive redrawing of local bus service in Co-Op City in the Bronx including the reorganization of routes in order to provide simpler, more direct service. Specifically we—we—we rerouted the BX26 from Bartow Avenue. We split the BX28 into two routes, we rerouted the BX30 out of Ash Loop, and we reorganized the QBX1 into the BX23 and the Q50 Limited. In response to feedback from the community,

a neighborhood study was undertaken in the fall of 2013 to assess and propose any revisions to bus service in Co-Op City. The study recommended minor changes to what we had already implemented and found that overall the more direct routes better serve our customers. Following this, we undertook a study of bus service in Northeast Queens. We are now undertaking an ambitious study looking at both express and local bus service on Staten Island. Based on our experiences we are open to redrawing the bus map to better serve current markets. One goal would be to concentrate service so that we have higher frequency routes on major streets rather than a multitude of low frequency variations. We are also striving to increase reliability by splitting up long routes. In January, 2017 we plan to split the M5 route into two shorter routes that would help mitigate the effects of delays, and provide more reliable service. We are considering other routes as well particularly as part of the Staten Island Study. Other methods we employ to improve route running times include reducing the number of stops on the route by increasing the spaces between them, and making minor route changes to straighten out routes

by reducing the number of turns where feasible.

While we realize that doing so may cause inconvenience to some customers, these are proven ways to improve bus speed and reliability. One recently implemented and successful move out is the X21. Launched in September of 2014 as a super express service, the X21 maximizes the time spent on the freeway, uses greater bus stop spacing and minimizes mileage on congested Manhattan streets and the number of on-street turns. It is the peak hour only service that has grown nearly 80% since its creation has yet to show any sign of tapering off. Our implementation of real time bus location data has transformed the way we do business while enhancing our customers' experience. MTA Bus Time is the live bus tracking service that gives customers the location of their bus. We have the choice of Smart Phone, red or text message by using enhanced global position device mounted inside each bus. That information is transmitted wirelessly through a server using on-board server equipment. The server integrates bus location data with bus route information, scheduled and map files to create useful information for our customers. In June 2015, we

augmented the mobile website for MTA Bus Time with a downloadable app for Apple and Android phone. We work closely with our customers to solicit feedback on the MTA Bus Time app, its user interface and functionality. One of the most frequent requests we have received was to provide the expected times of arrival of the bus at the stop. In addition to already available bus is X stops away information. We were happy to introduce time based predictions both in our app and on the website for Bronx customers in the first quarter of 2015 followed by a full citywide rollout of this great feature in the fall of 2015. The usage averages more 4.5 SMS texts per month. In year to date about 49 million page loads of the But Time website across six million new visitors. Beyond MTA Bus Time, we offer the MTA Trip Planner, the Weekender, My MTA Alerts, and the Twitter handle at nyctbus to help our customers plan their trips. An example of the proactive approach we have taken to service management is the enhanced development of the web based tool referred to as Back Tracking. This allows our dispatchers, route managers and schedulers to have the reports they need to monitor and adjust service in real time. Building

on the success of MTA Bus Time, Bus Track manages to intelligently repackage the vehicle location video, generated by MTA Bus Time in a format that enables street level dispatchers and managers to make critical real time decision to better manage service. With Bus Track, dispatchers can readily see which buses are on schedule, behind, ahead or not in service. Dispatchers can also identify when buses have a potential to bunch, and can take appropriate action to reduce or eliminate bunching significantly. We have recently completed the deployment of a mobile version of Bus Track to all our on-street service line dispatchers via iPads in all boroughs. Modernizing our Fair Payment system can improve the efficiency of our bus operations as well as the convenience of fair payment for our customers. In the 20 years since we introduced the MTA—the Metro Card, transit agencies across the globe have subscribed to Pack and Go Electronic Payment System that allow customers to use their own devices by waving a Smart Phone, a bank card or another payment device over contactless readers to pay their fare. In April of this year we issued a new fare payment RFP for the solicitation of design build open

architecture, open payment proposals. We want to make sure that what we procure is built on open technologies and standards and offers enough flexibility to serve our customers for the long term. As mentioned earlier, we've been successful to date with the implementation of all-door board on SBS routes, using off-board fare collection systems and pay for their seats. Transitioning to the use of all-door boarding using the new fare payment, however, presents a number of technical and practical challenges, primarily whether electronic payment verification in an open payment system is feasible or cost effective. This is why we are initially exploring emerging technological approaches to on-board fare collection in electronic payment validation on our SBS route. This pilot effort is a critical first step that will help facilitate an assessment of the proposed approach to all-door boarding to ensure proper functionality, efficiency—efficiency of on-board fare collection, and utility of the system in the demanding New York City transit bus service environment. While we clearly recognize the appeal of all all-door boarding on a selective basis, we must experience—exercise diligence in

considering all the operational and cost implications in addition to the benefits. And the valuing of possible future decisions that stand beyond SBS routes. One specific concern with respect to all-door boarding on regular bus service is fare evasion. In this regard, it must be noted that the MTA does not have primary enforcing authority for fare evasion on our subways and buses. This responsibility lies with another one of our key partners, the NYPD. The NYPD also enforces the rules of the road including bus lane regulations, which are critical to improving bus speeds in the city. We attend the NYPD traffic stat meetings held quarterly at One Police Plaza, coordinate details for major events, and attend planning meetings at local police precincts. An example of a recent joint initiative includes partnering with the local police department to conduct parking and regulation enforcement in and around the Ridgewood Terminal in Brooklyn. We are also working to improve our customers' on-board experience. In March 2016, Governor Cuomo announced that the MTA would add new customer facing amenities to its fleet including USB track reports, free customer Wi-Fi, digital information screens, and a

brand new look. This is a vital part of the state's effort to significantly transform and modernize the MTA, its infrastructure and its fleet to meet the growing demands of the 21st Century. The new high quality LCD Information Screen will provide our customers with information upcoming stocks, available transfers, weather, and other service related information in an audible and a visual format on screens mounted inside our buses. USB charging ports will be located overhead on all express buses. On local service buses, the charging ports will be conveniently located throughout the bus, typically behind forward facing passenger seats. On-board Wi-Fi hot spots will be provided hotspots will be provided to customers utilizing the latest LP based cellular technology. Through our Capital Program, the MTA continues to invest in its facilities and new buses. In January of '15, we reopened our Mother Clara Hale Depot in Harlem. This new depot is one of the most environmentally friendly facilities of its kind. Last October, we broke ground for a new 300,000 square foot state-of-the-art bus command center. The green facility will come with technology advances and improvements to bus communications and

coordination. Importantly, it will house the necessary infrastructure to operate the new digital bus radio system, which will replace our outdated analog radio equipment and improve communication. With new buses in the fleet, our main buses between fare (sic) is among the highest ever recorded, and we'll receive—and we will receive an additional 2,014 new designed buses between now and 2020. No discussion about the MTA will be complete without highlighting the subject of safety, which remains our highest priority. With the proliferation of pedestrians, cyclists, and growing traffic congestion our overall safety strategy reflects our commitment to improve our safety performance. The following three-pronged approach has been implemented: Vision Zero training to engage our bus operators on safety issues and identifying and address behaviors that indicate a potential risk. Implementation of safety technologies and traffic engineering streetscaping strategies in collaboration in collaborate—in collaboration with our partner New York City DOT. And public outreach to educate pedestrian and cyclists about safe behavior, particularly when engaging with MTA buses. Vision Zero training

emphasizes the current challenges of managing distracted pedestrians and cyclists. The training curriculum uses on-board bus cameras to show real situations and features videos and plans for safer staff and the NYPD. Since August of 2016 over 8,500 bus operators have attended our Vision Zero training and all bus operators will be trained by April 2017. While we acknowledge that there is still work to do, we are encouraged by the fact that incidents involving pedestrians and business decreased by 26% between 2013 and 2015. Importantly, MTA managers continually engage bus operators on safety and security issues on the road and at the depot to promote—to promote safety and get constructive feedback. Currently, almost 50% of our buses are equipped with cameras, which are intended to create a deterrent against criminal activity and also provide a critical record for use in actual investigations. All new buses will be delivered with cameras. By the end of this year we will begin compiling both a pedestrian turn warning system and a collision or boarding system. The pedestrian turn warning system is automatically triggered when the bus makes a right or left hand turn activating the external audio

warning that alerts pedestrians and cyclists that the bus is turning. External speed zones fall within an area that does not block the bus operator's view, and the speaker volume takes into consideration the ambient sound level in the vicinity of the bus. The collision avoiding system uses front and side facing cameras to provide an audible and visual alert to the bus operator when the system detects the possibility of an imminent collision. The scope of detection is rendered to the forward and forward facing sides of the bus. The system is in pre-production trials now, and it does have the potential to be an early warning system that could assist operators in advance of an toward event. In sum, from optimizing bus routes to intelligent signal priority to real time service management to off-board fare collection the list of initiatives and enhancements to improve bus service continually grow. As an organization buses is working to promote the most efficient strategies and procurement sourcing mechanisms to ensure we remain as nimble as possible for the future. Yet, these advancements—advancements can only offer so much in terms of bus speeds and travel time. The economic impact of traffic

congestion on the city and the region is significant. Traffic moving throughout the city is expected to grow over the foreseeable future. The future of the city and the region depends on us pushing forward initiatives that provide a combination of trans service enhancements and relief from road congestion. This includes the increased prioritization of buses on our roads through bus lanes and lane enforcement. All of us here in this room have the same goal, to improve bus speeds, service reliability and travel time. The MTA looks forward to our continued work with New York City DOT, NYPD and the City Council to achieve these objectives together. Chairman Rodriguez and members of the City Council, I thank you for this opportunity to speak about this joint goal to improve bus service in New York City.

COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: Thank you.

Good morning Chairman Rod--[coughs] excuse me--Good morning, Chairman Rodriguez and members of the Committee. I'm Polly Trottenberg, Commissioner for New York City DOT and a member of the MTA Board, and I'm pleased to be testifying here today on behalf of Mayor de Blasio. I'm joined by Eric Beaton, our Director of Transit Development and Jeff Lynch,

Assistant Commissioner for Intergovernmental and Community Affairs. I also want to thank you for bringing us together today to discuss improving bus service in New York City and I, too, want to thank the—the Transit advocates, Transit Center, Riders Alliance, Straphangers, Transportation Alternatives, and Tri-State Transportation Campaign for the valiant—the very compelling report [coughs] Turnaround: Fixing New York City's Buses. I'm very pleased to be here today to talk about how we're working with the MTA to improve bus service in our city. And as you've heard today, more and more people are choosing to live and work in New York. Right now our population is booming, over 8.5 million people. Last year we saw nearly 60 million tourists. Our subway system, as we all know, is bursting at the seam. Last year, we saw 1.76 billion rides on our subways, which is an increase of over 150 million annual rides since 2010. I think the MTA deserves great credit for accommodating this growth at a time when resources to support that growth have been very constrained. We all know nothing moves people as quickly and efficient as the subway, but unfortunately I think we all know we'll unlikely to

see any major expansions beyond the Second Avenue Subway in the near future. And that's why I think we all agree we need to focus right now on improving bus service. As my colleague from New York City Transit mentioned, one of the biggest challenges bus riders are facing is that average bus speeds have been falling for years reaching the lowest ever average of 7.5 miles per hour over the course of the day. Over 10% is lower than 25 years ago, and while there are nearly 2.5 million bus trips a day, ridership has been following a downward trend for two decades with a decline of nearly 6% over the past ten years—past ten years. It's true mainly in the densest areas of Manhattan and Brooklyn. This decline has happened at time when I've said population and job growth, tourism, subway ridership and cycling have all skyrocketed. So DOT and the city we are very focused on work with the MTA on how we can reverse these trends for several critical reasons. First, as our city continues to grow, we have a compelling need to achieve a more efficient as well as a more sustainable use of our limited roadway space. We must continue to encourage the most efficient and

sustain able modes, walking and cycling, and we all agree we should make the bus system work better.

