

Better Buses Restart – 5th Avenue Busway Pilot

Community Advisory Board #2, July 28, 2020



© NYC DOT



BETTERBUSES



Table of Contents

- Recap of 1st CAB Meeting (July 1, 2020)
- Travel Patterns Along 5th Avenue
- Preliminary Design Proposal
- Next Steps

Recap of 5th Ave CAB #1

Better Buses Restart Plan

- In June, Mayor de Blasio announced a plan for fast, reliable transit service during reopening
 - Buses have played a vital role during the shutdown and recovery
 - Bus ridership is already at 54% of pre-Covid levels, while subway ridership is only at 23%
- 5th Ave is one of five new busway pilots, with a 12-month pilot period
- These projects will help people get around more easily, with better service and less crowding



Recap of 5th Ave CAB #1

5th Avenue – 57th Street to 34th Street

- Major commercial/retail corridor and tourist destination
- Critical bus corridor for commuters from across the city
- High pedestrian and cyclist volumes
- Safety concerns
- Community requests for improvements



Recap of 5th Ave CAB #1

Proposed Busway Treatments



Dual Bus Lanes



Sidewalk Extensions



Through-traffic Restrictions – example from 14th St



Local Traffic Access & Pickup/Drop-off Zones

Protected Bike Lane

Issues Raised at CAB #1

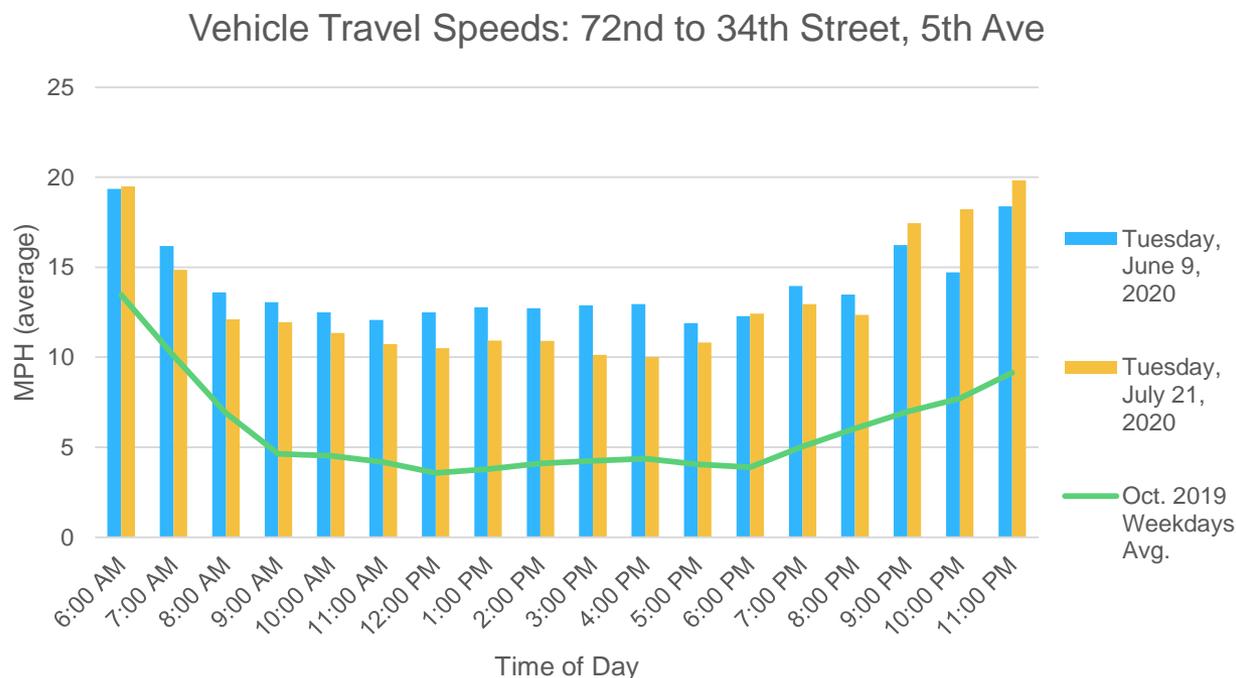
- Accelerated timeline of project
- Enforcement
- Taxi/FHV pickup/drop-off
- Local access for vehicle traffic
- Busway and turn regulations

Travel Patterns Along 5th Avenue

Travel Patterns Along 5th Avenue

Vehicle Travel Speeds

- During pandemic, speeds greatly increased as volumes dropped
- As traffic begins to return, however, daytime speeds are dropping and will continue to decrease
- Important to make changes **now** before congestion fully returns



Travel Patterns Along 5th Avenue

Busway Potential to Improve Speeds

- Decreases in traffic during the pandemic also led to significant speed increases for buses
- AM Peak bus speeds increased 32%, PM speeds increased 48%
- Shows potential for improvement that busway can provide

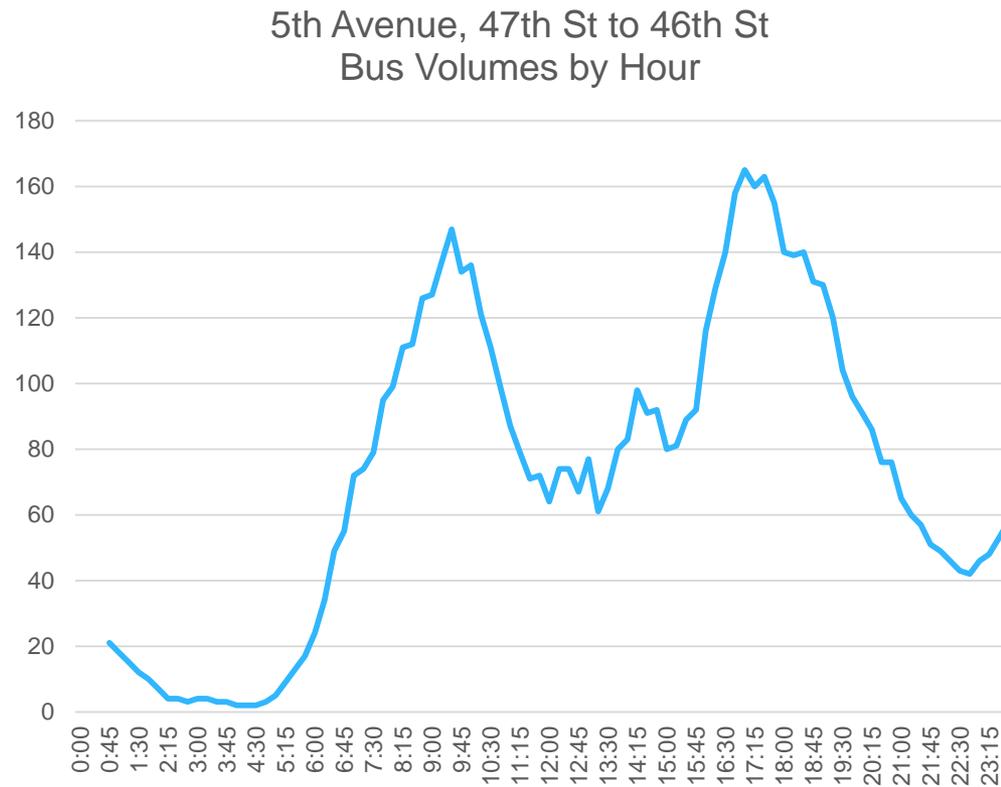
5 th Avenue from 60 St to 37 St			
Time	Avg. Bus Speed Spring 2019	Avg. Bus Speed Spring 2020	% Chg.
7 – 9 AM	9.0	11.8	+32%
4 – 7 PM	7.9	11.7	+48%

