



Woodhaven / Cross Bay Boulevards Q52/53 Select Bus Service Spring 2015 Design Workshops Summary



Executive Summary

In April 2015, NYCDOT and the MTA held four design workshops to update the community on the Woodhaven / Cross Bay Boulevard (Q52/Q53) Select Bus Service (SBS) project and to gain feedback on proposed street designs for the corridor and proposed SBS bus stops. Meetings were conducted in workshop format, consisting of small group presentations at tables followed by interactive exercises to gather feedback about the proposed street designs and SBS bus stops. In total, more than 200 members of the community attended the design workshops.

Workshop Locations

The corridor was divided into four focus areas in order to allow community members an opportunity to provide feedback on specific sections of the corridor. A design workshop was held within each focus area – the locations, dates, and times are listed below:

Workshop 1: Woodhaven Blvd from Union Tpke to Rockaway Boulevard

Thursday, April 16, 2015
PS 306 – NYC Academy for Discovery – Cafeteria
96-16 89th Avenue
Woodhaven, NY 11421
Attendees: 57

Workshop 2: Woodhaven Blvd from Queens Blvd to Union Tpke

Thursday, April 23, 2015
Queens Metropolitan High School – Library
91-30 Metropolitan Avenue
Forest Hills, NY 11366
Attendees: 53

Workshop 3: Cross Bay Boulevard

Wednesday, April 29, 2015
PS 146 – The Howard Beach School – Cafeteria
9801 189th Avenue
Howard Beach, NY 11414
Attendees: 60

Workshop 4: The Rockaways

Thursday, April 30, 2015
PS 42 – The Robert Vernam School – Science Classrooms
488 Beach 66th Street
Arverne, NY 11692
Attendees: 33



Workshop Format

The design workshops had a rolling start; participants were invited to arrive anytime throughout the 2-hour meeting. Upon entering the meeting, participants were assigned to a table with approximately five other community members and a MTA or DOT facilitator.

At each table, the facilitator would begin with a 20 slide presentation about the project, including information about the SBS program, background on the corridor, and the continued development of the planning process, including previous community engagement and feedback to date.

During and after each presentation, participants had the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback about the project. After the table presentation, the facilitator brought out a set of materials for discussion, including a map of the proposed SBS bus stops and specific design options for the focus area.

Following the table presentation and group discussion, participants were invited to move to tables with large-scale street designs located in the back of the room. At the design tables, participants were able to view the proposed block-by-block designs for the section of the corridor that the workshop focused on (e.g. the design plans for Cross Bay Boulevard were shown at

Workshop 3: Cross Bay Boulevard held in Howard Beach), provide feedback on the plans, and talk directly with project staff.

If a participant had a question or comment about a different segment of the corridor, a project staff member brought out those design plans and addressed questions or comments. All of the design plans showed proposed bus lanes, medians, turning regulations, and other features. Project staff recorded location specific questions and comments using post-it notes that were put directly on the design plans.

Many project elements were discussed at each meeting including:

- Bus lanes
- Roadway consistency
- Parking, deliveries, and curbside use
- Traffic flow
- Bus boarding islands and bus bulbs
- Service roads
- Slip lanes
- Enhanced pedestrian crossings, including medians and pedestrian refuges
- Left turn restrictions
- Proposed SBS bus stop locations
- Bus stop amenities



Workshop Materials

All of the materials that were used during the design workshops can be found on the project website. Links for each meeting are provided below.

Additionally, participants were given a newsletter about project progress on the corridor:

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/brt/downloads/pdf/2015-04-01-brt-woodhaven-newsletter-1-spring2015.pdf>

Workshop 1: Woodhaven Boulevard from Union Turnpike to Rockaway Boulevard

Presentation:

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/brt/downloads/pdf/2015-04-16-brt-woodhaven-dw1-presentation.pdf>

Discussion Materials:

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/brt/downloads/pdf/2015-04-16-brt-woodhaven-dw1-discussionmaterials.pdf>

Draft plans for Woodhaven Boulevard between Union Turnpike and Rockaway Boulevard:

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/brt/downloads/pdf/2015-04-16-brt-woodhaven-dw1-draftplans.pdf>

Workshop 2: Woodhaven Boulevard from Queens Boulevard to Union Turnpike

Presentation:

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/brt/downloads/pdf/2015-04-23-brt-woodhaven-dw2-presentation.pdf>

Discussion Materials:

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/brt/downloads/pdf/2015-04-23-brt-woodhaven-dw2-discussionmaterials.pdf>

Draft plans for Woodhaven Boulevard between Queens Boulevard and Union Turnpike:

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/brt/downloads/pdf/2015-04-23-brt-woodhaven-dw2-draftplans.pdf>