Second, the City believes we have a duty to equitably serve the millions of New Yorkers who rely on buses. As our city's economy has surged rising housing costs to push many New Yorkers to live further from the city's employment hubs and subway connections. To fulfill the promise of equal opportunity, the City must continue to improve access to jobs, education and essential services for low and moderate income New Yorkers, for seniors and people with disabilities. I'd really to emphasize the de Blasio's Administration commitment to enhancing transit choices for New Yorkers who are not well served by the subways or need accessible transit options. [coughs] As my colleague mentioned, as many people do not know, but the city does pay for a significant share of MTA's bus operations. So we also have a financial incentive to see the MTA's buses operate as efficiently as possible, as well as a duty to city taxpayers to be sure their dollars are well spent. [coughs] I think Craig gave you a good history of the creation of the MTA Bus Company and, you know, it's been a great improvement of service,

and I'll just highlight again, though, the city does cover a-a good share of those costs, a payment that's increased 29% since 2011. The City is now contributing. Last year \$367 million towards MTA bus. I'd also like to talk I think about the jointly run and highly successful MTA and DOT Select Bus Service program. I'm proud to say under de Blasio we've more than doubled our pace of rolling out new SBS routes. We now have a total of--well, we have routes on 11 corridors. Since last summer we've launched four new routes, 86th Streets--well, 86th Bronx, Flushing, Jamaica, Utica Avenue, and most recently the Q70 La Guardia link, as Craig mentioned. Together the 11 SBS corridors now in place provide over 300,000 daily rides, about 12% of city bus trips and you can see our map here showing the routes we've done, the routes that are in progress, the routes we're--we're thinking about. Later this year we'll launch 23rd Street SBS and we expect to also break ground on construction for the Woodhaven Boulevard SBS, one of three potential routes for 2017. Additionally, under Local Law 36 of 20--of 2015, championed by Council Member Lander, DOT will begin studying areas in need of better transit. Out of

this we'll develop our vision for the next set of SBS routes with the MTA, and we'll also consider other longer term transit projects. Well, while we continue to aggressively pursue the expansion of SBS, we also recognize the need to improve local bus service citywide. I'd like to lay out a number of the tools that we've used effectively on SBS routes, some of which can also be used to improve local bus service. First, we need to install more dedicated bus lanes. When I started at DOT, our city had 73 miles of dedicated bus lanes. Under Mayor de Blasio, we've installed 24 miles of dedicated bus lanes in some of the most congested corridors of the state. We plan to install 11 more miles by end of 2017, bringing the total up to 108 miles up nearly 50% from end of--since the end of 2013. When DOT installs dedicated bus lanes, we use paint, signage and bus bulbs to improve operations and customer service, but we also hand-in-hand with elected officials, community boards, local merchants and neighborhood institutions to balance the traffic and parking concerns. DOT has continued to innovate on bus lane design by testing a baller (sic) protected bus lane on 23rd Street. Median bus lanes are planned for

Woodhaven Boulevard, and we hope to roll out some creative solutions in the South Bronx in the coming months. We also use bus lanes in more targeted ways to improve local bus service such as on Livingston Street in Brooklyn. It will be a short Q jump bus lane that helps speed buses through congested intersections such as the one we implemented this summer on East 97th Street.

Number two, we need to continue building out our Bus Lane Camera Enforcement Program. We currently use camera enforcement on nine routes, and plan to expand to the 16 routes over the coming years as it's been authorized by the State Legislature. Camera enforcement is a key component to ensure only buses use our dedicated lanes during posted hours. This is especially important in New York where a fully separated bus lane is generally feasible. So camera enforcement must serve as that virtual separation. We understand that NYPD resources are limited. So cameras provide consistent certain enforcement for those who do not follow the rules. The result as we've seen again and again is that compliance is achieved and violations go down significantly after activation of bus lane cameras.

In fact, after a camera is in place for a year, we've seen bus lane violations decline by 33% on certain corridors and up to 87% on others, and that translates into time savings for bus passengers.

Number three, we're continuing to roll out Transit Signal-Transit Signal Priority, TSP, with MTA to keep buses moving. As the Chairman mentioned, TSP is a technology on the bus that communicates with our traffic lights to shorten red lights, or hold the green light when a bus is approaching. We've implemented TSP on seven corridors including four in the last year, improving bus travel times by up to 15%. We're in the process of activating TSP on two more routes, the M60 SBS from 125th Street to La Guardia, and the Q44 SBS from the Bronx through Flushing to Jamaica. These should both go live next spring. Activating TSP requires several steps from DOT and the MTA. First, the traffic signals must be equipped with the necessary hardware, which I'm glad to say DOT has now installed on all 12,900 of our signals. Next year, the team must perform engineering analysis on each specific corridor to assess feasibility. Last, the MTA must install and program equipment on their buses before TSP can be

activated. Both as engineering-engineering analysis and equipment installation on buses continues to move forward, but I think both DOT and the MTA can do more here to expedite TSP's rollout throughout the city.

Number four, working with the MTA we're continuing the critical work of making bus routes safer for riders, pedestrians and cyclists as part of the Mayor's Vision Zero Initiative. As we all know, we saw a fatal crash involving a bus just this week on the Lower East Side, and we join you in grieving over the loss of life for Anna Colon. We always grieve over the loss of live, and that put fire under us to continue to do our work to make our streets safer. In the past few years, we've worked with the MTA to identify hash-high crash locations, and re-route buses or redesign intersections to increase safety. One location that's received a lot of attention late is the intersection of Myrtle and Wyckoff Avenues on the border of Bushwick and Ridgewood. While we work with the MTA to re-route buses to avoid more problematic turns allowing us to redesign this dangerous intersection with fewer conflicts and more pedestrian space. I'd like to also walk you through another example of our bus

route work. To enhance safety would also improve the experience for bus riders. We can look up here at the board, one we're proud of, Third Avenue and 57th Street. It's been the site of some of the most high crash locations in Manhattan with a heavy volume of right turns including buses headed to the Queensboro Bridge. To improve safety here we created a Bus Q jump at 55th Street, added a bus stop, created a bus boarding island, and shortened the crosswalk to make bus boarding more accessible. We also improved the Third Avenue bus lane including added red paint, and moving the bus lane away from the curb from 38th Street to 55th Street.

Craig, you've heard from Craig about the many things the MT is—the MTA is doing to improve bus service. I—I certainly want to emphasize some of the things I think the city makes a high priority. One of the biggest delays, as we've talked about today in bus service is the time it takes for all riders to board and pay their fares especially in densities like New York. If the MTA moves forward with the procurement and development of its next—of its next generation of fare payment media, I want to emphasize how important this is to our city, and ask you on the

Council to please be actively involved in this important discussion. This change will be as significant as the city's transition from the subway token to the Metro Card. This is going to impact the commute of millions of New Yorkers for decades to come. It should be a high priority for all of us to care about our citizens here in New York and how they're going to get to and from work and school everyday. There are four interrelated components that need to be part of the new system. First, we need to have contact with fare payment where riders can just tap instead of dipping or swiping a card. Second, we need to have on-board fare collection installed on our buses so we can rely less on the complicated and expensive installation of off-board fare collection machines on our sidewalk. Third, it's imperative that the new system support all of our boarding, and last we agree we need to have good enforcement to ensure appropriate fare compliances. But it is time for New York to join other leading cities around the world where bus drivers have been benefitting from all-door boarding and contactless fare payment for years. San Francisco and London have been using all-door board since 2012, and this

is quickly being established as the best practice.

An analysis of San Francisco's experience with all-door boarding found a reduction in boarding time of 38%. All-door boarding also leads to a more consistent, less variable dwell time to the stops.

This is an important factor in reducing bus bunching and gaps in bus service, helping to make service more reliable and predictable. I do know that all-door board raises fare evasion question for the MTA, and we do not want to see the MTA's bottom line affected.

When SBS was first implemented, the DOT and MTA had a lot of concerns about fare evasion. Our MTA

colleagues deserve credit for the use of eagle teams on SBS routes to reduce fare evasion from around 15% with tradition on-board payment to as low as 3% with off-board payment. And the Eagle Teams achieved the

majority of their success through educating the public rather than issuing summonses. This

enforcement approach also allows the drivers to focus on the job of operating their vehicles safely and efficiently without distraction. We should leave

fair payment from clients to MTA's Eagle Team

inspectors who are experienced enforcement

professionals better equipped and able to focus on

this task. To improve bus service, the Turnaround Report also calls on the MTA to redesign the bus routes. The City the MTA taking a fresh look at bus routes. To that end, DOT is working together with the Department of City Planning and MTA to think about changing transit needs in the context of population growth and economic development.

I want to close by emphasizing that we need your help. Council partnership and support is essential to moving more bus projects forward. You know your districts and you represent thousands of constituents who are in need of better transit. Implementing these changes on the ground such as dedicated bus lanes can be slow and difficult. The cost of painted concrete or even engineering is not the limiting factor for the case of implementation. Rather, it is the time and difficulty involved in garnering political and community support for the necessary changes to our streets and to bus service. I want to thank the Council for inviting me to testify here today. I look forward to answering your questions.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you both and both of you and both our uses, and again for me I

choose to lead this conversation coming from a positive way. So I just was expect, you know, to get for that approach to be mutual. You know, I don't want to be just only on top of saying that it is not work, but it's more, you know, celebrating things that we have done, and be open to do better. And you also have been—we have to come from identifying areas where there's challenges. I don't believe in like this is the issue. I believe that, you know, we always have to proactive and—and be innovative when it comes to solutions. Because if not, you know, we will leave government, and all the people that will come and take our seats, and take your responsibilities, and the question is going to be will we be able to a great transportation system? Not for us, but for the future New Yorkers. Which is the area in the city that both MTA and DOT have identified as the one that has the worst bus services and, therefore, required to put more attention and more investments? [pause]

CRAIG CIPRIANO: I think in regard to and your question about worst bus service, you know, we look at—we look at bus service across the city holistically, and I even take a look at the way the

system is operating. The way it's operating as a-as a multi-modal transportation network. I think recently we have taken upon some service area taking a look at some of the service areas as I mentioned in the script, Co-Op City, Northeast Queens and Staten Island being three of those areas. I think we're open and we've been collaboratively with DOT to look at other areas that will require closer scrutiny. And, you know, at this point, I would just ask if Sarah has anything she wanted to add to that?

SARAH WYSS: [pause] I think we really-- when we're looking at areas to improve, we really look at two things: How many people are we going to help, and what can be done in that area? And every route, every neighborhood even if a street is a completely unique creature, and it needs its own tailored solution.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Does the MTA have like a five or ten-year plan on how to improves bus service in New York City so that you have a team of people that you know are going out and collecting data. You know, knowing those challenges and be able to pull--pull some ideas? Or do--do you inherit because I know some of you are new in your

responsibility. Others have been there for years, but the agency per se didn't plan their, you know, very consistent that we can say there's like a five-year plan that we have invested resources to have a better vision for improving.

[background comments, pause]

CRAIG CIPRIANO: So-so for sure we—we have—we have a vision on city bus service. A lot of that vision was expressed in the testimony as far as what—what we can partner with DOT and invest. You know, moving forward on our SBS program, moving forward on our customer mailers as well as continuing to evaluate that service. I believe recently Council Member Lander had put forth a proposal to—to do a join study with DOT and the MTA. I'm looking at our future SBS routes. I think, you know, we're currently part of that process.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: I—I just again keeping my nose to the positive, I just want to say that I believe it is important to get like a plan, like a five or ten-year plan, whatever timing, time frame again so that if anyone knew you just joined the agency that you could say there is something that we have. You know, it's that we will ask you guys

hey can you send your five-year plan, or to be able to say how can we look at it? How can we analyze it? Because, you know, in a great close level of collaboration between I can say myself and the team from the, you know, the MTA, you know, we've been able to say even at a local level. And I know that you will hear from all the council members here because this is a citywide issue. But in my district let's say we have M100. M100 was only going through Broadway. We have thousands of senior citizens who live Tenth-Tenth Avenue. They didn't have access to buses there. We worked with the MTA. We were able to get the MTA to help us to get the M100 to make a right turn at Dyckman. So now we have the M100 just going and covering like, you know, seven blocks, connecting with thousands of senior citizens. Many of them disabled people, but they have access. They can now walk like more than five blocks. And my thing is as we were able to, you know, come together and work with a plan, it was, you know, a great thing that we did it together. But, you know, those are the type of things that I say I will do like every periodically five or ten-year assessment where we have identified. You know, this is area that deserve

for us to put a look, you know, and bring additional buses and move buses faster. People living in the area in the South Bronx. It's not that—they don't have another access. Just imagine like a principal a teacher who works in one of the schools in South Bronx, and they have to visit five or four schools. If they don't have a car, there's no train that connects many of those schools there. So buses is the only thing that they have there. That's, you know, I'm all about being sure. Craig, I know that you have a lot of information. You have a lot of data. The question is can we, you know, work with a plan to say this is a five-year plan that we will buy service your MTA and DOT together? That I hope the City has this conversation about how to improve the buses not only right now, but five years from now in 2050-2055. SBS, how M12 crossing from the first one, I believe the first and SBS that MTA was with the city and they did it as a pilot project years ago, connecting hundreds of thousands of people from Inwood all the way through Co-Op City, and going through a corridor. What—what is holding for the [buzzing] for the SBS not to be transformed as the Bus Rapid—as the Rapid Bus Transit, as the BRT? What

can we do? Because this is not reinventing the wheel. You know you already have done 50% of the work, right? The area is designated just for the buses there during the rush hour. What is holding MTA and the DOT to say we can turn? And I was mentioning one of the many because there's already SBS and numbers of them throughout the city, and we know that the Bus Rapid Transit they are required to bring more technology in the signal process. You know to redesign the waiting area, the pending system. So, but this is not creating another Bus Rapid Transit because the SBS is already there. So what is holding the city not to see most of those SBS to be converted as Rapid Bus Transit?

SARAH WYSS: [pause] The BX12, requested first as BX2 be implemented. It has been a great success for along-along Fordham Road. However, we have implemented—we implemented the BX12 taking into account the other uses of Fordham Road. It does have bus lanes, which have been extremely successful with the camera enforcement. As far as making large bus stations similar to what you do see in other cities, the big problem we have is sidewalk space. We have a lot of pedestrians. We have limited sidewalk space.