Source: MTA Q32 Bus Speeds Data

Travel Patterns Along 5th Avenue

Bus Ridership & Frequency

- 110,000 daily bus riders on routes serving 5th Ave (2019)
- 41 bus routes coming from all 5 boroughs
 - 51% of riders from Manhattan routes
 - 49% of riders from routes originating in other boroughs
- 60-160 buses per hour throughout the day
 - Includes MTA, school buses, tour buses, other private buses



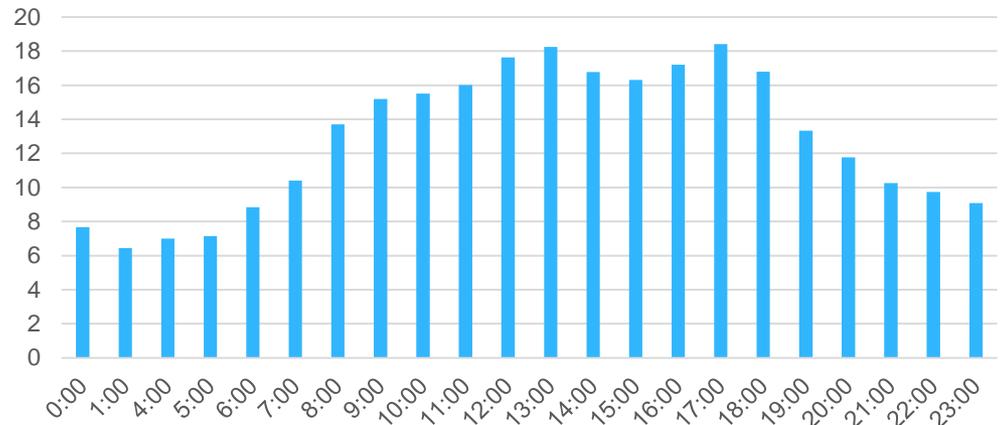
Source: DOT bus counts, Sept 2019

Travel Patterns Along 5th Avenue

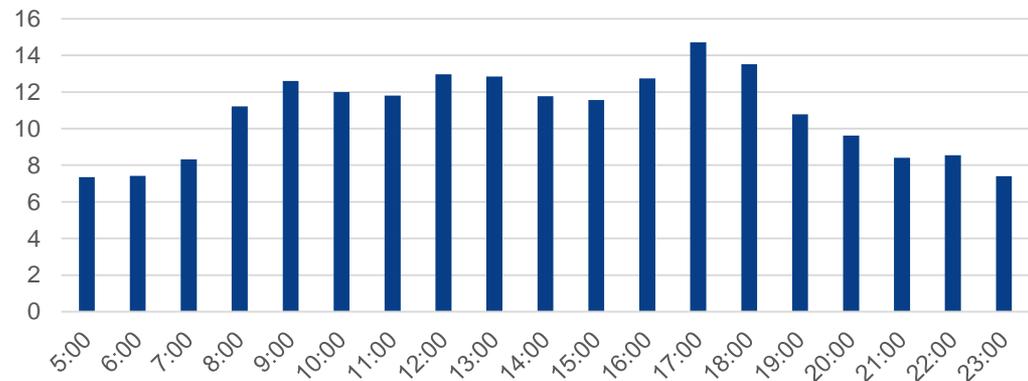
Bus Travel Time & Speeds

- Overnight, buses can travel from 57th to 34th in 6 minutes
- Same trip takes 2-3 times as long in the daytime

5th Ave from 57th St to 34th St
Average Bus Travel Time - MTA Local Buses



Average Bus Travel Time - MTA Express Buses



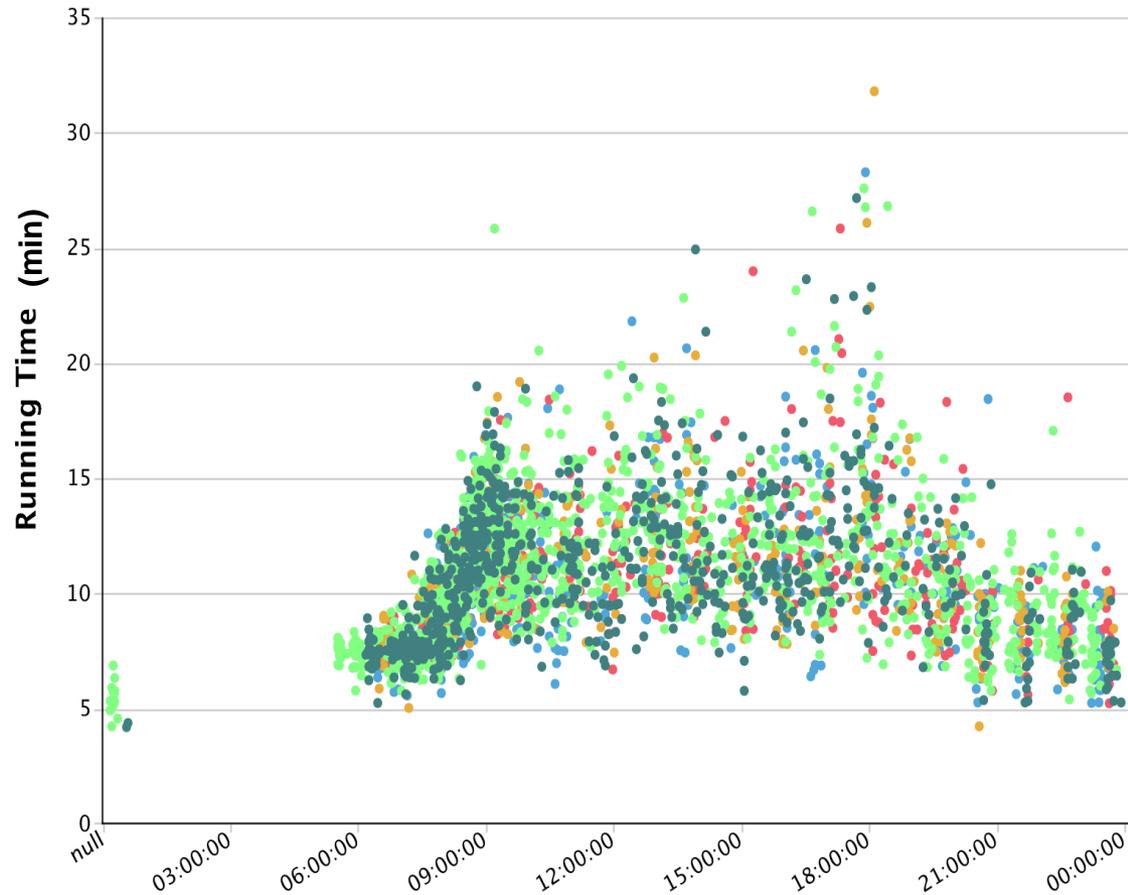
Source: MTA, October 2019 data

Travel Patterns Along 5th Avenue

Bus Reliability

- Traffic congestion also makes bus running time less reliable
- Can vary by 10-30 minutes even at same time of day
- Leads to long and unpredictable waits at bus stops, bus bunching, and crowding at bus stops and on the bus

Variation in Bus Running Time along 5th Ave



Source: MTA, October 2019 data. Each color represents a different route.

