



CITY OF NEW YORK

**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

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**COREY JOHNSON**  
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District Manager

May 3, 2012

Margaret Forgione  
Manhattan Borough Commissioner  
New York City Department of Transportation  
55 Water Street, 9th Floor  
New York, New York 10041

**Re: 34<sup>th</sup> Street Select Bus service**

Dear Commissioner Forgione:

Manhattan Community Board 4 (CB4) continues to be supportive of 34th Street Select Bus Service (SBS); formerly called Transitway. The changes implemented to date have decreased bus travel time along West 34<sup>th</sup> Street and we anticipate its full implementation will lead to further improvements.

However CB4 is dismayed that the SBS project is moving towards full implementation in July 2012 while major issues for West Side residents have not yet been addressed. Specifically, we request that the Department of Transportation (DOT) devise a solution to the inadequate amount of loading space included in the current plan on the north side of W. 34th Street between Dyer and Tenth Avenues. In addition to that request we ask that DOT address two other issues –that the bus lane will cause increased peak hour back-up to the already intolerable traffic conditions along W. 34th Street east of Dyer, and that the Bolt Bus curbside station will conflict with the SBS on W. 34th Street between Eighth and Ninth Avenues.

- The current proposal includes four-five loading/unloading spaces, plus an additional four-five loading/unloading spaces during off-peak hours on the north curb of W. 34<sup>th</sup> Street between Dyer and Tenth Avenues. This does not adequately meet the needs of the nearly 1,000 residents and four-five businesses on that block. We continue to strongly advocate for the Port Authority to eliminate the northbound entry onto Dyer Avenue from W. 34th Street, thus enabling the existing bus stop to be relocated from just west of Dyer Avenue to just East of Dyer Avenue opening additional loading/unloading west of Dyer Avenue;
- While we will continue to advocate for the above, we reiterate our proposal from last month that in the interim DOT consolidate two bus stops – the one west of Dyer Avenue and one east of Ninth Avenue - into a single bus stop just west of Ninth Avenue, while retaining a few loading spaces between the bus stop and the right turn lane onto Dyer. We do not feel the justification provided by DOT for not accepting this proposal is sufficient, particularly since reducing one bus stop will improve bus performance time.
- We further request that additional signage showing alternate route to the Lincoln Tunnel be installed at

the intersection of W. 34<sup>th</sup> Street and Ninth Avenue and again at W. 34<sup>th</sup> Street and Dyer Avenue. Such signage would direct the traffic to Eleventh Avenue and W. 40<sup>th</sup> Street.

- CB4 has already requested the relocation of the long distance Bolt Bus Sidewalk Terminal currently adjacent to the Bus stop at the northwest corner of W. 34<sup>th</sup> Street at Eighth Avenue because it is not consistent with the proposed bus lane. This configuration is not viable from transportation or a loading standpoint. We have not received a commitment that the Bolt Bus stop will be relocated by July and where it will be moving.

CB4 recommends that some capital funding – either as alteration/addition or as new 2014 funding be put aside to adjust the configuration at W. 34<sup>th</sup> Street and Dyer Avenue and possibly relocate the bus stop bulb outs based on the first few months of operations. This intersection is complex and unique and based on our experience on the ground, will likely need adjustments.

We also want to confirm that all pedestrian crossings along the corridor will be brought in compliance with ADA guidelines, including the installation of pedestrian ramps where they are missing (an example is the south side of W. 34<sup>th</sup> Street at the west crossing of Dyer Avenue), and that all ramps will be equipped with truncated domes. In addition, we note that the buses along the SBS route will have the ability to alter traffic light signals. Since such changes in timing can be confusing to those who are visually impaired who are used to set crossing times, we request that all intersections along the SBS route have audible time signals.

DOT indicated that the real time arrival panels on bus stops – which had been provided under a pilot program - are being discontinued by MTA and replaced with a smartphone application. CB4 requests that the bus stops continue to have real time arrival panels, as many of residents do not own smart phones.

We understand that designing the 34th Street Select Bus Service offers many technical complexities. We also appreciate the several changes DOT has already made to the SBS during the last several months at the request of the community and CB4. However providing a reasonable amount of curb access for residents and maintaining the viability of local businesses for this Community Board is equally important to its success.



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