By doing this SBS method where we still off-board fare payments, but no physical structure, which is station, we're able to use the environments that we have in the city.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: [off mic] I remember Vice President Biden when he came to La Guardia and said this is like a third world nation airport. So when you see the beauty of or images of BRT in Brazil and Columbia and Mexico and Europe it's like really putting all the—investing all the resources to move people, you know, faster for them to go to work enforcing the law putting all the technology. It's like a train and my thing is, you know, people are relying on our buses, three million people, and we have buses like, you know, it's like at five miles per an hour that they're moving. You've been doing a great job, you know, on starting analyzing working with the BRT. My thing is the SBS—and I would just say just in one area. You can—you can look at it citywide. My approach would be can we the DOT or MTA do a study to transform all SBS as BRT because most of—many of those—of those aspects that you have included at the SBS are already part of the BRT. So what is holding when it comes to increasing

the investment to say no one is thinking about a new BRT in Queens and Brooklyn? Let's take a whole comprehensive approach for transforming all SBS as BRT.

COMMISSIONER TROTTEMBERG: I'm—I'm happy to jump in that, and again I—I want to emphasize I think in terms of study we did a big study on SBS in 2009, and I take your point Mr. Chairman. We need to take a fresh look. I think the study now that the Council has authorized us to do thanks to Council Member Lander is going to give us that opportunity. I think in our experience and—and, you know, I think Sarah said it, you know, every street in New York for better or for worse presents its own unique challenges. We don't actually have in many parts of the city that don't have subway service enormous wide streets where you can easily put in a fully offset dedicated BRT system. I think what we have come up with, and I think we're all very proud of our work because we've done it at a reasonable cost in a way where we've been I think minimally disruptive in terms of traffic, in terms of sidewalks, in terms of pedestrians. We've gotten some great results with SBS. I think what we're talking about today is how

we can bring some of those elements citywide, and continue to up our game on certain routes. But I will confess one of the routes that we've talked about--we have some of the advocates in the room here--is Woodhaven where we wanted to get much closer to a BRT type system. I think it's no secret. That's certainly proved controversial. We've been having a lot of intense discussion about it for over a year. The price tag has gone up quite a bit. So there are definitely challenges in taking those next big steps, and working to do it. There's no--there's no disagreement on our part, but if you can get more dedicated bus lanes, and better quality amenities for passengers, of course, we want to do that. But definitely on the--you know, often very clogged and sometimes narrow and complicated streets of New York sometimes that--that--that definitely has its challenges.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Great. And--and I have to disagree. I mean not just disagree like we need to do better on working in an expedited process to bring as many BRT as possible to New York City. The plan that we have is too slow. We are thinking about well here we have--we have the whole plan in

terms of looking at one. Yeah, we can look. We just have another one put aside just for now. It's too slow to connect people that they only rely on buses. I do believe that the SBS it's a great, it's a good thing. But my thing I'm all about when you look at the images, videos share information about really our BRT in places let say such as in Brazil or Europe think about the info we have already ours being only that are used for—used for buses that are rush hour. It's all about the signal for the buses to be moving quickly. It's all about redesigning the sidewalk. It's about payment—the payment system for even at the SBS. You know, we can. We've got to. We have citizens, and it's change and improvement. But I hope that we don't see like you know like a pushback as, you know, while we are on the SBS it's, you know. I think that we should be—we should have a more aggressive plan because the numbers of New Yorkers that use buses. We're talking about three million New Yorkers. And the SBS is probably one of those that we can celebrate. You know, MTA, DOT, the City, the Council. It takes everyone. We can take credit and say it's a great thing that we have done it. But most of the work have been done in those SBS. Why

not to invest to transform those SBS as BRT? And I don't want—you know, I don't want to go back and forth, but it's more I want at least to put it, you know, in your head to see how—how can we continue? I know that it is in your interest. I'm not saying that we disagree on the important lanes for buses. But for me it's about—it's about money. It's about how we allocate the money because what I— In a former conversation to some people about improving buses, while people say one of the challenges that we have is traffic, is traffic. That's what I heard from many people, in-site and off-site agencies. Well, SBS give you already the tools. You already went through the community board. You already been with those who oppose, and we've already been able to say here we have four our team of SBS. (sic) Now, let's work to continue putting more tools to—to turn SBS as BRT. My last question, and then I'm going to be calling my colleagues and then coming back, is with the RFP. You just said that MTA already put out the RFP. Can you share with us this public information? What is the process right now? How many have responded to the—to the RFP, and what is in—what are the criteria that we should expect, you

know, for whoever get those bids to improve the payment system, the bus payment system they will—they're responsible for, and how much money are involved in this RFP?

CRAIG CIPRIANO: You know, unfortunately because that's an open RFP, that's currently being negotiated, I really can't go into many of the details of that RFP. So I—I would leave it at that at this point.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: [off mic] How many are there? (sic)

CRAIG CIPRIANO: There are current negotiations going on right now between the proposals and the MTA as we speak.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: [off mic] And how much are the costs? (sic)

CRAIG CIPRIANO: Unfortunately, I can't speak to costs at this point. It's an open negotiation.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: But that's when we want to say open process when you announce it, when you put an RFPs that put—the only job that you know. Like I'm not saying—I'm not coming—I'm not

2 asking for details. I'm asking about what is, you
3 know, we are all involved and committed.

4 CRAIG CIPRIANO: I'm—I'm sorry. Are you
5 asking for sort of an order of magnitude of what that
6 new fare payment will cost? Is that what you're
7 saying?

8 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: No, I'm asking—we
9 talked about the cost and I'm asking the total amount
10 when you put the RFP out there for whoever will
11 respond, how much is the amount of the dollars in
12 that RFP? What is the total amount for that RFP?

13 CRAIG CIPRIANO: [pause] So I'm sorry.
14 The—the exact cost of what the—the payment will end
15 up with is being negotiated. However, you know,
16 engineering estimates we have moving forward into the
17 procurement are somewhere in of a billion dollars in
18 that neighborhood.

19 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: How much?

20 CRAIG CIPRIANO: One billion I believe.

21 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: One billion
22 dollars, and what about the criteria because again,
23 and is being fair. I'm not asking for things that
24 you cannot share with us. When you put up—it was an
25 open document before, you know, we knew what it is.

Like this is something that you're doing because you want to attract, you know, the best corporation that will respond. What is that those—whoever will get the RFP, who are they responsible for?

CRAIG CIPRIANO: Again, I apologize. I really can't to selection criteria as it's an open procurement.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Do you believe that the city could pursue in striving to consciously reverse the declining bus ridership? And if so, what should the city do? That's for both DOT and MTA.

SARAH WYSS: Absolutely, we should look to increased bus ridership to repair some of the bus ridership that has been lost, has been lost because people are switching to the subway, and that we're happy with. But there are many other places in the city where we need to work on making buses move through traffic a lot better, and we really welcome your help reaching out to the communities to explain the importance of both bus lanes and other things simply such as removing parking if it's too close to intersections, which makes it difficult for buses to get through.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you and now I'm going to be getting on the clock five minutes. I'm going to be calling my colleagues Council Member Kallos followed by Council Member Chin. Stay-stay two five minutes.

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Thank you, Chair Rodriguez for calling this necessary hearing on bus service. I ride the buses all the time, and I want the buses to run on time. Twenty-five percent of the homes in my district include a senior who may rely on bus service. My district has heavy ridership, and it's one of the top complaints I get everyday. You don't have to take my word for it. Ask Marcus Brook from the MTA. He can tell you that at meeting after meeting attracting hundreds in my district everyone in the room is riding the bus to get there. But it can be frustrating because when Council Members pass on complaints about missing buses and service delays it became a-becomes the game of he said/she said, which needs to end. You can't separate that status quo, but we can use transparency and the data to improve bus service. We know where every single bus is at every moment of the day because of bus time. I want to thank the civic technologists at the NYC for

connecting me with Nathan Johnson who has been archiving bus data ever since. I want to thank Floyd Bow at NYU Cusp for building buses.org to show bus fees, the dwell times, locations along routes where buses bottleneck, but there's a limit for what I could get done for free, and I want to thank Transit Center for launching busturnaround.nyc. Please visit it if you're watching at home where you can see how much your buses bunch, the speed, ridership and more. I learned this morning that the M101 in my district is one of the ten most bunched buses in the system at 17.9% bunched, which is about one in five. So if you get five buses an hour, one of them isn't going to show up. It's going to show up bunched with another one, which means if it's 12 minutes per bus, you're waiting 24 minutes or more for your bus, and it has an average speed of 4.9 miles per hour. Now, I do want to say thank you to MTA, New York City Transit President for Buses, Darryl Irick, Amy Vargas, Robert Marino, Marcus Book, Michael Rivas (sp?) and you Craig for working with me over the past 2-1/2 years, but I'm hoping we can see some more progress. So with my constituents I'm trying to find reliable bus service. The best political or publicly available

estimates calculated from bus time suggests that more than 10% of the scheduled 15 SBS arrivals never occur. So, the question that's started this all is where are my missing buses?

CRAIG CIPRIANO: Thank you Councilman. I mean as you—as you stated, we've been working closely with you and the team for more than a year now I believe on the use of bus-bus time API. You know, we—we really strongly believe in open data, and since 2012 for when Bus Time Came into existence, you know, the MTA had put forth, you know, the bus time API for, you know, software development and data analysis. In regards—in regards to the missing buses that you referenced, we—we don't believe there is missing buses. In fact, you know, we—we brought to the MTA Board on a monthly basis a metric known as AM and PM Bus Availability, and that's really about our performance in providing, you know, service during our peak times. That metric is—is in the 99 percentile. So, we're putting the buses out but what happens is all along the day, you know, things happen. You know, challenges happen and are—and are issues. For instance, looking at—

2 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: [interposing]
3 I'm—I'm sorry to cut you off, but I only have about a
4 minute and 30 seconds left--

5 CRAIG CIPRIANO: [interposing] Yeah,
6 yeah.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: --so I--and I
8 have, other things I would like to cover, but my
9 problem is you're telling me 99% service, but that's
10 not what we're experiencing on the ground. We're not
11 seeing 99% of the buses showing up on time. In fact,
12 now we have data that shows that 17% of the time with
13 the M101 they're showing a bunch, which is not 99%.
14 That is--that is far from it. So, you're--you're rely--
15 relying on AM/PM, but that seems like it's the wrong
16 measure. Riders care about how many minutes did I
17 ride for the bus. They--they're not caring about your
18 wait assessment of like 25% of the--did the bus show
19 up within 25% of the time, and whether that was ten
20 minutes late or never. And so, can you switch it to
21 excel wait time, which is something that's
22 International Bus Bunch Marking Group uses, which MTA
23 is a member that London, Boston and DC uses where
24 they measure the number of minutes, plus the number
25 of riders, and along those lines could you share that

information with us as well as the fare box data, which is already available from the subways, but isn't from the buses so that we can actually measure how many people are waiting how long for each bus? Along with the pullouts so that if the MTA bus time data isn't as reliable, we actually can just measure the number of buses getting sent out on each route so we can compare actual versus performance?

CRAIG CIPRIANO: Sure. So in regards to what you're seeing, what you're referring to, I think our two technical teams still have some work to do to-to-to refine the two, and to get to where it needs to be. In regards to, you know, missing buses, what we see is that, you know, [bell] all along the day we're going to have challenges. There's going to be street congestion. There's going to be mechanical defects. There will be sick customers, and they'll continue asking our service managers and dispatchers to make service adjustments even our headways. So specifically in regards to two days that we looked at recently with you, you know, one day happened to be when the U.N. General Assembly was in town. You know, it was a very tough day for traffic. Many of the buses that were—that would call missed buses or

buses not the schedule where we adjust this so we could keep even headways going-going both directions. In regards to new metrics, you know, we're constantly taking a look on the metrics. You know, currently we are reporting the latest estimate. It's a metric we used for about 15 years now, on-on 42 routes. We think the opportunity is here now to-to report maybe a system wide or borough wide metrics. We're-we're currently putting a proposal together for our MK Board to-to discuss that. Any bus, other metrics such as excess wait time or journey time, those are things that we are evaluating and we're looking at. We really need to have the support systems behind it, and with the algorithm of the databases behind it. But those are things that we are definitely looking at in the new development.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Council Member Chin.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you. Thank you, Chair. Good morning. I ride the bus all the time, and for my district in Lower Manhattan it's a critical service especially for seniors. So my question is like are we even seeing-- We wrote the last two--my colleagues, my elected colleague and I we

wrote again to the MTA asking that the SBS service on the M15 to increase two stops, one on Delancey and one on Highland, and on Pike and Madison. So that because Pike and Madison is connected the F-Train, connected to the M22; Delancey to the J-Train, the F-Train is there, and we still have not heard back. I mean originally when we first got the SBS Bus, we thought that it to really, you know, be a long distance apart, but these are stops that are connected to public--other public transportation. At the same time it's also connected to growing residential neighborhoods. So I wanted to hear about the status of that request, and also on the M15, a lot of times, you know, in waiting and people but the tickets and the SBS bus doesn't come, and then finally a local bus comes, and you want to get on the bus with your paper ticket and most of the time they take it, but sometimes they refuse. And they say well, you've got to slide the card again. And that happened to a lot of my constituents, and it happened to me once. So, I know on the website it staid it's supposed to accept the paper ticket, but it doesn't happen all the time. So I think that the training

and reinforcing with the bus driver that they're in place.