Travel Patterns Along 5th Avenue

Pedestrian Volumes

- On a typical weekday, pedestrian counts show high numbers all day:
 - 2,000-3,000 pedestrians per hour in the morning peak (7-9 AM)
 - 7,000-10,000 per hour in the evening peak (4-7 PM)
- Holiday counts reach 30,000+ pedestrians per hour
- A busway allows more space for pedestrians during pandemic recovery



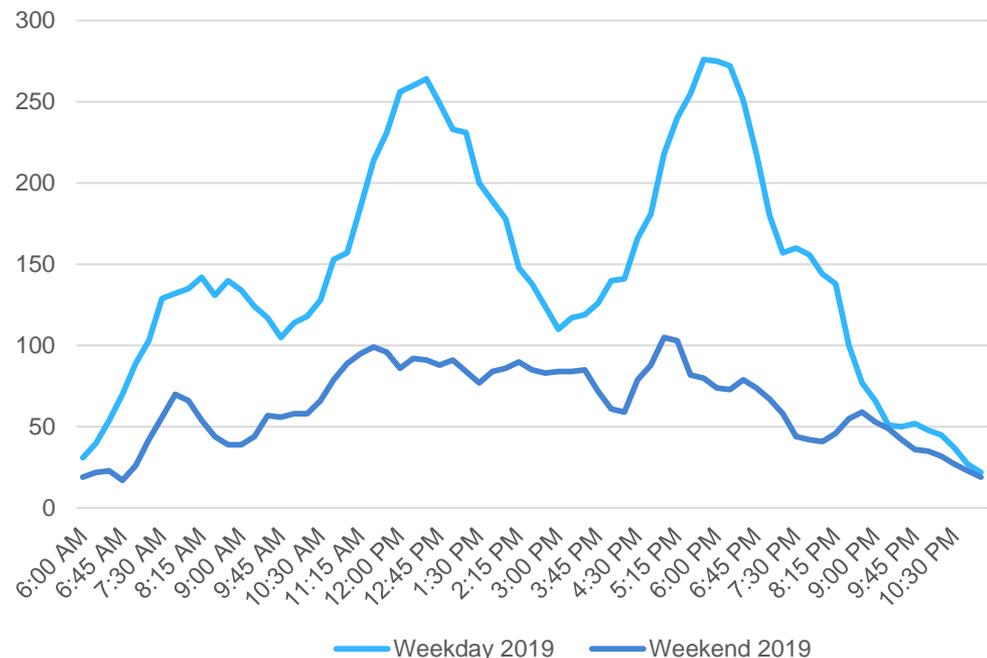
5th Av at 45 St

Travel Patterns Along 5th Avenue

Bicycle Volumes

- ~1,800 cyclists use 5th Ave daily. Can exceed 2,500 on a nice weather day
- Highest ridership on a Manhattan corridor without a bike lane
- East River bike crossings are up 6% in Jan.-June 2020 vs. Jan.-June 2019
- A busway on 5th Ave creates space for a dedicated bike lane during pandemic recovery

Bicycle Volumes, 5th Ave at 51 St



Source: DOT bicycle counts, Summer 2019.
Note: Weekend count date was rainy, so reported volumes likely lower than average weekend.

Preliminary Design Proposal

5th Avenue Busway Plan & Design

Overview

Limit southbound through travel to buses, bikes and emergency vehicles

- All traffic must turn off 5th Avenue prior to 57th Street
- Proposed busway hours: 24 hours, seven days a week (to match existing 5th Ave bus lane hours)
- Alert signage will be provided north of 57th Street and on side streets

Allow local access onto 5th Avenue

- In general, all local traffic must exit 5th Avenue busway at next available turn

5th Avenue Busway Plan & Design

Overview

With traffic restrictions in place, space on 5th Ave becomes available for several other needs:

- Implement protected bicycle lane
- Add sidewalk space along east curb
- Provide pickup & drop-off space

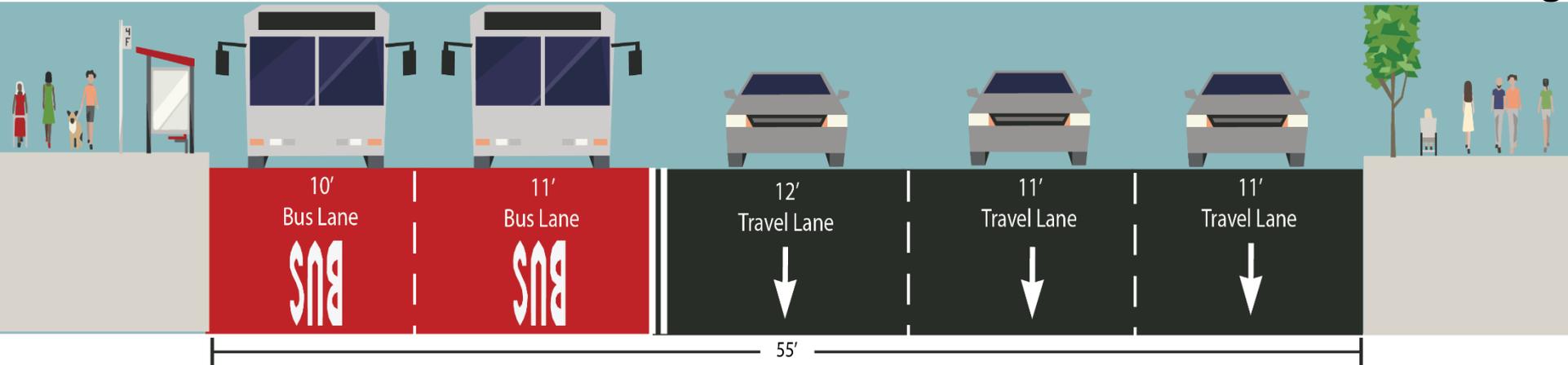
DOT will coordinate with NYPD on traffic management and enforcement

