

181st Street Busway

Community Advisory Board Meeting – June 23, 2022



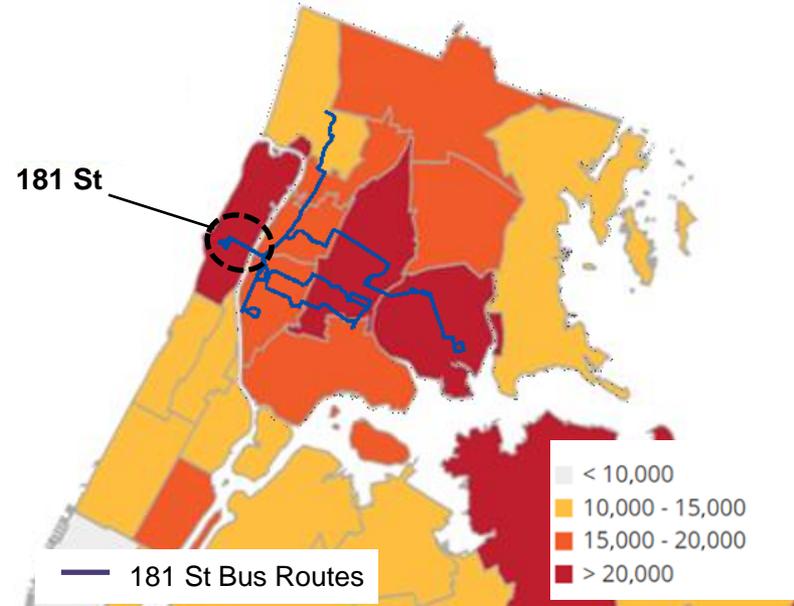
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Background

Why 181st Street?

- 5 MTA bus routes
- 68,000 weekday passengers on average
- Routes serve neighborhoods with high concentrations of essential workers
- Bus passengers comprise 62%-70% of roadway users
- Pre-Busway, average bus speeds were 3.7 mph
- 69% of Washington Heights and Inwood households do not have access to a car



Outreach History

Busway Launched
April 26, 2021

1. CAB Kickoff Meeting – July 7, 2020
2. Meeting with Small Business Services (SBS) – July 2020
3. Meeting with Washington Heights BID – August 2020
4. Presented draft Busway plan
 1. CAB Meeting #2 – September 3, 2020
 2. Presented to Community Board 12 Transportation Committee – November 2, 2020
5. Meeting with FDNY – November 13, 2020
6. Presented final Busway plan
 1. CAB Meeting #3 – January 7, 2021
 2. Presented to Community Board 12 Transportation Committee – February 1, 2021
7. Meeting with Yeshiva University – February 2021
8. Meeting with Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) – April 2021
9. Presented post-implementation updates
 1. CAB Meeting #4 – February 4, 2022
 2. Presented to Community Board 12 Transportation Committee – February 7, 2022
10. On-street bus rider survey – April 18 – 22, 2022
11. Business walk-through with WHBID and CM De La Rosa's office – May 17, 2022

Monitoring and Updates

Updates Since Busway Launch: Signal Timing and Bus Stop Furniture

June 2021:

- Signal timing changes along Broadway to help facilitate traffic flow

October 2021:

- Bus stop consolidation on 181st St / St. Nicholas Ave
 - Included bench relocation and new Leaning Bar