CRAIG CIPRIANO: So I'd like to take the second question first. By all means our policies that bus operators should be taking the SBS ticket on--on the local routes, and we will make sure to get that. You know, make sure to communicate that strongly and have a focus on re-re-educate our bus operators if you say that's not happening. If we've lost the bus stop spacing of a specific, you know, SBS, I would defer to Sarah in a second. But what I would say is that, you know, whenever we implement an SBS route, really again our bus stop spacing is a key tool in our program.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: [interposing] I--I thought, you know, that was the reason, by going uptown, they stop on like, you know, because of the two hospitals there. So those would stop at 28th Street, and there's another stop Brittany (sp?) Street. I say wow, if they could do that uptown, they should do that below Houston for, you know, the growing residential population that I have in my district.

SARAH WYSS: We're happy to look into this, and we also need to look for that letter, and make sure you get a response if you haven't yet.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Well, I would definitely want to continue because we've been asking that for a long time, and also the other question I have is on the M5, MTA has a proposal. We had a hearing back in April, which we testified. So what is the status between the M5 and the M55 sort of its position? Because we want to make sure that there's a connection so that riders can trans-transfer easily.

SARAH WYSS: We did following the public hearing, and all the testimony we heard, we did revise the proposal so that there is now a bigger overlap between the M55 and the M5, and this will be implemented in January.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Okay. I mean I think overall it's really looking at some of those routes, and seeing why some, you know, it doesn't have to be so far away and so long because Sunday with M103 it stops at Sixth Street. It doesn't go-go further down, and we have a growing residential population in Lower Manhattan. So we need that, and

the-the issue of really doing the all-door, you know, exit-purchasing tickets or-really I think that would be great. On the M14, you know, the A, B, C and D and those have to be, but the A, C and D and we want more service on the A because that is another area where there's a growing residential population. And they are, you know, they-they need to increase services on that line, and to be able to have, you know, on-board purchase tickets or whatever and to get people on the bus stops there. Because that route is very, very slow. So we definitely want to see improvement on that, and especially on some of the routes like M9 and M22 where a lot of seniors take that bus, and a bus driver has told me like because they have to stop and pick up passengers in wheelchairs, and that's causing the delay. So we really need to look at new buses where you have space, you know, for frontloading of wheelchairs so that people can, you know, get on the bus at a particular time. I think that would be great in terms of some of those routes where you know a lot of seniors take those bus routes. So I look forward to continue working with you because as I said earlier, bus service is critical to the senior population, the

people with disabilities, and it's just great for a large residential neighborhood especially in Lower Manhattan. Than you. Thank you, Chair. [bell]

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: [off mic]

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you for doing this important hearing, and I want to thank DOT for certainly conducting two different studies along JFK Corridor and obviously also the Far Rockaway Corridor, and I think the question was raised by the Chairman on where is the worst service in particular in the city. And for Council Member Miller and I, I'm sure we can attest that Southeast Queens and Far Rockaway absolutely has the worst bus service in the city of New York, and I always attribute—I always attribute Jimmy Vacca with this basis, but we can always attribute—I can get to Florida by plane quicker than I get to Manhattan by bus and train on days. And while the MTA's touts, and I always say you tout and Wi-Fi and charging stations in the buses, we really want to enjoy those comforts in our home. I mean we want better service, you know, and the question I have is so you—so one of the things in your testimony you attributed—I—I just want to know

what do you attribute the decline of bus service to?

You said 2.7% decrease, and I'll tell you why I think there is a 2.7 decrease because most people in our communities would rather drive to the train because the bus is so unreliable. So if you can speak to where did those numbers come from, and if we've seen a decline of that in Southeast Queens and Far Rockaway?

CRAIG CIPRIANO: Well, I mean I-I believe we said in the testimony that we believe that decline is related to, you know, slower bus speeds as well as, you know, the customers' ability to transfer to sub and in order to subway where they're at without the parallel.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Well, I don't think it's that. I think more people because of the the bad service, such as myself would rather choose to drive to the subway rather than to take the bus to the subway. So DOT, where are we at on Woodhaven in particular, and where are we at on getting a full BRT? We don't necessarily think just having lanes and SBS is going to be conducive to really ensuring that we cut times for Rockaway residents in particular, 40% of the people who live on the eastern

end of the Rockaways. So where are we at with that, and where are at with DOT study for Far Rockaway?

COMMISSIONER TROTTERBERG: I'm going to give a little up on Woodhaven.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: [interposing]
And the Q53 expansion.

COMMISSIONER TROTTERBERG: But I'm also going—I'm going to turn it over to Eric Beaton who, as you know, has been on the ground, and look, we—we want to thank you for your leadership on the Woodhaven Line. As—as I was saying, you know, it's definitely been politically challenging. We are hoping I think at the—at the end of this year if all goes well that we have an important safety project we're going to start on Jamaica Avenue and we—we solved the problem of the left turn there, which I think has made a lot of folks happy, and then next year, work more fully. We have put in a request to the Federal Transit Administration for funds to do the fuller buildout, and Eric has been talking to them more directly.

ERIC BEATON: Sure. So—so I think one of the real hallmarks of what we've done with bus service with—with the MTA has been we want to deliver

results quickly while we still work to make things better in the long term. So what we're doing with Woodhaven is—is starting this month we're going to start building out the bus improvements that we can do in-house, and next year you'll see—you're start seeing real median bus lanes, and substantial stations, things that people would consider to be really high quality BRT improvements. At the same time, we did submit a grant request to the FTA for around \$100 million in addition federal money to do really substantial, you know, better stations, better streetscape, extend that—that high quality treatment much farther, but we don't want to wait for that. We want to make sure we're getting improvements in right away, and that's why we want to set this up to start Woodhaven SBS by the end of next year. I—I estimate 252 Extension, I know that that's something we've been working on very closely with the MTA, but I don't know if Craig or Sarah, if you want to speak to that piece.

CRAIG CIPRIANO: Yeah, I'll ask [pause]

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Well, you got to move fast. He's taking up my minutes.

CRAIG CIPRIANO: Sorry Council Member.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Do I get an
3 extra 20 seconds?

4 MALE SPEAKER: [off mic]

5 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: [interposing]
6 Can you hit your mic?

7 MALE SPEAKER: --Relations, New York City
8 Transit. As you know, we've been out to many
9 community meetings with you about the Q52. We are
10 looking to do an extension. We've been working the
11 DOT on street network to identify exactly how far
12 that extension will be eastwards in the Rockaways,
13 and we should be getting to—we should be getting back
14 to you shortly with—with the location.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Okay, you're
16 going to east then, and then for consumer complaints,
17 I had a question I guess this for MTA. So we—I mean
18 just last night, and we can't make this up, we had
19 this hearing today. I got a complaint from a
20 constituent on the Q114 Line in particular. How do
21 you handle in particular complaints that come across?
22 You know, someone calls 311, how do you respond to
23 those complaints, and there are a lot of constituents
24 who obviously call because of bus service. So I'm
25 interested in knowing how do you respond to that?

CRAIG CIPRIANO: Yeah, I mean all-all complaints whether it be-whether it comes through 311 or a written complaint, Twitter [bell] you know are-are handled via our Centralized Corporate Communications. We will then work with the Operating Department to work with that person depending-depending on what the complaint is to-to, you know, investigate the issue, and come-and take a look at what it is, come up with a plan, and then get back to the customer as far as that particular issue. In some cases it's just a-it could a quick response. In other cases it takes a little bit more analysis and investigation.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: How does the Council access complaints in particular that are raised from constituents on bus lines? So there's something on line that is transparent that we can access or the public in particular can access on complaints online? COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Alright that's a no it looks like.

SARAH WYSS: I just wanted to add with the specific complaint we're happy to follow up with you on this one.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Yeah, but I-I want a broader conversation on how do we get more transparency around complaints on bus lines, and is there any way we can access this information as of now, the public in particular? So if there are 100 complaints on the bus line, is there any transparent way for us to know that there are 100 complaints on the bus line?

CRAIG CIPRIANO: So at this point, I don't believe we have any public, data public metrics available--

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: [interposing]
That's alright.

CRAIG CIPRIANO: --so, but we will take that back.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Mr. Chairman, I look forward to working with you with on that. I will just say I'm going to read out the lines that are continuously--we had complaints on Q113, Q114, 85, 5. Daneek Miller will continue his numbers 52 and 53. You know this is really about transit equity. We're bringing in more people. The population in New York City is increasing. Our low-income residents in particular who don't have access to cars really

deserve better bus service in the city. Our middle-class New Yorkers deserve better service in the city. Everybody deserves better service in particular in this city, and it's really shameful that we're not moving. I'll—I'll commend you on moving in some parts, but we have a lot of work to make sure that it doesn't take us 2-1/2 hours to get into the city on many days. So Mr. Chairman, I look forward to continuing to work with you on this. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: We will follow and before calling my next colleague, can we make a commitment that we can bring the conversation back, you know, internally to the MTA. Is this, you know, if you have the jurisdiction to explore the possibility, or is that required for the board to be the one having the discussion? They have constituencies that they are living with paying two fares because they have to take two buses and a train, and it can be someone who live on the poverty line that \$50 makes a difference or it can a middle-class that have to pay for the music program for their children and also \$50 a week make a difference. And I assume that we are aware, right, about the situation happening, right? So can we at least open

and see how can we, you know, have a discussion and the possibility to fix a problem that is affecting especially those New Yorkers that live in Queens who they have to take two buses and train to go to work?

CRAIG CIPRIANO: Yes, we will take that back.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.
Council Member Koo followed by Council Member Reynoso.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Thank you chair.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: [interposing] Thank you, Chair Rodriguez, and thank you Commissioners and—and all the MTA exec—executives that are here. You know, I'm—I'm City Council Member Koo. I represent Flushing, which has a very busy transit hub. First I—I don't mean to criticize all of you, but we are doing this constructive dialogue so where in my area there are over 20 buses. It would be somewhere them, maybe between six and coming all over the island and Bayside, just to catch the 7-Train or the Long Island Railroad, and because of other congestions in downtown Flushing. So my first—first question is how come in your long-range planning you never put a bus depot in Flushing? I mean it has

been discussed before and like a long time ago, but it's not going to be put on a real plan, you know.

And I—I give you an example like the 41 Road where the Q58 bus, in the morning I saw 10 buses there lined up the whole street. It's like then we can.

Our downtown streets become a depot, and it's not fair to the Department of Buildings because they are lined up against the street and they can't even get

into the building. You know, when people want to drive in if they have a garage in the building, and especially going to the 41 Road in Q58, and Main

Street, on Wilson Avenue they—we have to build a bus depot for—for MTA or for NYCD. So it's not fair to

our constituents, our business people because they're blocking the wheels of all of this. They can't see

the signs. That is my first question. The second question is, you know, we need more express buses.

Because the—the regular buses they are—they are very function, and we need them and during this rush hours

we need like people going to city to work. In the past we have Express Bus 51 going to the city. They are asking this continuous for that a few years ago.

I think we'll have to resume some of those bus routes to cut down on the congestion and one the 7-Train.

There is I'd say an urban- My third question is like the-the bus lanes. They are not-like I think they are underutilized. It is only for SBS bus. Because I think with the new source bus lanes for other buses like commuter buses or casino buses, it's not, you know, they're over 30 people or 25 they'll go back a couple of points, and you use those bus lanes.

Otherwise it's really underutilized. It's empty most of the time, and-and while the other lanes are so-so busy and so congested. So, we might open up the bus lane for-for all buses, you know, even private buses. You know, in my area we have the commuter buses going to Chinatown from Flushing. So if they didn't use those lanes, you-you will cut down on the-the delay and on the general and you will cut down the general congestion on the streets. So those are my three suggestions, and one more thing is like on those to SBS tickets. Why do you sell those like seventh heaven? Like you will be much better because on the street is-is so bogy.(sic) Those issues are real bogy. I mean look we have time machines, but somehow in New York everything is so big, you know, and the-the blocks of people are walking-are walking anyway, you know. On the sidewalks there's lots of people

walking, and people who are coming to the city, or people who are--or ladies bringing their babies on a--on a--on a carriage, you will clear a lot of congestions. And more thing is they've got--our buses should go straight in downtown. We should avoid turning. Because once you make them to turn, forget it, you know, the whole street is blocked especially with the round buses. You know, you--you have to wait two or three traffic lights to--for this bus to turn and meanwhile like we have like traffic tied up a few blocks down. So, those are my main concerns or--or--and I hope you guys can work on those. [bell] And--and I guess despite all the criticism, New York City is one of the best places in terms of public transportation. Because if you go to L.A. or other Bay cities, you will out, you know, if you don't have a car, forget it because you are--you are stuck at home 24 hours a day. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

Council Member Reynoso.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Okay, thank you, Chair. Thank you guys for being here first and foremost. So I appreciate your attendance. I do want to speak to just speeding up time s on--on buses and

the real efforts being there. I—I know I see reductions in some cases of even an—entire miles per hour or two, but—but I really do think dedicated bus lanes seems to be the most appropriate way or the most ideal way to speed up traffic—traffic times I guess to speed up the—the buses. How aggressive are we looking into just really making that a priority? In—in many communities especially ones that we see are—are transit stars like truly making that a priority, and what obstacles you have in being able to get that done? And the next thing, I just want to say—also say I want to thank you more than anything for the work that you're doing on the Wyckoff Plaza on Bushwick and Ridgewood where we've seen three people die over the last three years getting hit with the rear, the rear wheel of a bus off of right turns that are—are difficult to view for both the bus driver and also dangerous for pedestrians. That you were able to do something that's actually aggressive, and not half step the solution, actually do it all the way through. And I think we're moving from about 36 different turns to just nine or eight turns in—in this one intersection. So obviously you guys are are—are in care, and you're doing something about

that. So thank you for that. I really want to speak to how aggressive you think you can be in having dedicated bus lanes to speed up the buses that hopefully increase ridership.