- Use of enforcement cameras may become available

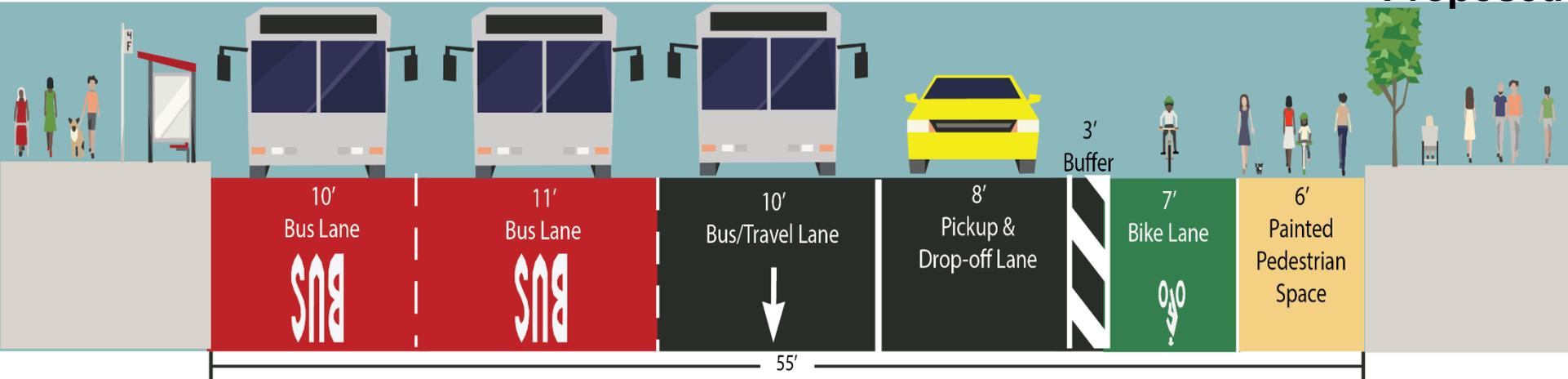
Cross Section

Typical Midblock

Existing



Proposed

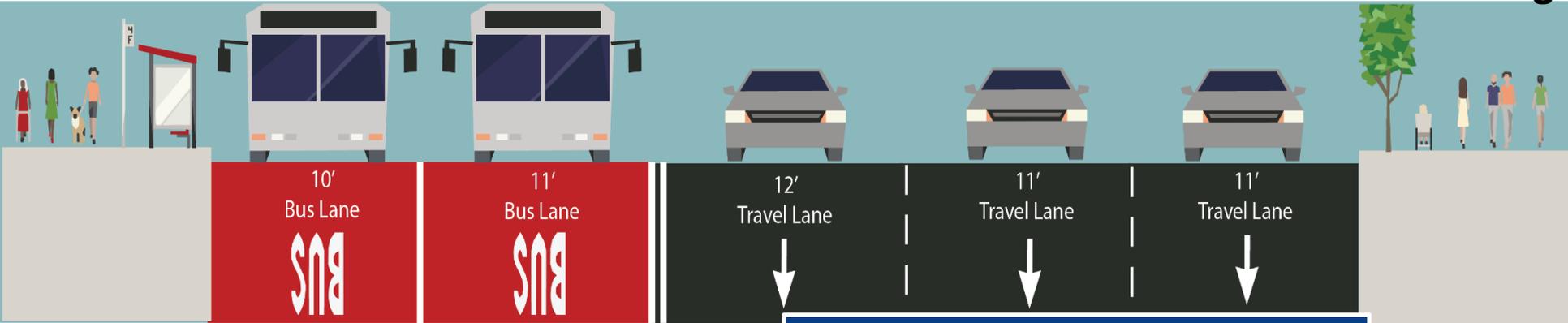


18

Cross Section

Typical Intersection

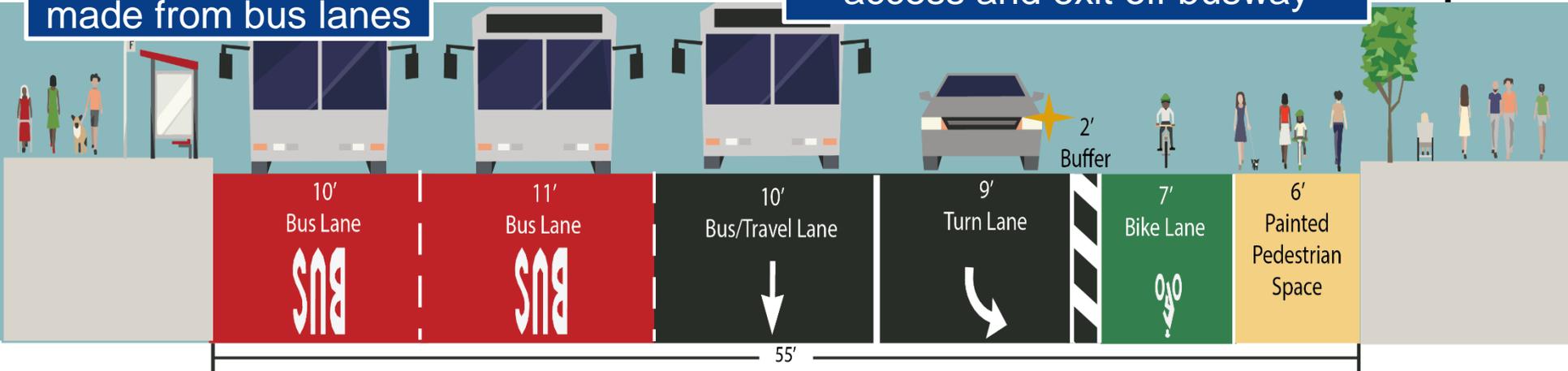
Existing



Right turns can be made from bus lanes

Left turns can be made for local access and exit off busway

Proposed



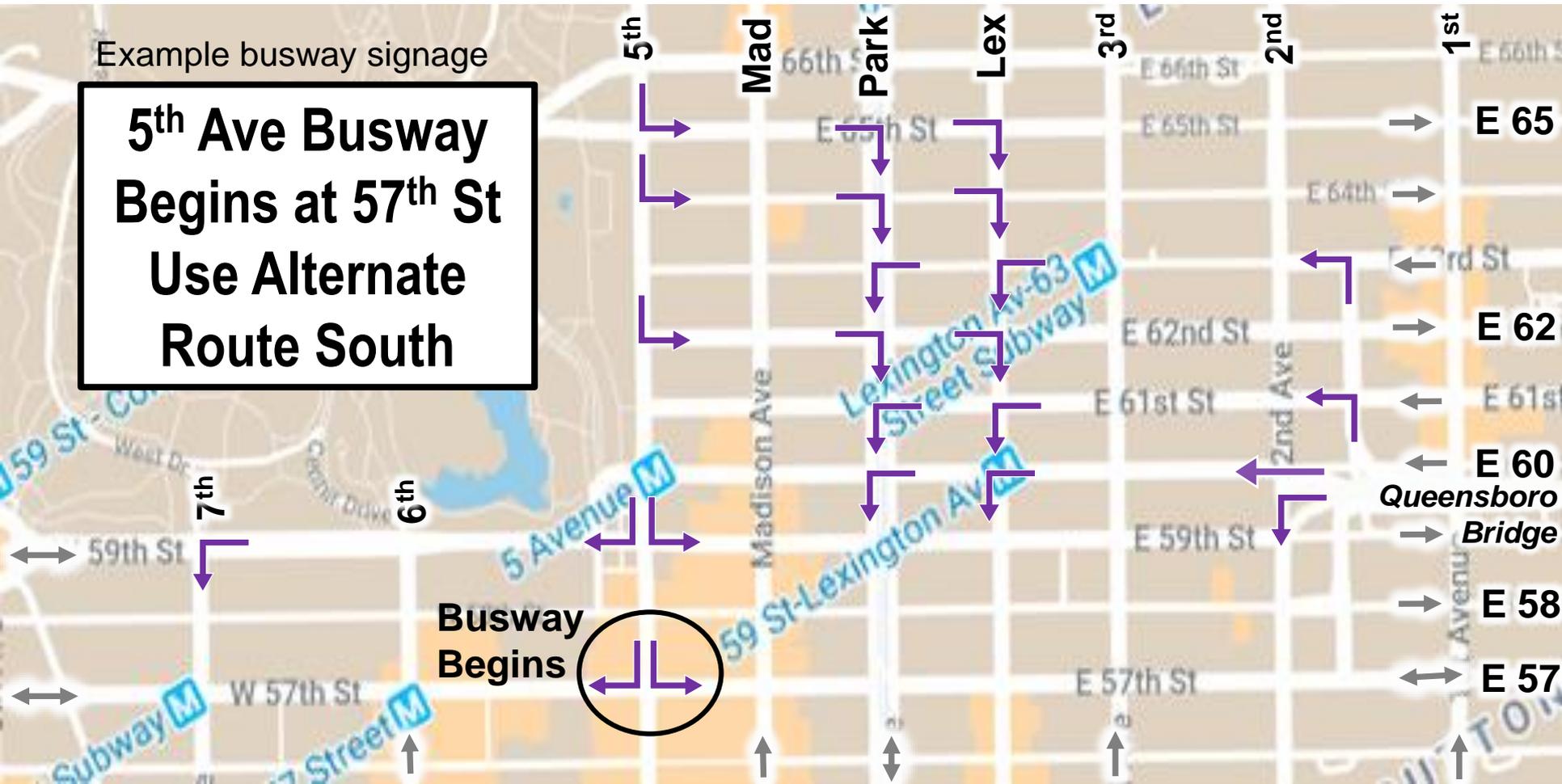