Updates Since Busway Launch: Gantry Signage

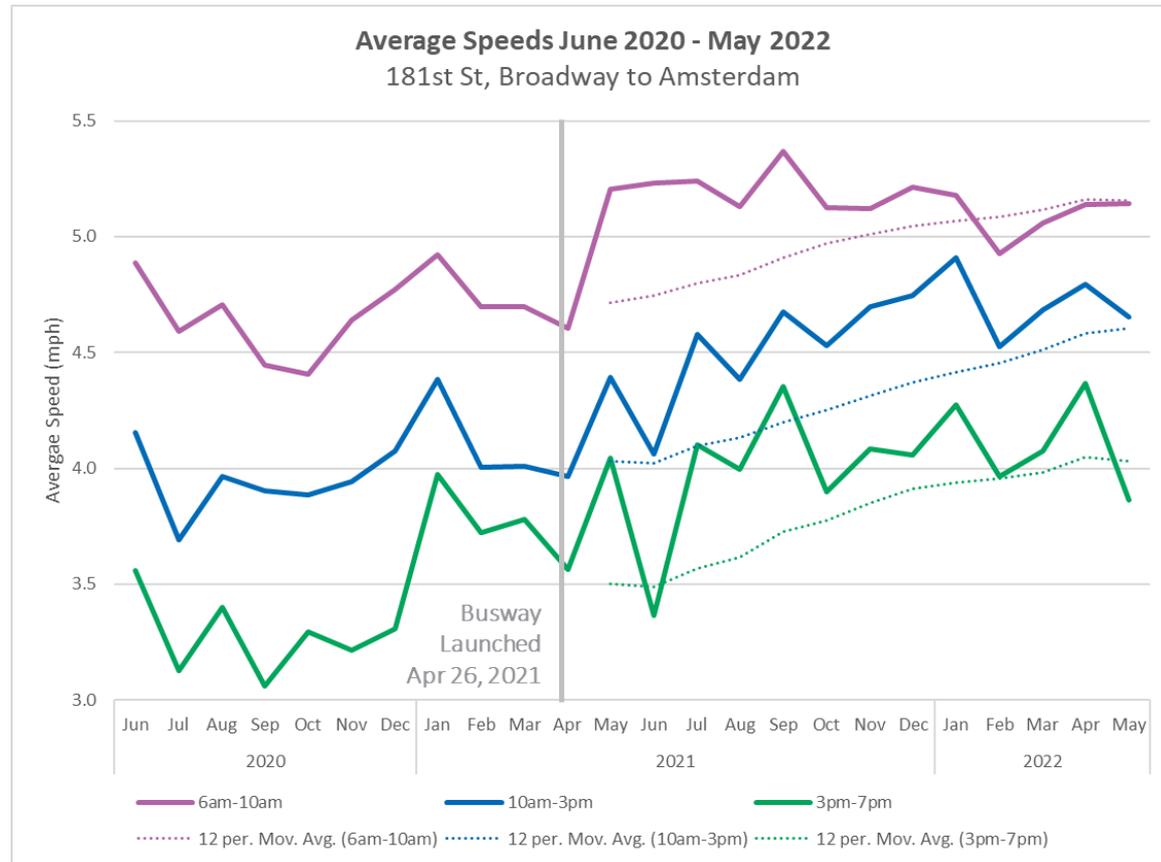
December 2021:

- Gantry signage installed approaching 181st St/ Audubon Ave and at 181st St/ Wadsworth Ave to increase visibility of busway regulations



Bus Speeds

- Average bus speed for all routes using the busway increased throughout the day
- Speed improvements up to 32% during the AM and PM peaks
- Greatest speed gains were in the WB direction
- On average, speeds have continued to improve after implementation