COMMISSIONER TROTTERBERG: I'll-I'll jump in and-and-and Council Member Reynoso, thank you for your leadership on-on Wyckoff Plaza. It's very much appreciated. We agree it's a very vita safety project, and-and just to-to address also something that Council Member Koo is on, but just to be clear, the way dedicated bus lanes operate in New York City any bus that's a vehicle that has over 15 people can use, and a school bus. So a casino bus can use it, a commuter bus can use it. So, it's open to all, all comers. It's not just for MTA buses. You just have to be carrying a big enough volume of people to make it worth it. And look, you know, sometimes I hear that complaint well we don't see any buses in it. We-we spend a lot of time working with the MTA closely and, you know, we're-we-we put dedicated bus lanes in where the volume is really justified. We-we don't put them in in places where-where nobody is going to use them, but it's certainly something we're always tweaking. On-on the question of dedicated bus

lanes, you know, I—I testified Council Member I’m proud to say in the de Blasio Administration we’ve been aggressive in adding more mileage of dedicated bus lanes. By the end of next year, we’ll have 108 miles and look in some places those can be done pretty easily, but it’s no secret in places it requires a lot a lot of on-the-ground work with community boards, local merchants, with you all, and—and one thing I ask for is really need your partnership because it—it does take a lot of work working through parking issues, working through delivery issues, working through making sure we’re not having a big negative impact on traffic. We’re very committed, though, to picking up the pace. We recognize that’s a key thing we can do in this city to improve bus service citywide.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: I just want to make a statement for the larger population of the residents here in the city of New York. Public transportation is the only link that they have to get around the city of New York, and it should be a priority for us and the city to make sure that we’re providing reliable and safe service to those—to those residents, and that sometimes we have to make tough

decisions and—and—and work for the greater good here. Outside of individual or local concerns regarding something like parking that is a privilege. A lot of people think parking is a—is a—help me out there.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: [off mic] Alright.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: There you go.

Parking is not a right. Thank you Council Member Margaret Chin. Parking is not a right. It is a privilege, but for many people the only way to get around is with public transportation. So I just want you to know that I'm working aggressively to get that done for the greater good. It's something that, of course, and would always support, and we have the L-Train shut down happening soon, so bus service is going to be very important. I would like to use, I guess, my last 50 seconds to see if there is anything that you guys are doing creatively to get people moving when the L-line shuts down, and then keep people on buses thereafter? I tried to mention through the great work that you're going to do in those two years.

CRAIG CIPRIANO: What I would say is that we—we are working very collaboratively—collaboratively with New York City DOT. I think the

first step in the process as far as the L-Train goes is that there are two steps, the public outreach as well as, you know, traffic modeling. I think those two things will really inform the plan as we move ahead, and we kind of--kind of making those spaces right now.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Anything you're doing special for that service? So you guys are still working without, and anything that you think you could do, you're able to maintain permanently even after the L-Train comes back to keep people in the buses even after the L-Train opens up?

SARAH WYSS: We-- [bell] we're currently doing a study of sort of the various options as far as bus priority throughout the city. We're considering many different options, and when we have the results we can talk more about them.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Council Member Miller

COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I hope you may indulge me for a moment as I address my former colleagues and--and counterparts. What is the current statues of the New York City Transit and to the bus--bus fleet?

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2 CRAIG CIPRIANO: We currently have 5,725
3 buses.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: What is the
5 current average age of that fleet?

6 CRAIG CIPRIANO: The average age is about
7 eight-eight years.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: What was it three
9 years ago?

10 CRAIG CIPRIANO: Actually three years ago
11 I don't have the exact number in my head, but as far
12 as average age it has been coming down as we've been
13 buying new buses.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: How many new
15 buses have you purchased over the last four or five
16 years?

17 CRAIG CIPRIANO: The exact number again I
18 don't have it in my head. What I--what I will say is
19 that, you know, new buses have been coming in, and we
20 look forward to additional new buses I think in--

21 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: [interposing] Is
22 it more than 500?

23 CRAIG CIPRIANO: Yes, it is?

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: More than 1,000?
25

2 CRAIG CIPRIANO: I don't believe it's
3 more than 1,000, but what I--what I would say is we'll
4 be replacing 35% of our best fleet over the next five
5 years and it's--

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: [interposing] How
7 many have been replaced over the last three years?
8 I'm--I'm--I'm not--I just need to ask you what that is.

9 CRAIG CIPRIANO: The exact number I don't
10 have in my head, but we can get those to you for
11 sure.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Would you say
13 that a third of the fleet has been replaced over the
14 last five years?

15 CRAIG CIPRIANO: A third of the fleet?
16 In the last capital program I believe we replaced
17 2,000 buses.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Okay, so that is--
19 that is pretty significant, and it should have had a
20 pretty significant impact on the quality of service
21 that has been--been delivered, right? So I'm going to
22 talk, and--and my have had a lot of--there's a lot of
23 conversations about some of the diminishing services
24 and some of the reasons why, and--and--and so I want to
25 talk from my experiences that--and I know there was

implications about buses whether they were replaced and things of that nature there. I know that we've experienced in particular in-in-in Queens and throughout the city a lack of equipment. So that equipment problem has been pretty much resolved, right? And so what I want to know, the question I was asking was what was the impact on additional equipment? Did it have on the services? Are we seeing the delays that we have seen in the past? Are we seeing-is there missing trips and so forth? Those things there. Has that had a significant impact? You can answer it but, as we talk about some of the amenities that have come in on these new fleets, one of the things and-and-and as Council Member Richards says, we in Queens where we had an average of an hour and a half commute into the city, one of the things that we are less concerned about are those amenities. One of the things that we are concerned about is the safety and the date include this new for the buses is safety mirrors?

CRAIG CIPRIANO: I'm sorry safety mirrors? Is that what--?

COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Yes, we're-we're talking-we're not talking the traditional spyglass.

We're talking about the new safety mirrors that would prevent some of the accidents that we've seen or which had been the cause of the new policy and legislation.

CRAIG CIPRIANO: Yes, the new safety mirrors are incorporated into the new bus.

COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: So all in the new buses, and how about is there ability to block cell phone and electronic uses, device usage in particular areas of the bus? Because while we are encouraging the use of these devices, I will tell you that one of the biggest impediments to safety is the--the type of conversations and access that go on in the area of the bus operators' area, and--and that's something that should be addressed as well. So I--I would like to get--I would love answers on the impact on the new fleet as we move forward. As we see DOT here, I want to talk about it's--it's encouraging to see the synergy of the MTA and the DOT as we--Ms. Wyss said that goes on (sic), but--but I've said and--and--and DOT and MTA cannot agree on where to put a bus stop sign for many, many years. So it was encouraging at the same time we take it with a grain of salt until we see these grand ideas actually come to fruition

whether or not it could happen. A lot of this I would submit has to do with traffic congestion, traffic patterns and things of that nature there, which will require a collaboration. What are we doing in the area of—in—in making sure that those collaborations translate into better bus service considering that most of the lines that we're operating now were once streetcar lines. Have they been changed? [bell] Are they more efficient? In my district we had the X63, 64 and 68 that don't run beyond 9:00 in the morning, don't run below 23rd Street although one-third population come down here to business district. That is not very efficient use of those services—services that currently exist. What are we doing in terms of that? Council Member Richards also mentioned the Roosevelt area, the X—the—the 213 and 113 and 114. It runs on 147th Avenue. The 277 stops at Springfield Boulevard, and the conduit, which is about three or four blocks away because they don't connect, those folks are then forced to go into Jamaica and come back out to go to Queens College to Queensboro or wherever the students are going, and that adds about a 45-minute commute. What are we doing on simple things that would make

the services more efficient, and more commuter friendly?

CRAIG CIPRIANO: I'll explain.

COMMISSIONER TROTTEMBERG: I—if you want I—I can speak just a bit about the congestion question overall, and then maybe MTA can talk in more specifics. You know, it's an interesting statistic that from 1992 to today, New York City has seen a population rise of a million people. So obviously the good news is the city is growing, but obviously for our transportation system, you know, for an MTA that is somewhat resource constrained and not building out tons of new subway lines, it's a huge challenge because we need to move an ever-larger volume of people both on that subway and on our roadways. DOT we just put out a five-year strategic plan where we looked at some of the tools we can have to try and tackle congestion citywide particular what can we do in parking and freight policy and technology. But then we have our specific tools for the bus routes, which we're hearing about today dedicated bus lanes, TSP, Q jumping, things that even when you have a congested condition, you can help at least get the buses moving more quickly, and we've rolled that out

on some of SBS routes, but I think we're pledging today to try and accelerate the pace.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: [off mic] Thank you. [on mic] And I'm sorry for the time, but we have to leave the room at 1:00 p.m. because general (sic) said they have a hearing here, too. Council Member Rose.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you, Chair. Good afternoon. I represent a borough that is wholly dependent on surface transit, and in the absence of a subway system, bus transportation becomes critical, and we actually are in a transportation desert in my district in Staten Island. I—I know that you're currently in the process of doing—conducting a survey, a study. You know, what is the timeline for the completion of that survey? What are the metrics—metrics that you're using to determine need and—and restorations, and—and finally, there's been a BRT that has been discussed, and was supposed to be something that was eminent. Could you tell me about that, you know, timeline and where that is in the planning. And then my last question would be about Metro Cards. We—we have one distribution point for Metro Cards, which is the Staten Island Ferry, which

is-it's just crazy. Is there any plan to have more distribution points throughout the borough since again, our sole means of transportation are buses and-and then I-I have an express bus question. Thank you.

SARAH WYSS: To start with the Staten Island Study question that you asked, we hope to be releasing an internal report very soon. The data we've looked at is we've done customer surveys asking customers on buses in-in addition to looking at the wealth of electronic data that we have through Metro Card and through bus time. We are continuing to-as on a separate line, we are continuing to look at the North Shore BRT. I'm sorry. I forgot the other questions.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: So your-in your study, you are looking at ridership of-that current ridership right? And when are you actually monitoring this ridership? Because there-there was some concern that this study was being conducted during the summer when ridership was somewhat diminished, and that it was taking place on weekends and during non-peak, you know, transportation hours.

Can you, you know, give us some—shed some light on when, in fact, ridership is being looked at?

SARAH WYSS: You know, we have been looking at ridership during the peak months, during the peak times not just on—we have been looking at weekend ridership because that does matter, but we've been looking at weekend ridership to look at weekend ridership. We've also been looking at weekday ridership, and no we've—a good point of advantages of using this data is we have a library and an archive of data. So even if we're looking at it in August we can be looking at a May date or we can be looking at data from when school was in session.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: And are you looking not only in terms of—of route changes, but restoration of—of—of routes that were eliminated previously?

SARAH WYSS: We are looking at absolutely everything.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Everything. Okay, and the BRT, you know, I mean we keep hearing that it's a discussion with this discussion, and it—it really is—is frustrating because it's a part of a bigger, you know, discussion that we've had, and—

which is, you know, the need for a North Shore railroad, and we've—that's been taken off of the table because the MTA has said that, you know, a BRT would be, you know, more cost-effective, and yet I—I don't see anything being—anything coming to fruition in terms of dealing with this lack of—of—of ability to move people in my district from areas that are deeply populated to the transportation [bell] hub, which is the ferry. I want—I really want to know where this BRT is in the pipeline, and if it's still just some nebulous thought that's out there, really I feel to sort of keep me quiet about fighting for this North Shore Railroad. So I need more than, you know, yes there's a BRT somewhere in thee ethers for Staten Island.

CRAIG CIPRIANO: We'll—we'll get back to you on that.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: I hope that you can come back as soon as possible. We'll be working together with my colleague Council Member Rose on this issue. Now, I'm calling Council Member Deutsch.

COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Thank you, Chair. Thank you all. First of all, I want to speak about the B44 on Nostrand Avenue, and I know that

since it was implemented the SBS stop on Nostrand Avenue, I have requested an SBS stop at the corner of Avenue R and Nostrand Avenue, which is a transfer point to the B36 and the B3 as well as to medical center. It has apartments and buildings. They have many seniors there, and it's also a distance between Kings Highway and Avenue U, which is 1.1 mile. On an average, an average distance between an SBS stop in Southern Brooklyn is about .5 of a mile, and I was—I got thousands of signatures on a petition regarding this stop and, you know, we always—when people wait at the corner of Avenue R and Nostrand Avenue, you could be waiting for the B44, and you can have four empty SBS buses passing by, and I know we always teach our children that if you're on a packed bus, a full bus, and a senior citizen walks on the bus, we get up for that senior and we give up our seats. And here you have three or four SBS buses passing by senior citizens waiting outside in the heat and the cold and rain and the snow and these buses are just constantly passing by before finally you get three local B44 buses coming at the same time. And this has been a complaint, and I have complained to MTA for—since it was implemented, and I have been

constantly in touch. They tell me its improved, that the B44 Local has improved, which it did not, and I kept on requesting. I kept on requesting for MTA to come down with me to wait for a bus, and I have been granted that request. So that is one. Number two is I want to bring up that we talk about improving ridership. On Kings Highway this is the DOT. On Kings Highway there are—you have the pedestrian medians, and where you have two buses, the B82 and the B7 and those medians are really in terrible shape, and we need some coverage, people to use the medians for—for to improve ridership and to encourage and to appeal to people to use our—our bus, our mass transit. And it's impossible to stand on those medians because they have overgrown weeds that no one is taking responsibility for, and they're really cracked and it's a—a safety issue. So that is a second question. So keep that in mind. The third thing is we have half fare for senior on the Metro Card, which I believe it's from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. I have many seniors that are still working, and I would like to see if we could get that from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. So our seniors who have a hard time making ends meet could have that half day fare.