Workshop 3: Cross Bay Boulevard

Presentation:

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/brt/downloads/pdf/2015-04-29-brt-woodhaven-dw3-presentation.pdf>

Discussion Materials:

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/brt/downloads/pdf/2015-04-29-brt-woodhaven-dw3-discussionmaterials.pdf>

Draft plans for Woodhaven Boulevard between Queens Boulevard and Union Turnpike:

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/brt/downloads/pdf/2015-04-29-brt-woodhaven-dw3-draftplans.pdf>

Workshop 4: The Rockaways

Presentation:

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/brt/downloads/pdf/2015-04-30-brt-woodhaven-dw4-presentation.pdf>

Discussion Materials:

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/brt/downloads/pdf/2015-04-30-brt-woodhaven-dw4-discussionmaterials.pdf>

Community Feedback

General Comments

Transit service

- Concern about SBS fare evasion.
- The Q52/53 should operate as local buses after 11pm.
- Off-board fare payment is desired on local buses as well.
- Transferring between an SBS and local bus in the corridor will use up the free transfer to another bus route or subway.
- There are too many different bus routes on Woodhaven Blvd.
- Need better frequency on all buses; keep local buses reliable.
- Consider a “Super SBS” with no stops between Queens Blvd and the Rockaways.
- Request for articulated buses on the corridor.
- Extend north end of Q52 to Woodside or LGA; eliminate Q70.
- Off-board fare payment is a waste of paper and not eco-friendly. Smart cards would be better.
- Distance/zone pricing suggested to increase ridership.
- Operate overnight service.



Bus lanes

- Physical separation is necessary to keep general traffic out of bus lanes.
- Bus lanes require effective enforcement.
- Local buses may impede SBS buses.
- Concern about too many buses in bus lanes. Buses are backed up now at bus stops; would take up space in regular lanes as they try to pass each other.
- Queuing on the slip lanes may block bus lanes.
- Consider two bus lanes in each direction (local and express).
- The bus lane could also be an HOV lane.
- Buses should be in the center of Woodhaven Blvd.



SBS bus stops

- When SBS bus stops are located between service and main roads, high barriers are needed to prevent unsafe crossing of the service road.
- Need barriers high enough at bus stops to prevent passengers from jumping over them.
- Need to ensure ADA accessibility at SBS bus stops.
- Need to ensure there is adequate lighting at median bus stops and that the bus stops are ADA accessible.
- The community should be informed about the detailed design of the median bus stops (fencing, shelters, etc) and proposed locations for a physically separated bus lane.

Safety

- Request for improvements to help the elderly cross wide streets more safely.
- SBS bus stops on main road of Woodhaven Blvd will require riders to cross service road.

Traffic

- Left turn restrictions will divert more traffic onto side streets and require more time for drivers.
- Specific concerns regarding left turn bans at Metropolitan, Myrtle, Jamaica, and Rockaway.
- Slip lanes between main and service roads are needed, along with signage and advanced warning for drivers.
- Signage is needed to give drivers advanced notice of turn restrictions.
- Changing a general traffic lane to a bus-only lane will negatively impact all traffic.
- Reducing the number of general traffic lanes may make passage more difficult for emergency vehicles.
- Need advance warning for left turn bans and alternate routes.
- School buses, trucks, and Access-A-Ride vehicles are in main road, causing traffic backups.
- Sanitation trucks need to stop doing pick-ups during rush hour.

Parking

- Curbside deliveries are an issue on Woodhaven Blvd.
- Request not to remove any on-street parking.

Community Engagement

- Community engagement should continue after SBS service begins to monitor and adjust.
- Please include the map or proposed bus stops on the NYCDOT website.
- Provide the full concept design online.

Other

- Speed limit should be 25mph.
- Green infrastructure would be beneficial to incorporate into project; maintenance is very important.
- Bring back Long Island Rail Road (LIRR).