Source: MTA

On-Street Outreach

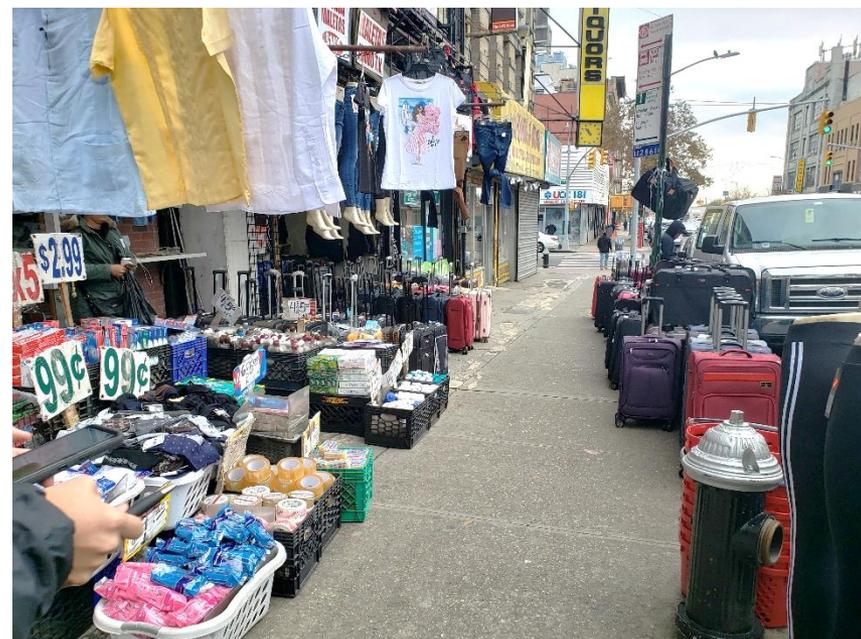
Door-to-Door Business Outreach

May 17, 2022

DOT, WHBID, and staff from CM De La Rosa's office went door-to-door to businesses on 181st St to hear concerns

Key concerns raised included:

- Customers confused about Busway regulations, afraid of getting tickets
- Safety and quality of life concerns in the evening
- Parking availability, including impacts of ConEd construction staging
- Commercial loading hours do not match the when deliveries are made
- Street vending



Bus Rider Survey

April 18 – 22, 2022:

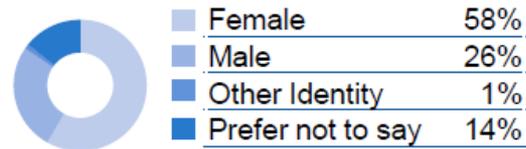
DOT conducted on-street outreach to bus riders to gather feedback on their experience with the Busway



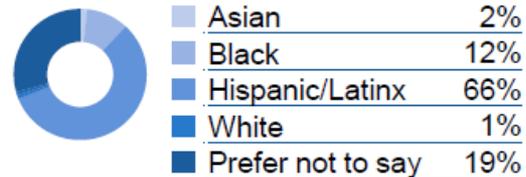
Bus Rider Survey: Demographics

- 220 surveys completed; 500+ on-street conversations
- Majority of respondents lived in Washington Heights
- Majority of respondents relied on the bus as their main form of transportation
- Shopping was the most common form of activity they conducted along 181st St
- Food/beverage, service industry, and retail were most common forms of businesses they frequented

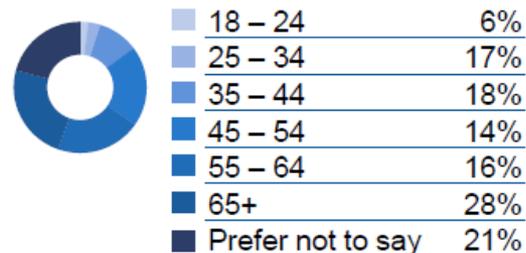
Gender



Race



Participant Age Group



Typical Transportation Mode(s)



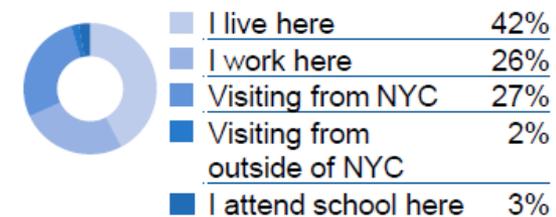
What brings you to 181st Street today?



Which type of businesses do you frequent on 181st Street?