In addition to that, the MTA track noise has gotten very-worse over the past years particularly in Brighton Beach. The noise going-there's a bend, there's a turn on West Sixth Street where the F-Line and the Q-Line meet. That is terrible track noise, and it measures 80 decibel levels into people's homes, and I have requested MTA to come down and take a look at the track noise, yes. People have moved in near the train tracks, but it has gotten a lot worse and it's very difficult for people to enjoy the quality of life, and I'm asking MTA if they could come down and finally after a year to take care of that problem of the track noise at least to what it was before two years ago. In addition to that, I also requested over a year that we install parking under the Q-Line along the path from West Fifth Street to the F-Q on West Sixth Street location, which is MTA above and DOT I believe owns-owns the-jurisdiction underneath. But there was a dispute between the MTA and DOT whose jurisdiction is under the tracks, and this is what I've have. It's actually throughout the city no one takes responsibility for the jurisdiction underneath train tracks. So, MTA finally got back to me and said

it's-it's a safety issue because in the Bronx you had a fire under the tracks, but the fact is that people park under Brighton Beach Avenue. People park underneath 86th Streets, people park underneath Fort-Fort Hamilton Parkway as well as Nagano Avenue, and MTA employees park about three dozen vehicles under their tracks on a daily basis. So I am trying to get that parking for my constituents, but we have a hard time finding parking on a daily basis. That is another issue. So, finally, [bell] we'll stop over here.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: I think that those are a lot of recommendations where we're hoping that--

COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: [interposing]
Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: --we will be working with you, you know, one-on-one. I think that many of them-those things that, you know, like getting a bus stop those that you're describing those who think that we should-we need to get the men and women on the ground. So what I hope especially like if there is something that you can summarize in one minute, we could follow with MTA and your office to

2 see how we can work together to get us the most thing
3 as you need it for your constituents. Is that okay?
4 Do you have anything to handle it?

5 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: Are--are you
6 wanting--

7 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: [interposing]
8 I'm--I'm--

9 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: --are you wanting
10 us to answer? I'm sorry Mr. Chair.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Yeah, and--and
12 please, if I get an answer to the medians--

13 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: Okay.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: --and if I could
15 get an answer to the Avenue R and Nostrand Avenue.

16 COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: I'll--I'll--
17 I'll--I'm happy to give an answer on the medians. And
18 I've actually walked on that stretch of King Highway
19 and seen those medians. I will concede that they are
20 not good ones. We're looking at what can be done.
21 We actually be fixing one I'm looking at this year or
22 next year. It's Kings Highway at Frazier Square.
23 We're going to be putting in a new accessible bus
24 stop, but we're looking at them also as part of how
25 can we improve bus service in Southern Brooklyn. One

challenge we face is to the extent that we build out and improve medians, but we're going to have to deal with the parking loss, but we're happy to work with on it. We agree we need to do some work there, and it's part of the planning effort that we're undertaking within Southern Brooklyn.

COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Thank you, Commissioner. I just didn't get an answer on the Avenue R and Nostrand.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: MTA and did you say?

SARAH WYSS: First of all, just a point of clarification. Senior fares are good all day on local buses and the subway.

COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: I'm sorry?

SARAH WYSS: Senior fares are good all day on the local buses and subways. On local.

COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: I don't get the question.

SARAH WYSS: Oh, sorry, never mind. As far as Avenue R is concerned, that is currently served by the Local B44. We can look at it again for the SBS.

COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Alright, this has been going on for about a year and a half, and I've been hearing the same answers for a year and a half. So my question is can we put an SBS stop over there to stop at Avenue R and Nostrand. It's 1--it's 1.1 mile from one stop, one SBS stop in Southern Brooklyn to Avenue U. So it's kind of a long distance for senior citizens to walk to get to the SBS stop, and the answer MTA gave me that the ridership is low to get full SBS buses that stop, and if one stops, and you're not going take away the-the travel time, if one bus stops and picks up the seniors and people with disabilities waiting there, you're not going to take away too much or anything at all from having that SBS being efficient. So, having that bus stop over there it's--it's one of the highest population of seniors in that area, which they have medical centers, like I mentioned before. I believe it's--

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: [interposing]
Sorry, Council Member.

COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: --important to have stops.

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2 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Can--can we follow
3 up with the--the Council Member and see how we can
4 address--

5 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: [interposing]
6 Would you follow up with the office.

7 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: I'm sorry, sorry
8 colleague--

9 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: [interposing]
10 Okay

11 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: --but we have to
12 move and to let the next one in. There are like 20
13 people waiting, and we have to be leave before 1:00
14 p.m. So can we work with his office and our office
15 on that particular request?

16 CRAIG CIPRIANO: Yes, we will.

17 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Very good.
18 Thanks.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Okay.

20 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Council Member
21 Levin.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Thank you very
23 much, Mr. Chair. A couple of quick questions. Does
24 the new SBS pay RFP have a requirement for a cap in
25

pay as one of the conditions of the responses or is that--?

CRAIG CIPRIANO: Yes, and the new fare payment RFP request for an open architecture fair payment system with--with Cap involved yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: So that so--so the public can be assured that eventually whatever bid wins the RFP it will have that option of cap in pay with it?

CRAIG CIPRIANO: Yeah, yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Okay, I mean that's--that's good. I mean in--in terms of, you know, allowing for--for new technology that could really streamline this--

CRAIG CIPRIANO: [interposing] So, I just want to make sure I clarify again, you know, an open for the community, but what--what the MTA is asking for is an open architecture payment system that will allow customers to use, you know, Smart Phones, bank cards or an MTA issued card.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Okay and that includes like the--the key fob or any--the key fob type payment or--?

CRAIG CIPRIANO: The key fob I'm not—I'm not familiar with it, but I guess--

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: [interposing] Or, you know, the--

CRAIG CIPRIANO: --know of Apple Pay--

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Apple Pay.

CRAIG CIPRIANO: MTA-MTA issue card or that you're on a bank credit card issued by your own bank.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: But-okay and that's-that's the most advanced technology that's out there right now?

CRAIG CIPRIANO: Yeah, yeah, that's all class and right now. However, again we're asking for an open architecture system so that that, you know, remains, you know, relevant throughout the course of its life.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: In-in terms of-I-I represent the-the northern part of the-the B44 Line. Often times on-on Nostrand Avenue on the northern part where it's-it's a narrower street there-there tends to be back-ups and congestion. How closely is the police department involved in issuing summonses for traveling in the bus lane? [pause]

COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: We—we try to work closely with the NYPD on the enforcement challenges we have all over the city, and certainly again I want to compliment the advocate community for putting out the report because it's helped us re-engage in that dialogue of making sure that we're doing good bus enforcement.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: [interposing] Uh-huh.

COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: But I think as I've also said-- Right, as I've also said, I think ultimately we want to work more with automated enforcement and as I—as I mentioned in my testimony we currently have the authorization from Albany to deploy bus cameras in 16 lanes around the city. We're up to nine. We're going to keep that process going because I think the NYPD is always going to have a lot of enforcement challenges and automated enforcement I think is going to be really the wave of the future. We're going to build out, what we have authorized, and hopefully at some point perhaps go back to the State Legislature for more.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: I—I apologize. I missed your testimony. How—how many were authorized at this point?

COMMISSIONER TROTTEMBERG: Sixteen have been authorized and we have—we have nine—we have nine—we have nine routes and we're—we're working to the next. We're going to do two more in the coming year, the Bronx, Flushing, Jamaica and 125th to La Guardia.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: And then just on a—a more local issue for my district, a few years back the MTA cut the—the 71 bus that went east to west along Union Street. As it currently stands, there are no bus lines between 9th Street and Park Slope, and Bergen Street. That's a full mile. If you look at the MTA bus map for Brooklyn, you know, that's the widest distance between two bus lines, you know, anywhere in the northern half of the borough that I—I could see, and I have in my district three NYCHA develops that were right along that bus line, and there have been community groups in recent months that have like put together, you know, a—a—a new plan for what a—a—a bus line could look like that runs down where the former 71 Line was, and, you know,

could address some of the ridership issues going to places where there's a lot newer developments and-- and--and could you--is it--can we get a commitment from the MTA that you could sit down with these community groups that have put together this new plan because, you know, since that line was cut, that cut a--a major lifeline for NYCHA residents, and people that want to be able to get from one side of Brownstone Brooklyn to the other. And as I said, right now the distance from Ninth Street to Bergen Street is a--is a full mile, and it's--it's--I understand that there were ridership challenges when it was in existent, but may that could be addressed by adjusting the line. Now that, you know, it was cut during the--during the recession when--when [bell] our budget was tight. Now that we're, you know, we're in a recovery, it's something that I--I would hope that the MTA would look at.

SARAH WYSS: We're happy to take a look at what the community group has come up with, and take another look at it.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Can you sit down-- can you agree to sit down with the community groups that have put together a new plan?

SARAH WYSS: I could reach out to our Government and Community Affairs Office. They can work with you.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Okay, I look forward to that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Council Member Greenfield has one question.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My-my question really I guess relates to some capital projects and improvements that we've been trying to do with your respective office. Specifically one of the challenges was having a challenging bus time, and especially for the elderly and during inclement weather folks are waiting outside and they've asked for bus shelters. I imagine this is a big request, but we've heard that there's a challenge with the contractors who may be maxed out in terms of the amount of bus shelters that could actually-can actually go up, and I'm wondering if there is something we can do about that. We'd be happy to help with the Council, and similarly another-another frustration for folks is that a couple of years back myself and some other colleagues we put money in the budget for the bus time clocks,

and we've been told there are some challenges there as well. My-my point is that these, you know, we may not be able to solve right away every traffic issue and rapid bus transit issue, but we certainly can give people shelter and tell them when the bus is coming, and that would do a lot to lower the temperature. So can you give us the update on the status of those two items, and what, if anything, can we do to be helpful to help-to help on those two issues?

COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: Well, thank you for the question Council Member Greenfield and we wholeheartedly agree. You-you would hope it would be seemingly simple to put in a lot more bus shelters, and-and the real time bus information and perhaps like a lot of things in New York City it doesn't turn out to be quite as simple as-as we had hoped. We do have-the City has a contract with, you know, a company that puts up our bus shelters, and it's true we've basically hit our limit. We are in the process of talking to them about expanding the number of bus shelters, and looking, frankly, at what the cost of that would be. And it's certainly something we do want to talk to the Council about. We wholeheartedly

agree. It should be a simple way of improving the experience for bus riders around the city. I know we've reached out to some of the members on the Council. It is true unfortunately the real time bus information, and many of you have been terrific partners with us in supporting that. It's taking longer than we would have liked. We've—we've run into I think a bunch of complexities making sure that we have devices that are fully accessible for people with disabilities, people who are visually impaired, people who are deaf. We also are a little bit of a victim of the fact that the technology is changing very rapidly, and we want to make sure that we're getting the best technology, the most durable, the most affordable. So we are—we are working as hard as we can. I think I'm looking over at Jeff and Eric. I think the middle of next year is that—is that—Early, early next year, and again we do apologize. We know it's—it's taken longer than we'd like, but we have run into I think a set of accessibility and technology challenges.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: So that's—that's for the bus time, but on the shelters is that what you're saying now is there—there—there is

currently no ability to create new shelters in New York City?

COMMISSIONER TROTTEBERG: The current contract does not--basically the--the contractor is not obligated to build new shelters. So if we want him to do it, we have to--we have to agree on a way of paying for it. That involves advertising and negotiations. So we are in the process of looking at that.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay?

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you and--and please leave some of your staff present at the hearing. We will hear now from the Coalition, the NYC Bus Coalition. We are going to be working very close with them, and I think it is important also to get some of MTA and DOT present to listen to their testimony. Thank you. I have a lot of local issues, but I will follow with you later on. Thank you. Now the next panel. [pause] Tabatha Decker (sic), Sis-Gina. I'm sorry. Gene Russianoff, Vincent Pellechia, Jackie Cohen, Nick Sifuentes. [background comments, pause] And I'm sorry. I apologize for the time. We got to put in the three minutes because,

you know, we have to be out of this room by 1:00 p.m.
So you may begin.