Alternative Southbound Routes

North of East 57th Street

 Alternate Route

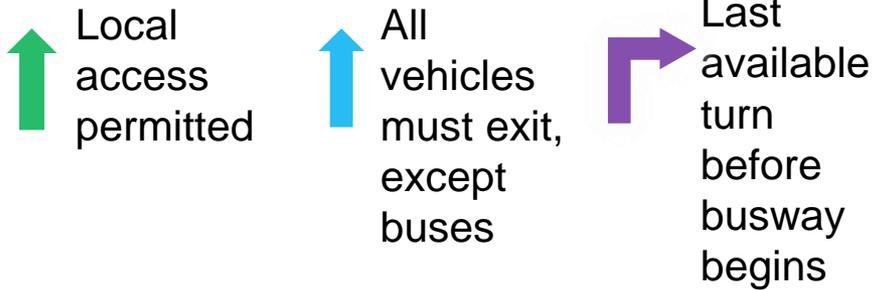
Example busway signage

**5th Ave Busway
Begins at 57th St
Use Alternate
Route South**



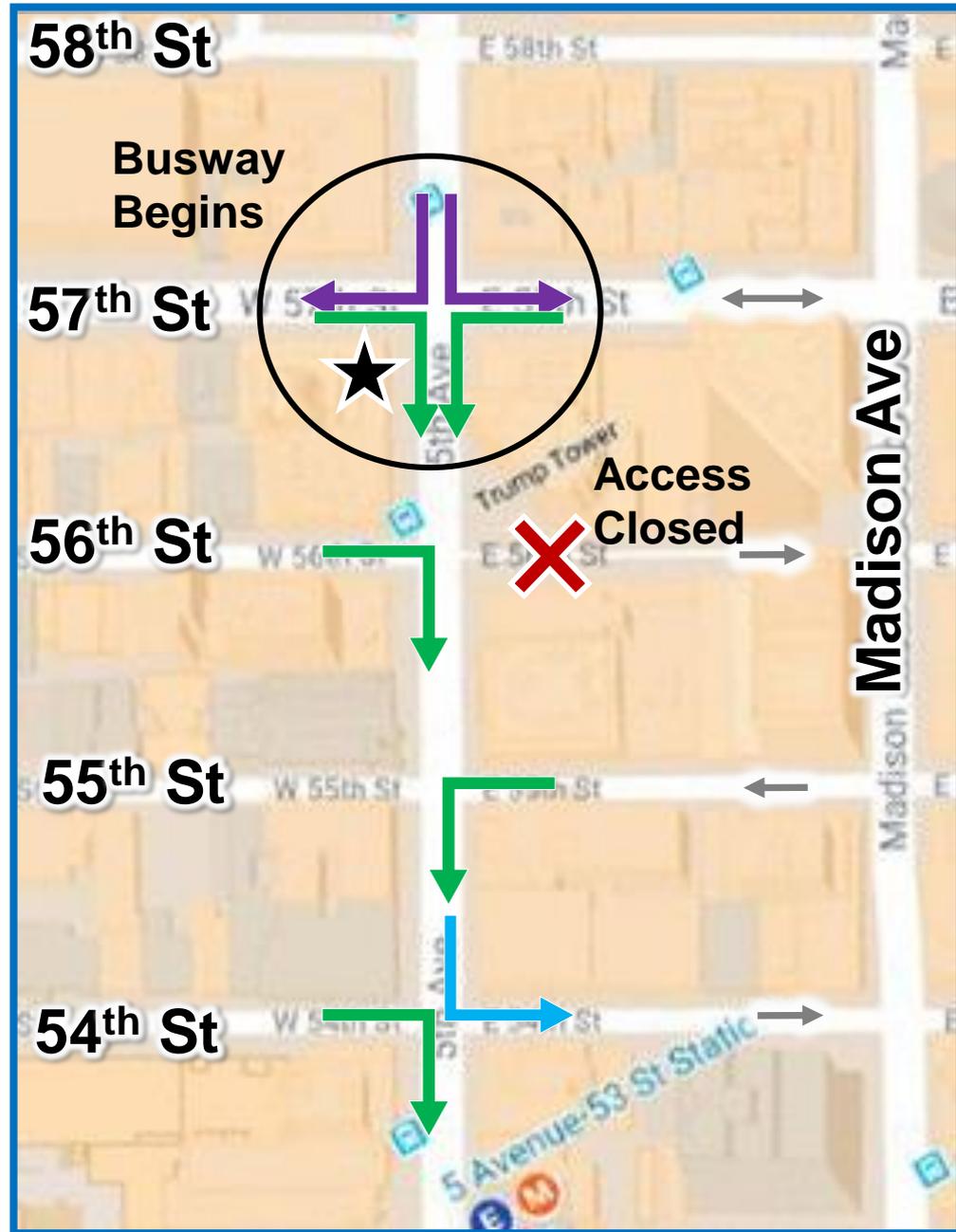
Local Access

57th Street to 54th Street



- All vehicles travelling south on 5th Ave must exit at 57th St
- All vehicles accessing 5th Ave from 56th and 55th Streets must exit by 54th St