Relationship to 181st Street



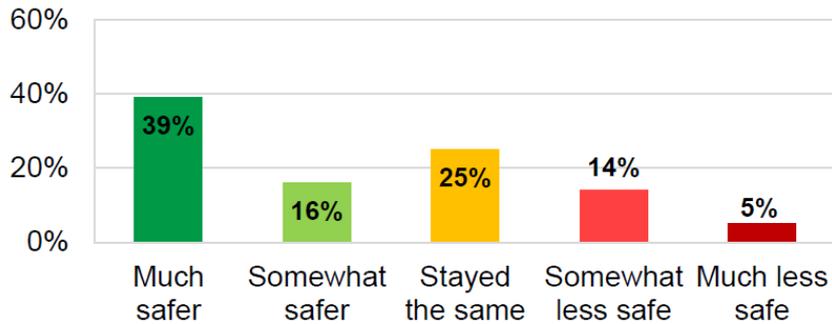
Bus Rider Survey:

Perceptions of 181st St After Busway

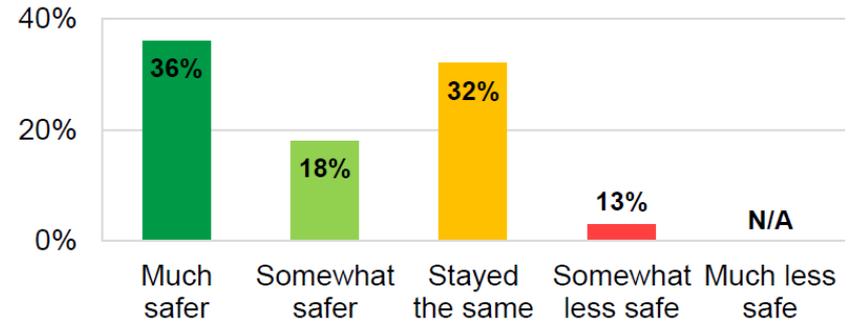
Experience crossing down 181st Street feels...



For those who identified as Pedestrians



For those who identified as seniors (62+) and persons with disabilities



Bus Trips and Service along 181st Street...

Bus service feels	<i>More frequent</i>	<i>Stayed the same</i>	<i>Less frequent</i>	<i>I don't know</i>
	57%	27%	13%	4%
Bus travel is	<i>Faster</i>	<i>Stayed the same</i>	<i>Slower</i>	<i>I don't know</i>
	60%	26%	10%	5%

Bus Rider Survey: Top Benefits

According to survey respondents, the top benefits of the Busway have been:

Quality of bus service	49%
Reduced vehicular traffic on 181st St	41%
Additional pedestrian space for safer street crossings	59%
Improved environmental quality (noise, vehicle exhaust)	25%
There have been no benefits to the 181st St Busway	14%

*Respondents could choose multiple benefits

Comments included:

- Number of buses have increased, and service has gotten better
- Pedestrians see fewer conflict with vehicles, and feels safer crossing 181st St
- Reduced congestion along Busway limits

Bus Rider Survey: Top Challenges

According to survey respondents, the top challenges of the Busway have been:

There have been no challenges to the 181st St Busway	45%
Quality of bus service	30%
Pedestrian safety	21%
Access to businesses	14%
Other	9%
Access to taxi, Uber, Lyft, Via	5%

*Respondents could choose multiple challenges

Comments included:

- Increased traffic and congestion near the Washington Bridge, where the Busway ends
- Bus service is still slow and inadequate along the following lines: Bx3, Bx11, Bx13
- Confusing signage
- Bus stop crowding is still a concern

Next Steps

Next Steps

181st St Busway:

- Reduce Busway hours based on community feedback
 - New regulations: 6 AM – 8 PM, 7-days/week
- Move to make Busway pilot permanent

Ongoing DOT work to address community concerns:

- Adjust curb regulation on southwest corner of 181st St/Audubon Ave
- Adjust commercial loading hours to afternoon and allow morning parking
- Work with ConEd to explore alternatives to on-street storage of construction materials to free up parking spaces
- Continue to monitor traffic on side streets

Thank you

Questions?



NYC DOT



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