TABITHA DECKER: Good afternoon, Chairman Rodriguez, members of the committee, City Council Members. My name is Tabitha Decker, and the Director of the New York City Program at Transit Center. With me today are Gene Rusianoff of the Straphangers Campaign; Jackie Cohen of the Straphangers Campaign; Vincent Pellechia of Tri-State Transportation Campaign and Nick Sifuentes of Riders Alliance. We appreciate the opportunity to share our analysis of the state of New York City's buses and the practical strategies that we are advocating for to improve them. Our organizations have formed the Bus Turnaround Coalition, because we are determined to reverse the declining service quality, and get New Yorkers back on the bus. New York City's public transportation system is in a state of slow motion crisis. With over half a million jobs added since 2010, our city is in the midst of a population boom, and our transit system is struggling to keep up. Our look at MTA data found a nearly 20% decline in bus ridership from 2002 to 2015. The MTA responses to the beliefs or Turnaround Report in July attempted to

frame the issue as limited to Manhattan but, in fact, we're seeing dropping bus ridership in Brooklyn, in Queens and in the Bronx and in the Staten Island ridership is not dropping, but it's failing to keep pace with job growth and population growth. Today, we heard from the MTA, and a hypothesis that the routes that are experiencing this decline in ridership are routes that parallel the subway. In our analysis, we found a strong correlation between routes that have poor reliability and routes that have declining ridership, and I think that that this something to really pay attention to. You know, despite this declining service, and declining reliability there are still 2.5 million rides taken on an average weekday on our buses, and many of these riders are low-income and older New Yorkers for whom this bus service is their best transit option. The studies that the MTA held out today cover a relatively small portion of the city. This wouldn't be a major current-concern for us if those studies were part of the comprehensive citywide effort to reform bus service. Instead, those studies appear to be one-off efforts that have resulted in minimal changes. Clearly, the failure of our bus network is

a citywide issue, and it's one that we can and must solve. So I commend you, Chairman Rodriguez for calling this hearing today, and my colleagues are going to talk a bit more about the opportunity that we have to reform our buses.

GENE RUSSIANOFF: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. I'm Gene Russianoff with the Straphangers Campaign, the Transit Riders Group. Fortunately, there's a lot of data out there that could help inform our judgments. I think we have some agreement and disagreement with DOT about the—the state of the buses, but I don't think anybody who rides them on a regular basis would say things are great. I think they—they—they have serious problems in terms of lateness, and lack of reliability. Some of you will be fans our regular Pokey Awards, which we hand that each year to the slowest bus in New York City to try and bring it home to people. We try and compare what the slowest bus is slower than. So for example, a slow bus on our report is slower than a—a bumper car. It's slower than a child on a five-year-old tricycle. We actually had a performance artist race the B42 down 42nd Street and beat it. And then my favorite it's

1 slower than a wide flow of lava in Hawaii. So,
2 there's--there's room for improvement. There--there is
3 evidence that the bus speeds are declining citywide
4 when compared to their scheduled--public schedules.
5 They identify what most New Yorkers who--who you
6 survey and identify with, which is that the--there's
7 too much bus function and there's too many long
8 waits, and people are dissatisfied with the quality
9 of service they're getting. Lack of bus-only lanes
10 that help--would help really enormously speed up their
11 operations. There are some bright spots we--we find.
12 There was a lot of discussion of Select Bus Service.
13 Thank that's been one of the city's great
14 achievements and I--and--they--they should be able to
15 build on it. And it makes me hopeful that we'll seek
16 into new cooperation between this body and the DOT
17 and MTA, and make things happen. Thank you.

18 Thank you all for having this hearing.

19 At a time when traffic congestion and subway
20 overcrowding continue to worsen, New York City is
21 making maximum use of all its transportation
22 resources including the metro--the metropolises with
23 large subway systems and increase bus usage through
24 proactive policy measures. In order for New York
25

follow suit, and span the ridership decline, we must address the primary shortcomings of our bus network. In our report, they identified key steps to fix our city's bus network, redesign our bus network and routes for more frequent and efficient service. This requires examining the network as a whole to determine whether it is failing and redesign as needed. For example adding more frequent service on routes with high ridership or high ridership potential, and break up routes that are too long. The longer the route is, the more unreliable it tends to be. We commend the MTA for breaking up the M5, a route that currently takes almost two hours as scheduled, not counting frequent delays, to travel from end to end and is among the least reliable routes in Manhattan. Right size the distance between stops. Stop currently average about 750 feet. Where many cities have implemented or are considering doubling this, and in Europe some places are even tripling this, and redesign indirect routes. Another thing we can do is design streets to prioritize buses. Create more bus lanes and widespread traffic signal priority for buses; install bus bulbs and boarding islands, and introduce cue jumps, which DOT

mentioned earlier, and this is where buses are given a green light before other vehicles at an intersection and also usually involve cue jump lane where the buses can enter the front of the intersection before the cars.

JACKIE COHEN: Additional system wide solutions can include transforming how we get on and off the bus. So the city should use post Metro Card fare system—payment system to allow all-door bus boarding through implementing tap and go on the board fare collection as we heard about earlier. The MTA has already outlined plans to phase out the Metro Card in favor of modern fare payment technology within the next few years. And we encourage the agency to take full advantage of this new technology by ensuring its use will be extended to all local buses. By reducing boarding times, lost time on each time, at each bus stop can be reduced significantly ultimately reducing overall trip time, and adopting better methods to keep on schedule. So, despite having access to better bus time data than ever before, buses are still arriving in bunches creating uneven gaps in service that make it difficult to anticipate when a scheduled bus will actually arrive

or depart. When buses get off track, dispatchers and drivers should take early preventative action to ensure that buses stay evenly spaced. Less bunched buses means more reliable service, and would allow riders to determine an accurate departure time. So when they're deciding to leave their homes and ahead of their trip. We also need to ensure that buses begin their runs on time. Analysis of bus time data has revealed that too often buses experience a delay in their initial departure. Keeping bus departure on time keeps—keeps buses on track and on schedule. We also ask for an increased transparency about bus performance. Data that bus performance needs to be presented in a way that riders can equally understand. Providing data for purposes of app development and data analysis is important, but it is critical that the riding public be able to comprehend the city's current state of bus service in order to hold our transit agencies accountable for better bus service. And instituting a comprehensive open data policy, where data is reported on a frequent and regular basis will enable groups like ours, developers, bus riders and the agencies themselves to identify and solve problems related to bus service.

NICK SIFUENTES: Good afternoon. I'm Nick Sifuentes, Deputy Direct of the Riders Alliance. First, I want to say thank you to Council Member Rodriguez, the Transportation Committee, the MTA, the DOT and everybody here today for coming together how to—to discuss how to fix our ailing bus system. Now, we've heard from the DOT and the MTA and I'd like to commend the agencies for what they've committed here today, especially Commissioner Trottenberg and the DOT, but I would also like to challenge them to go further faster. You've heard about the broad goals and objectives of the Bus Turnaround Campaign. Many of them are significant tasks that will take some time to realize. But to be clear, we think there are a number of concrete steps that the MTA and DOT can undertake now to improve bus service in the near time—near term for riders, and demonstrate their support for comprehensive bus reform. What we really want is to hear MTA and DOT commit to a comprehensive plan to re-envision our bus network, to make buses faster, more reliable and more efficient. Now, right now we have a ways to go to meet that goal but here are five things that we think the MTA and DOT can do

right now to make bus service work better for riders in 2017 and beyond.

First, develop a list of possible changes to bus routes that could speed service including straighter routes, and breaking very long routes into shorter ones like they're doing with the M5. (2)

Develop a set of service adjustments that would shift resources to increase service frequencies on the city's busiest, most underserved routes. (3)

Accelerate the pace of transit signal priority related software procurement and installation with a goal of 25 total routes and corridors employing TSP by the end of 2017. We're glad to hear Commission Trottenberg address transit signal priority. It's clear that the DOT is moving to implement that. They mentioned 2018 as the implementation date. We'd love to see them do that in 2017. (4) We should develop a list of top bus delay hot spots to improve in 2017.

The data is out there. What are those underperforming routes? Let's list them and let's fix them, and then (5) We need to design a new operational dispatch and management strategies to implement when the NYC Transits new bus control center comes online in 2020. Now, turning around

NYC's buses should be in the best interest of both the governor and the mayor. Quick relatively inexpensive wings on bus service would provide a strong compliment to the Governor's numerous long range infrastructure initiatives, and improve access in reducing travel times for New Yorkers who do not live in quick walk to the subway, and who cannot afford taxis. It would certainly constitute a major accomplishment for Mayor de Blasio's agenda to improve social equity, and access to opportunity. This statement is true of City Council as well. We share the shame—the same goals, and if we actually make real strides to improve bus service, we can achieve those goals. With other 25 or whatever—2.5 million daily rides, our buses for all their faults are still vital mode of transportation for New Yorkers. It's imperative that the MTA, DOT, and elected officials at multiple levels take up the challenge of improving this often neglected element of our public transit system, and it's far more likely that we'll be able to take action if elected officials and New Yorkers in general speak up. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: We don't have any question, but we will look at you as a great partner as we move the conversation with DOT with this important effort to improve bus service in our city. Thank you.

NICK SIFUENTES: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: The next panel Natasha Sanders, Julia Kite, Stephanie Veras, Julia Martin and Paul De Nadia (sp?) [background comments, pause] You may begin, please.

JULIA KITE: Hello and thank you. I'm Julia Kite, Policy and Research Manager of Transportation Alternatives, and we advocate on behalf of all New York City's pedestrians, cyclists and transit users for safer and livable streets. New York City streets are the largest and most valuable public space, and there is no more equitable, practical or innovative use of this public space than the provision of world class public transportation. I won't reiterate all the problems we've been mentioning about the buses, but rather I would say that in this testimony I'll present to you some of the priorities for improvement, which we view as essential steps to ensure better service.

Improvements to bus service go hand-in-hand with the improvements to New York City's arterial streets.

One cannot be made better without the other. For the past two fiscal years Transportation Alternatives and the Council have urged the city to drastically increase funding for the redesign of arterial streets recognizing that in order to be both safe and functioning at industry standards, they will require a \$2.4 billion investment over the course of a decade. Unfortunately, capital funding allocations remain only a fraction of what is necessary to maintain a state of good repair. Dedicated bus lanes on these arterials are the most vital improvement necessary for better service. New York City's buses are among the slowest in the nation, in large part due to the amount of weaving in and out of traffic and dodging double parked vehicles drivers must do. SBS has created in parts exclusive bus lanes to help reduce travel time. For example on the B44, SBS buses used to spend about 20 minutes stopped in traffic on each run. They're now down to 12.5 and DOT attributes this to signal retiming and bus lanes. Even when there was no service change on the B49, similarly travel times decreased. The evidence is

clear these bus lanes improve service even when a route is not SBS. The City does not need to go through the long process of planning and consulting, but perceives SBS designation in order to improve bus service. Creating more dedicated bus lanes is a relatively inexpensive, but highly beneficial intervention. Even better when bus lanes are added as part of the complete street redesign, and arterial roads then become much safer for all road users. For example, bus bulbs, their neck downs when the sidewalk is widened by reclaiming a traffic lane as space for people waiting to get on or off the bus. It shortens crossing distance for other pedestrians. When we saw this implemented again on Nostrand Avenue as part of the B44 SBS, traffic injuries fell 37%. And this Autumn, Transportation Alternatives will be I really think a Vision Zero design standard, a guide for how to redesign arterials with safety and public transit investment in mind. We agree that the upcoming L-Train shutdown is a crisis not to waste, and we think it is a shutdown that could present the city with an opportunity to prove that true bus rapid transit is an effective, economical, and achievable transportation option. So to keep the city moving

during the shutdown, we're advocating the creation of the People Way on 14th Street, which would create true Bus Rapid Transit, and that's our chance to prove that we can do it New York that has worked very well in other cities. I'll conclude by saying there are more suggestions in our testimony [bell] but we also encourage the Council to pass Council Member Reynoso's Resolution 621 of 2015, and calling on the MTA to install rear wheel guards on all buses that may have saved the life of Anna Colon. Thank you very much.