★ Reviewing existing turn restrictions to allow access throughout the day

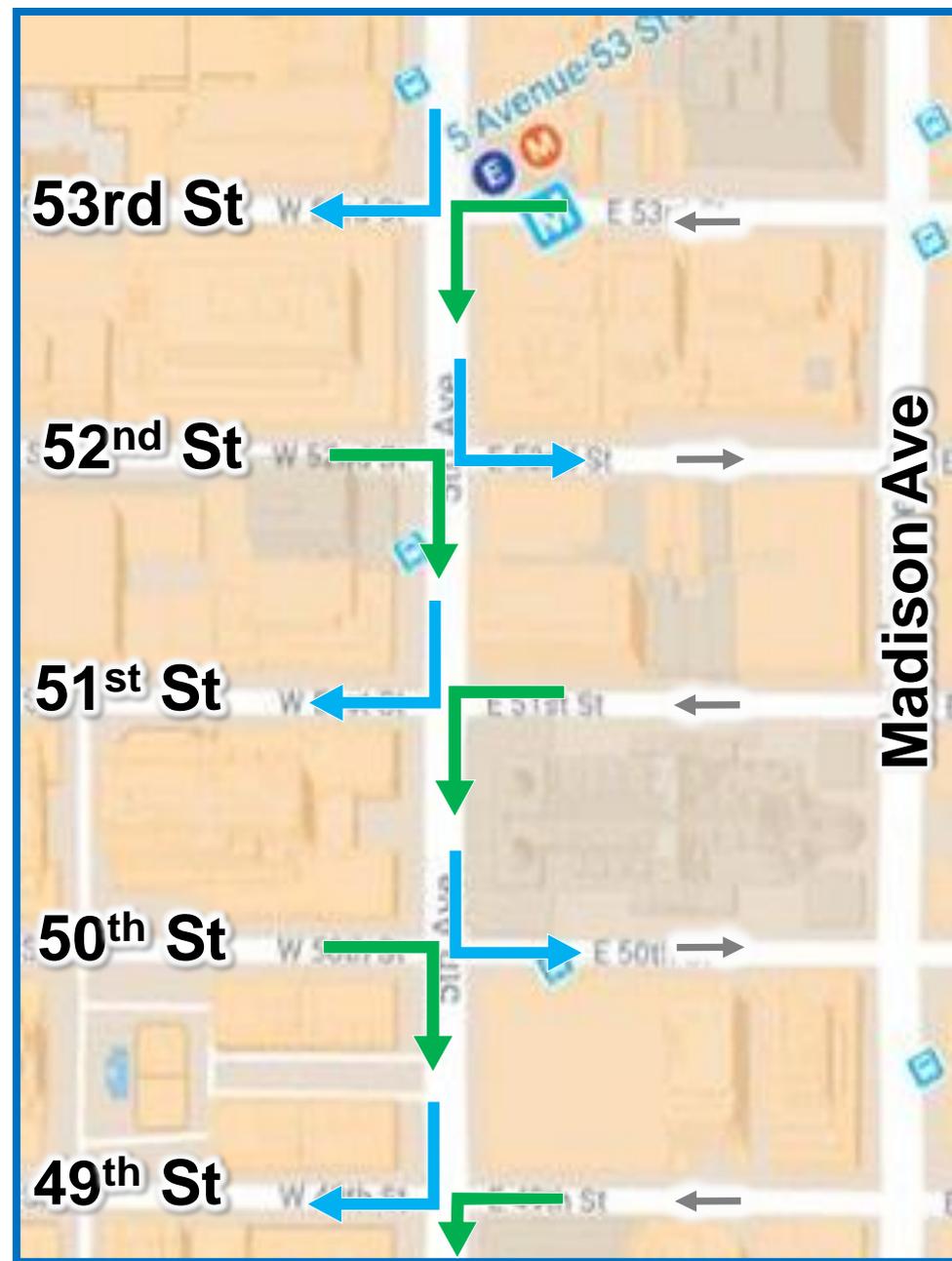


Local Access

53rd Street to 49th Street



- All vehicles accessing 5th Ave must make the next available turn as shown

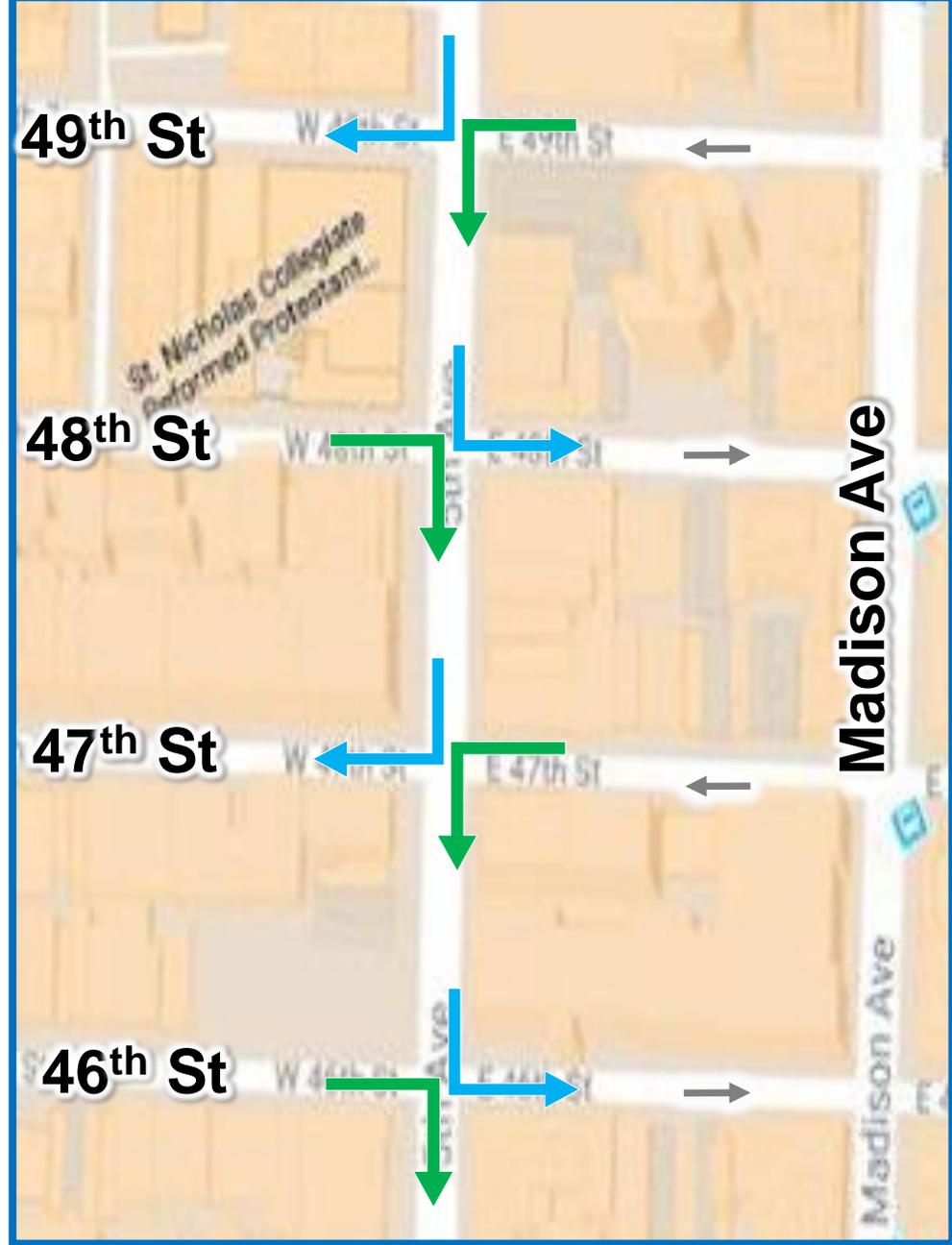


Local Access

49th Street to 46th Street