Comments by Focus Area

Woodhaven Boulevard: Queens Boulevard to Union Turnpike

- Support for Cooper Avenue as an alternative for left turns at Metropolitan.
- Concern about Trotting Course Lane becoming a two-way street.
- Bus lanes should extend on the bridge over the LIRR.
- Expand the bridge over the LIRR to accommodate bus lane on side.
- The maneuver from eastbound Eliot Ave to eastbound Eliot Ave via Woodhaven Blvd is dangerous due to visibility issues at the LIRR underpass. Vehicles should take eastbound Eliot Ave to northbound Woodhaven Blvd to eastbound Booth St.
- Need a northbound slip lane from 65 Rd to just south of or north of 64th Rd.
- Northbound at Alderton: service lane dead end should be a safer merge. Need solid line between mainline and bus/service lane.
- Wendy's bus stop at Metropolitan is unsafe. Bus stop in Design Concept #2 is a big improvement.
- Hot dog truck owner concerned about being displaced near World Gym.
- Concern about traffic over bridge near Union Turnpike.
- Traffic is often improved south of Home Depot.
- Southbound Woodhaven drivers could make illegal U-turns to get to Yellowstone Blvd.
- Metropolitan & Woodhaven is very dangerous.
- Metropolitan signal synchronization is an issue (unable to clear more than one intersection per light cycle).
- 68 Rd has constant double parking.
- Consider physical separation between bus lane and general traffic near Queens Blvd.
- Potential problem with emergency vehicles merging from general lanes to right-turn lane to Long Island Expressway (L.I.E.) on-ramp.

Woodhaven Boulevard: Union Turnpike to Rockaway Boulevard/Liberty Avenue

- Skipping Atlantic on the SBS is OK to improve speed.
- Moving bus stop from Atlantic Avenue to 91st Street will inconvenience riders.
- Move northbound bus stop at 81st Rd to "near side" of intersection.
- The bus stop at 101 Ave is a good idea (connects to the Q8).
- The Park Lane South bus stop elimination requires a difficult walk due to elevation.
- Support for an SBS stop at 101 Av.
- Sidewalks need to be improved between proposed 91 Av bus stop and Atlantic Avenue.
- Proposed 101 Av turn restriction will improve safety for students crossing Woodhaven.
- Need left turn on Jamaica Ave.
- Left turn restrictions are better south of Rockaway Blvd because the street grid offers more options.
- Left turns at 85th/86th not seen as a fair trade for Jamaica left turn restriction.
- If you miss exit at Atlantic Av it would require too great a distance before you could turn left again.
- Sidewalks need fixing, notably connecting 91 Av and Atlantic.
- 101 Av – 100 St – need lighting under the overpass.

Cross Bay Boulevard: Rockaway Boulevard to 165 Av

- Support for new Pitkin Avenue bus stop.
- Add Pitkin stop before SBS implementation.
- Traffic often backs up near Pitkin Avenue.
- Congestion along Cross Bay Blvd in the Broad Channel area: Not too bad during weekday rush hours, very bad during summer months re: Rockaway Beach access.
- Perceived higher percentage of car use on the southern portion of the corridor.
- Cross Bay Blvd congestion is a problem during the summer months (for beach access).
- Double parking is a problem on Cross Bay Blvd.
- Proposed changes to Van Wicklen Road for a plaza should include public hearings.
- Oppose left turn restriction at Rockaway Blvd.
- Speeding problems on Cross Bay at connection to Belt Parkway.
- Need left turns at 156th and 157th.
- Russo's Restaurant valet parking backs up past 163 Av south.
- Albert Rd needs a light.
- Conduit South currently has 5-6 cars doing left on red; need red light camera.
- Need a one-bus trip from Howard Beach to Whitestone.
- Rockaway rail line re-established to alleviate the traffic on Woodhaven/Cross Bay.

The Rockaways

- Extend the Q52 to Far Rockaway-Mott Av.
- Possible extensions of the Q52 in the Rockaways:
Bus starts at a depot at around Beach 47th Street:
The bus route should at least be extended to there.
- Try service extension on an experimental basis.
- Bus extension could aid the economy of this subarea.
- Request for Q52 expansion to happen prior to capital project.
- Extend to Sea Girt, not to Far Rockaway.
- Extend the Q53 to Breezy Point.
- Extend Q22 to Breezy Point.
- Project goals should articulate Rockaways-related goals.
- Between 2pm & 5pm lots of buses are needed because of the schools.
- Beach 100 St pickup at 2:15pm & 3:04pm school buses (MTA).
- Limit bike lanes - use space for bus lanes (Rockaways).
- There are only two ADA accessible subway stations in the Rockaways.
- Reduce unnecessary transfer by extending Q52 to Far Rockaway.
- Look forward to this getting started (choose the right concept).
- Strongly against eliminating bus stops on Q52 and in Broad Channel.
- Transit customers tend to take bus trip (Q52 or Q53) to Rockaway Blvd to transfer to A train.
Benefits: multiple services (Lefferts/Far Rockaway A), no waiting with shuttle train.
- Not opposed to the SBS service, but concerned that the City is not taking seriously the proposal for reactivation of the LIRR Rockaway Line.

FAQs

During the workshops, participants asked questions across many different topics. These questions and their responses can be found under “Frequency Asked Questions (FAQ’s)” on the project website :

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/brt/html/routes/woodhaven.shtml#faqs>

Throughout the project, DOT and the MTA will continue to update the FAQs.