STEPHANIE VERAS: Good morning. My name Stephanie Veras. I am community organizer here at the Riders Alliance. I was born and raised in Queens, and I have taken buses my entire life, and it is buses that have taken me to school, work and job interviews, and I know first hand how unreliable buses can really be. And owning a car is—is a luxury. It's extremely costly and it increases car congestion. So we should be thinking of different ways to change and improve our bus transportation system, and these are going to impact, as we have said all day long, over three million New Yorkers. And we really need to that that into

consideration and respect their time, and make sure the buses work for them. And a lot of New Yorkers don't live near a train. So buses are the only option, and this is a beautiful and vibrant city, and we need that our New Yorkers Are able to explore and enjoy what we work so hard to create. So as an organizer on this campaign, riders are tell me constantly of how unreliable and slow the buses are, and this is what I hear. They are frustrated having to wait over 20 minutes for a bus to come, and then three come together. They are tired of feeling stranded after a late night working at the restaurant, at the mall, et cetera, to find that their bus is no longer working. They are tired of feeling humiliated when they have to—where is no space and they are rejected to get onto a bus because there is no space for their walker or their wheelchair. And—and they're also tired of getting lost because they have no idea where they're going because they are no efficient bus maps, and the bus driver won't tell them when they can get off. So—and they're just having—and they're also tired of taking two or three buses, a subway to get to their destination because bus routes are simply just

obsolete. So these—these are the stories that bus riders face every single day, and it is time to turn around our buses. And here today we have vibrant beautiful Riders Alliance members who will share their story, and what better bus service means to them. So here with us we have Julia, Paul and Natasha. [pause]

JULIA MARTIN: My name is Julia Martin. I'm President of the Senior Advisory Committee at the Hudson Guild of Chelsea Senior Center. Recently, the MTA came to talk to us about bus service. The M11 and the M20 service our community. They told us the buses were supposed to run, and they gave us brochures showing that the buses should run no more than 12 minutes between stops, between stops. When we told them that the buses were running an hour late, they told us they could do nothing about it because the ridership has gone down, and they have no intention of fixing the problems. Seniors count on the buses to get to senior centers, to participate in their activities and have meals, to go to all the wonderful shows, and in New York City. This is a wonderful city for seniors, but we need the buses. Also, many seniors are using walkers. These walkers

block the front of the bus. The front facing seats need to be moved back so that walkers can be lowered—can be put side-by-side with the senior. Also the seats probably should be able to be flipped up so there's even more room. We need electronic announcements in several languages so we know where we are at night or on a rainy day. You cannot tell where the buses are, where it's going to stop. We need traffic control. We need people on the streets to keep the buses moving. They clog up and nothing happens. We also need protection from the dozens of bikes that run through the lights making it very difficult for us to cross streets and to get to the bus stops. We also cooperation with Sanitation to shove the crosswalks and to shove the bus stops. We are the fastest growing population in the country. We are the next hurricane. We are going to bring this city to a stop because our children are going to have to take off from work, and take care of us or maybe our grandchildren can drop out of college and take care of us, and businesses will come to a complete stop. We need to stay healthy. We need you to look at things in a holistic manner. We need bus service, we need safe streets, and we need—and then

we will stay healthy and we will keep this city running. Thank you. [pause]

PAUL DE MARIA: My name is Paul De Maria and I've been a member of Riders Alliance for two years, and I grew up in the Bronx. So I've seen many phases of the MTA, and there's been a lot of progress. But there's a long way to go. I don't own a car myself, but like many--many of the New Yorkers I-I depend on--on transit, and I've also been an active member of a number of advocacy groups including all the Auto Free New York. So I know these grassroots groups do have an impact. Now, traveling in the Bronx can be difficult by bus because they are very slow, and because cross-town routes are very long, and you really can't take a train into Manhattan and come back. I was around in 2009 when BX12 became the first Select Bus route in the city, and got improved performance. Many riders on Fordham Road take the BX12 and BX41 many, you know, during the week, and I know that's been a positive change especially with the bus lanes, and the off-board collection on the all-board--all-board door boarding. I think, though, there could be some improvements in SBS. The lanes can be paved better

and I think the paint should be retained better as it wears out in about two years. I think that the Select Bus Service the ridership is really up, and I think the local bus service ridership has been going up in the--in the Bronx, too, and as opposed to some other places like Manhattan, and we can't make every route an SBS route, but we can maybe make some of the lessons from the SBS, and require the vehicles, all the buses to, and then, of course is the--the boarding and source of bus lanes. Anyway, this is why I'm here today asking you elected officials, the MTA and the DOT to adopt the recommendations of the Bus Turnaround Report, and the recommendations will go a long way to the 2-1/2 million people that use these buses everyday, and we need these reliable buses, and I think this campaign report has a lot of good information in it, and I thank you for your time.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. The next to the last panel is going to be Geraldine--

FEMALE SPEAKER: [off mic]

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Oh, I'm sorry.
[laughter] I apologize.

NATASHA SAUNDERS: My name is Natasha Saunders and I'm a Queens resident, and I work as an

agent in Manhattan, and I've lived in this state my entire life, and I have always taken the bus in order to get and fro. I work very long hours like a lot of New Yorkers. I work over 40 hours a week and I have to wait for 20 minutes or more for a bus at Jamaica Bus Terminal everyday. When they do come, they're bunched together, and then they are crowded. So many of us have to wait for, you know, additional buses to come, which could perhaps could be an additional 15 to 20 minutes. On top of that, the expenses that I have to and many other commuters have to spend on top of their Metro Card to take the dollar van to the train station. Sometimes illegal on top of having to take an Uber or a Lyft. The dollar vans and the private cab companies and the private cab drivers are making a business out of serving communities that are being plagued by terrible bus service, and it's a lot for us. On the weekends the buses run every half hour. After midnight they pretty much shut down. So basically in a city that never sleeps, the commuters that go to work on the weekends or work late or are coming home late are left stranded and they are forced to basically have to find alternative methods of transportation like spending more money for cabs,

and it's very frustrating. So, I—I came here today teamed up with the Riders Alliance to basically talk to the FDA, the DOT, the officials, and see if they could adopt the recommendations of the Bus Turnaround Campaign because they're doing a lot. They have a lot of methods as far as some of the buses first, the 2.5 million riders first. Just listening to a lot of stories, I can't believe that it's so bad in all the boroughs. So we just ask that more be done, and just consider the needs that we need. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: I'm sorry. So now we're ready for the next panel. Teri Cude, Corey Vera, Andrea Leslie, Leslie, right? That's you? Stephan Bowman, Bernard Salsberg (sic) Bernard Stanley, Captain Fred and Kevin Broderick. [background comments, pause] The next panel of—I thought we have eight.

TERI CUDE: Good afternoon, Chair Rodriguez and Council Members. I'm Teri Cude, First Vice Chair of Community Board 2, Manhattan. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I'll talk about our local routes to and through our community. Council Member Chin has several copies of the several—the solutions we have passed in desperation

on this issue. In 2010, MTA, of course, held a set of convenient and easily accessible bus routes that fully served users through Greenwich Village, SoHo, parts of NoHo, Little Italy, and China Town. They shortened and diverted the M1, lengthened and relocated the M5 and eliminated the M6. CB2 has written several resolutions protesting this loss of service in our area, and providing suggestions for relief. Countless constituents including seniors, those with young children, and people with disabilities have been asking us to help get them better bus service once these changes occurred. Ideally, the pre-2010 routes should be restored to the degree possible, at the very least in CM 1, 2, 3 and 5 all currently travel down Fifth Avenue. CB2 urges that that one of these should take the fork at approximately 24th Street to travel down Broadway to Union Square. We request that additional buses such as the M1 continue down Broadway to South Street or at least Fourth Street and travel uptown via Center to Lafayette to fill an enormous gap in service. Last, we hope to see the MTA have the M5 become local south of 14th Street and turn west on Houston ending near Sixth Avenue twice an hour before starting

uptown on Sixth Avenue where the bus shelter returns to Houston. In addition to these recommendations, one way to enhance public bus service is to better control the sightseeing tour buses clogging Broadway often taking up bus lanes, bus stops and the remaining travel lane to pick up and discharge passengers and fight their way around each other to fight for passengers as well as using their presence as advertising vehicles. Loop privileges, which we were offered when another group was discontinued, the drivers do not always allow the seniors or--or other passengers to stay on the bus or to even get on the bus to ride it around towards the other way. I am concerned about moving stops further away. I've heard that spoken of by other speakers. Mobility challenged persons need closer not farther stops. Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I hope you can help us get this three (sic) buses.

[pause]

STEPHAN BOWMAN: Thank you letting a Contrarian (sic) speak. My name is Stephan Bowman. I've been trying to apply the engineering and the scientific analysis skills that I learned in college to New York City Transit. I'm also a retired senior

citizen so for now I have a lot of time to pursue this analysis. The following is observations of my own. They do not represent any organization that I am a member. I'm not against frequent fast and reliable bus service, but bus service in New York City is better than advertised. Its critics are basing their assessment on a single parameter: average bus speed. Emphasizing a single parameter ignores how New Yorkers use buses. Some of the recommendations would result in wrong or average trips. The first chart and paragraph on the first page shows you the conventional analysis that has been presented showing that in the—in seven selected city bus—average bus speeds range from 7.4 miles per hour in New York City to 10.7. However, the average speed is only one parameter. It depends upon how long the trip is that people have not looked at. New York City has a vast subway system. If you take a look at the same data from the National Transportation Data Base you find out that the average New York City bus trip—bus is only 2.2 miles, and they range for these same cities up to 4 miles for Los Angeles. Put two and two together, and what the average New Yorker wants to know is how long is

the bus route going to take? If you look at this, you find out in the second page in the bar chart that they average between 16.1 and 4-18.4 minutes with New York coming in at 17.6. Los Angeles despite its higher bus speed, highest bus speed, is the outlier. It comes in at 22.6 minutes. So, therefore, to get from best-from worst to best in terms of time or get to this in terms of total trip time, all the difference is 90 seconds to work with. [bell] Given-given the-let me just do one set for you. Given however the time of the trip is only one part. Another thing is the walk from-to and from the bus stop. If you take a look, I've reduced the New York City bus schedule for the different types of buses in the chart between local, limited and SBS buses, and taken a look at the average distance between stops. If you factor in the walk to and from buses, and the average speed based upon the time, you find that's something rather interesting. The longest bus trip from destination-origin to destination happens to be from SBS buses. The shortest happens to be local buses due to the fact that the trip is short, and essentially you're taking one minute to walk every extra block in-in terms of something like that. I

have additional stuff with regard to why the buses have had decreased use. It's based upon the population trends. I have used up my time. I thank you for your consideration.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

COREY BEARAK: Hi. I'm Corey Bearak and I'm the Policy and Political Director for Amalgamated Transit Union Office 1056 and 1179, and this testimony is on behalf of the presidents of the locals, Mark Henry and Benny Calhoun. Mark Henry is also Chair of the ATU Legislative Board that includes other ATU locals in New York City, and I hope you can make the whole testimony part of the record as well, but I want to emphasize that as bus operators and maintainers, our locals are expert about these issues, and we will need to be consulted more by the Council, by DOT, by MTA on what needs to be done. And since we have not a lot of time, I'm going to go into specific recommendations we have, which includes restore to maintain the remaining bus services parts from 2010, expanding bus service to all bus service to operate 24 hours, introducing more express bus service in Southeast Queens at the level that's serving Northern Queens. Acquire more buses to

deploy an existing revised and new routes, which is a key component of any improvement plan. You heard the discussion at the beginning of the meeting with Councilman Miller was talking about having more buses. The MTA was bringing on, but that's talk about expanding—let's not talk about expanding capacity, but that's just replacing existing buses. We need to bring that number up 25 or 30% probably or maybe more to address the needs in New York City. We need to identify a need for new bus terminals. Councilman Koo talked about the downtown bussing area, and how it's plagued by congestion and that's an area, which is a prime candidate for a depot, and we need to get something sited not just to hand us a couple of lines, but all the lines there. We need to look at our bus depots that need repair or replacement and schedule that [bell]. We need to adjust the congestion on Local 9 and to bring more buses to meet service needs during rush hours, and this with starting buses further on routes so more riders can get a timely route-ride. It should look also by instituting all fare bus collection not just for SBS and obviously dedicated lines for local and limited bus routes such as you know you pretty much

enjoyed just really in Manhattan. And then something that's also been advocated by Councilman Miller, implementing free transfer between the commuter rail and Bus Public Transit, which we already have in terms of the subways, which bring the buses and express buses. And we want to also recommend that the entity that's looking at the DQX, which we like to call the rail to nowhere, it should also be you linking the waterfront neighborhoods using buses because that can happen almost instantaneously. The bottom line is we need a holistic approach, some sort of pass with this approach that brings the MTA, DOT, the City Council the unions and advocates together, working to get this done. If there's any questions I have a bus operator who is expert on this, Kevin Brady, who is with me. [pause]

KEVIN BRADY: Hi, I'm Kevin Brady. I'm a 20—I'm 29-year veteran with New York City Transit. I've spent nine years with ATU 1056 as the representative. I was asked by Mark Henry, our President, to come down and speak a little bit about some of the things that we need to get done to see improvements in bus transit. SBS we think should be expanded. It has saved time on the 44 route, our Q44

in Queens, roughly 11 minutes per trip per bus early in the morning as a sample. Unfortunately, I found working with Transit in an operations planning meeting that the wheels on the buses aren't the only thing that moves slowly. As some of the Council Members have found with the bus, it sounds very frustrating to them of having to wait and wait and wait to get responses from Transit because they have to check with DOT. We need to find a way to streamline some of that process to really make the improvements quickly so that we can stay on top of--on--on the way on implementing where the buses need to be and when they need to be there. The buses they use just takes too long. Corey pretty much told us about some of this stuff. [laughs] I'll stop there.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you everyone, and with your presentation we come to the end of this hearing. This is only a beginning or a conversation about improving--what to do to improve those services. And continue improving those services in our city, that will require the participation of everyone from the locals to advocacy group to MTA and DOT. Before we end it, I would like to thank the Transportation staff who work in our committee. Do I

1 COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION 137

2 have the names here, they're here. Shima I know and
3 Kelly Taylor, our Counsel, Shima Obichere, Financial
4 Analyst, Gafar Zaaloff, Jonathan Masserano; Emily
5 Rooney, Policy Analyst and my Chief of Staff Rosa
6 Murphy. Again, this is the end of this hearing about
7 improving buses in New York City. [gavel]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date October 25, 2016