- All vehicles accessing 5th Ave must make the next available turn as shown

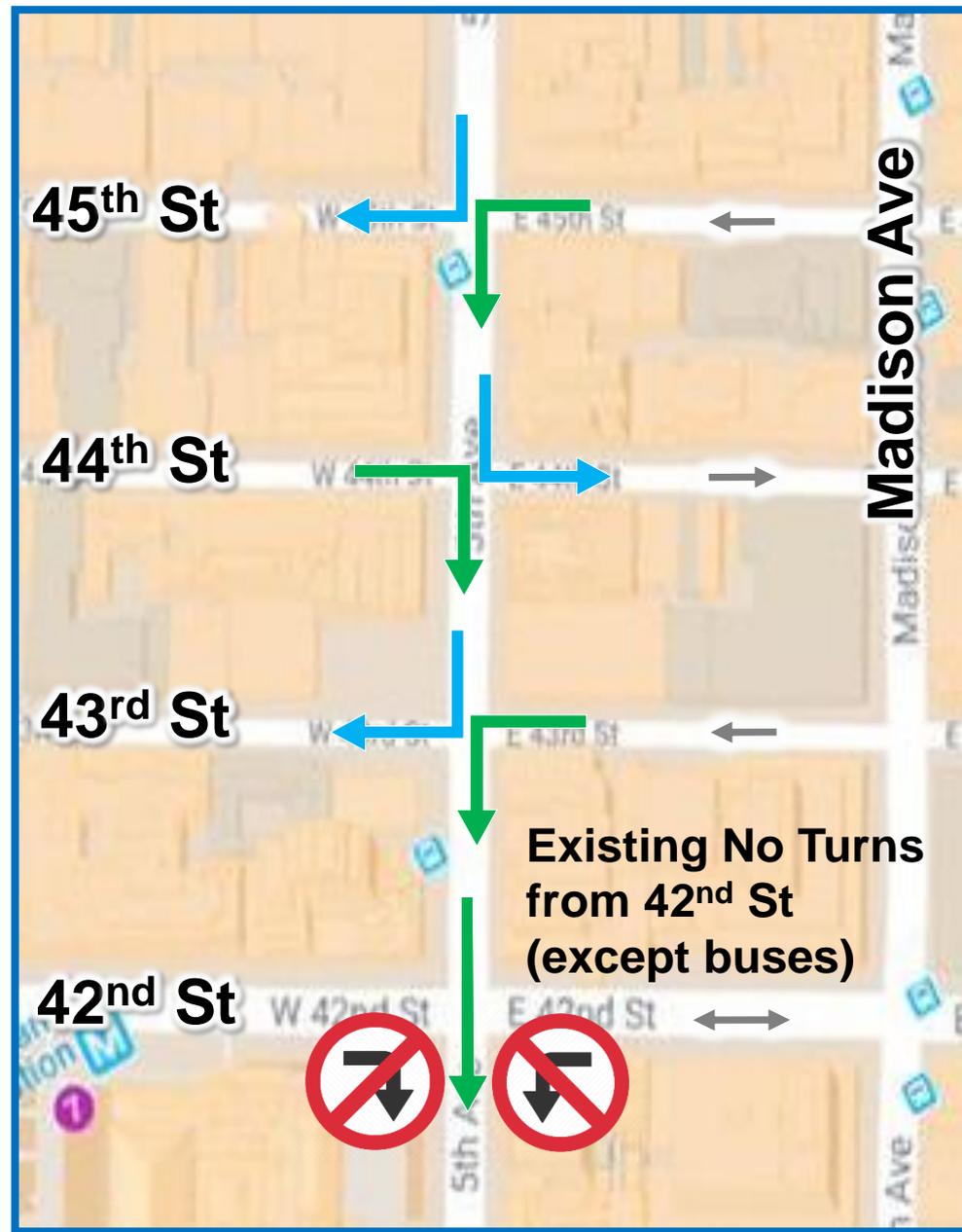


Local Access

45th Street to 42nd Street



- All vehicles accessing 5th Ave must make the next available turn as shown
- All vehicles accessing 5th Ave from 43rd St must exit by 40th St

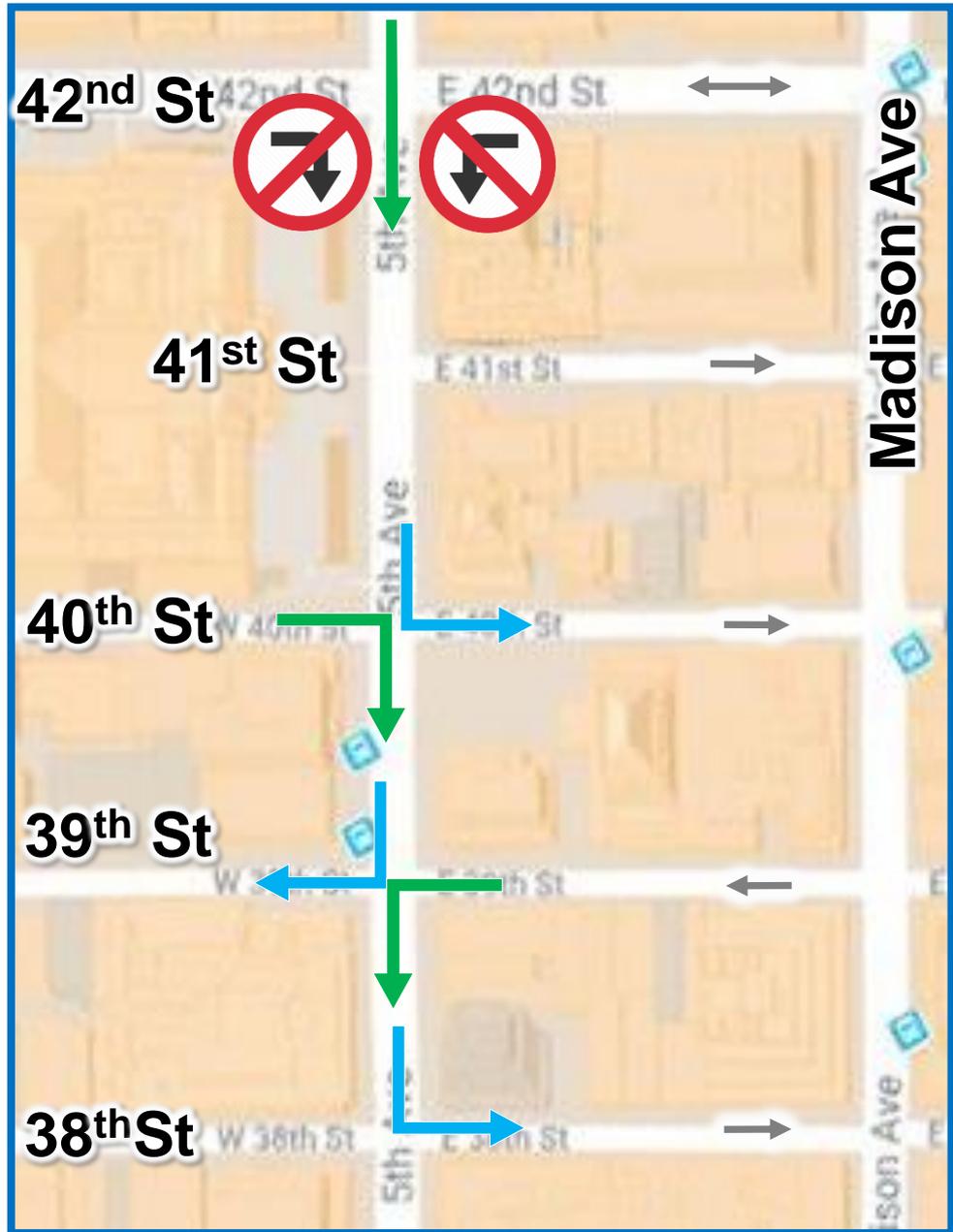


Local Access

42nd Street to 38th Street



- All vehicles accessing 5th Ave from 43rd St must exit by 40th St
- All vehicles accessing 5th Ave must make the next available turn as shown

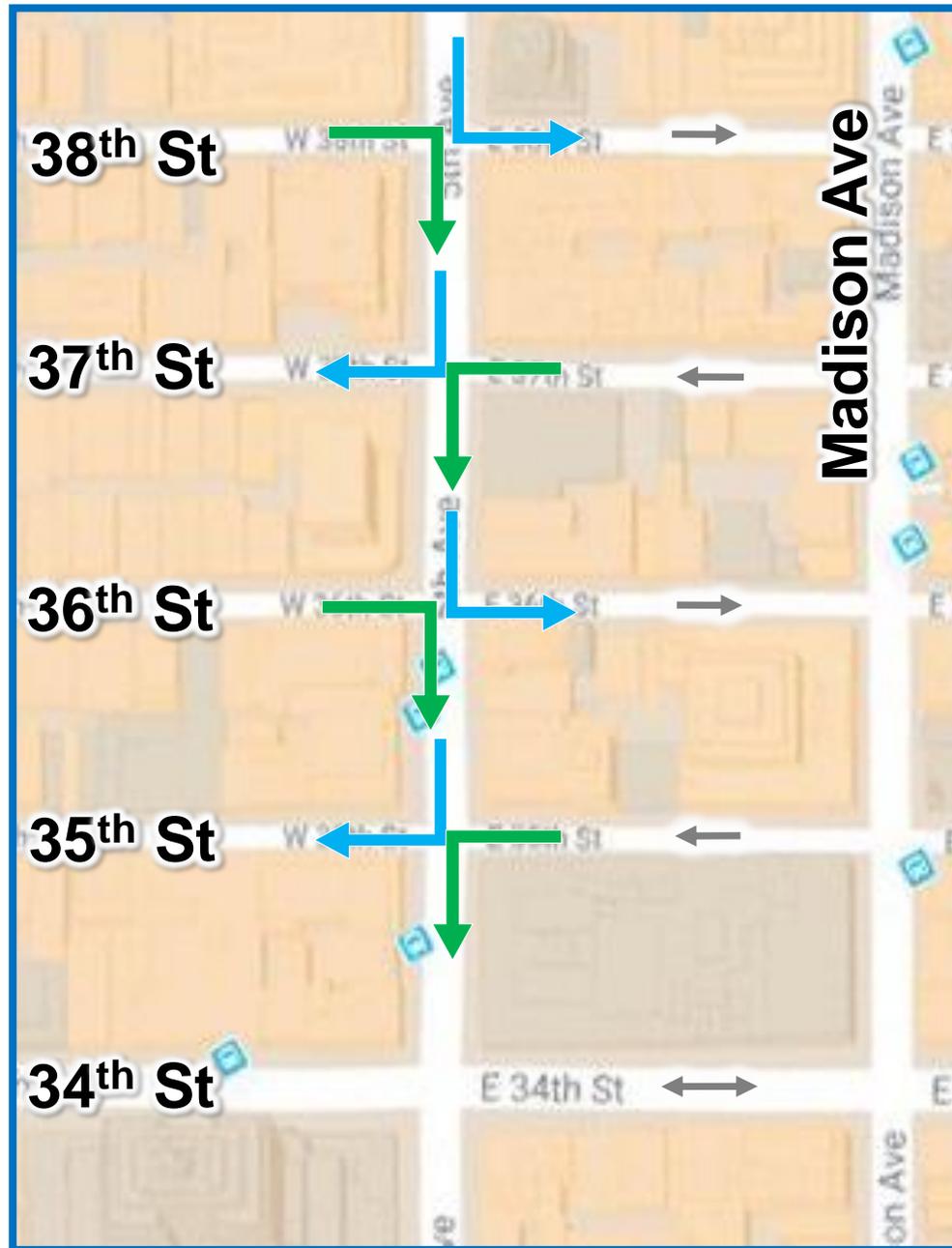


Local Access

38th Street to 34th Street



- All vehicles accessing 5th Ave must make the next available turn as shown
- Busway ends at 34th St



Next Steps

Next Steps

Stakeholder Engagement

- CAB to meet regularly throughout 12-month pilot period
 - Next CAB meeting to be held mid-August
- Project information is now live at www.nyc.gov/betterbuses
 - Click on “Better Buses Restart Projects” then scroll down to 5th Ave
 - Presentations & other materials
 - Comment submission form
- Launching project feedback portal this week
 - Will share with CAB once site is live
 - Will also post on social media, share with other stakeholders

Next Steps

Project Timeline

June 2020

- Begin outreach
- Begin project coordination

July-September 2020

- Community Advisory Board (CAB) Meetings
- Project design and coordination
- Ongoing stakeholder engagement and outreach
- Phased implementation begins

Fall 2020 – Spring 2021

- Ongoing CAB Meetings
- Ongoing stakeholder engagement and outreach
- Phased implementation continues, with adjustments as needed

Summer 2021

- Busway performance evaluation through pilot end date
- Ongoing stakeholder engagement and outreach

Thank You!

Questions & Discussion



NYC DOT



NYC DOT



nyc_dot



NYC DOT