Hillside Avenue Bus Priority Improvements

Springfield Blvd to Queens Blvd Community Board 12 – May 13th, 2025









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Summary and Work to Date







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Why Hillside Avenue?

- Springfield Blvd to Queens Blvd (4.2 miles)
- 194,000 daily bus passengers on 17 MTA bus routes and 21,000 on 5 Nassau County (NICE) bus routes
- Connections to EFJZ, LIRR, AirTrain, additional bus routes
- Buses as slow as 4 mph
- 60% of nearby residents take transit to work
- 40% of nearby households don't have access to a private vehicle
- Bus passengers account for 83% of roadway users, but buses are allocated less than 1/3 of the roadway itself



Roadway Users on Hillside Av









Existing Conditions







Existing Conditions Challenges

- Bus lanes are inconsistent
- Unmarked bus lanes not visible to drivers or pedestrians
- Double parking blocks bus lanes, contributes to congestion
- Bus lanes frequently blocked by illegal loading and parking, forcing buses to merge in and out of lane









Work to Date

- 1. Pedestrian Intercept Surveys (3 days) April 2024
- 2. Bus Rider Surveys (3 days) April 2024
- 3. Briefing to Elected Officials Existing Conditions May 2024
- 4. Community Board 8 Transportation Committee Existing Conditions May 2024
- 5. Community Board 12 Transportation Committee Existing Conditions June 2024
- 6. Community Board 13 Transportation Committee Existing Conditions June 2024
- 7. Merchant Surveys (7 days) July/August 2024
- 8. Briefing to Local Stakeholders Existing Conditions August 2024
- 9. Transfer at Jamaica Exhibit Opening August 2024
- 10. Briefing to Elected Officials Draft Proposal January 2025
- 11. Community Board 8 Transportation Committee Draft Proposal January 2025
- 12. Community Board 12 Transportation Committee Draft Proposal February 2025
- 13. Community Board 13 Transportation Committee Draft Proposal February 2025
- 14. Briefing to SS Comrie's Office Draft Proposal February 2025
- 15. Briefing to CM Lee's Office Draft Proposal March 2025
- 16. Briefing to NYC Dept. of Small Business Services Draft Proposal April 2025
- 17. Community Board 12 Transportation Committee Final Proposal May 2025
- 18. Community Board 13 Transportation Committee Final Proposal May 2025
- 19. Community Board 8 Transportation Committee Final Proposal May 2025





On-Street Engagement by the Numbers

*	295	Total In-Person Surveys
	158	Surveys Completed in Bangla, Spanish, and Haitian Creole
	145	Digital Self-Administered QR Code Surveys
	420	Businesses Visited
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What We've Heard

Your Feedback	Our Response
Traffic Congestion	 Detailed traffic analysis to determine potential effects of lane reduction Adjustments to design of project to ensure efficient traffic movements
	 Monitoring plan to identify, minimize any negative effects
Parking	 Adding ~650 parking/loading spaces across Hillside Av, where peak hour no standing regulations are currently in effect
Local Business Access	 Curb access is improved or maintained as-is on every block
Loading Needs	 Install loading zones where appropriate for efficient curb management
Enforcement	 DOT stationary cameras and ACE on-bus cameras to enforce bus lane Coordinating with NYPD for in-person enforcement





Final Project Proposal









Proposed Design

- Offset bus lanes for most of the corridor
 - Offset bus lanes are located one lane away from the curb, next to the parking lane
 - Westbound: offset bus lanes from Springfield Blvd to 143rd St, curbside bus lane approaching 188th St and between 143rd St and 139th St
 - Eastbound: offset bus lane from 144th St to Springfield Blvd
 - Bus lane drops approaching Queens Blvd, and 212th St WB
- Extended bus lane hours to 24/7
 - 15,000+ bus passengers overnight (10pm- 5am)
 - 80,000+ bus passengers on weekends
- Bus and truck only left turns at three intersections
 - Westbound left onto 169th St
 - Westbound left onto Merrick Blvd
 - Westbound left onto Sutphin Blvd
- Offset bus lanes serve as right turn, driveway, and parking access lanes, keeping traffic moving











Proposed Design – Curb Regulations

- Existing: No Standing during peak hours on most of the corridor
 - WB: 7-9 am No Standing
 - EB: 4-7 pm No Standing
- Proposed: add ~650 parking and loading spaces
 - Expand existing regulations (metered parking, free parking) into previously No Standing hours
 - Add Truck Loading Zones in highly commercial areas
- Bus stops remain, buses will continue pulling to the curb to pick up and drop off passengers
 Draft curb regulations plan









Existing Condition vs. Offset Bus Lanes – Cross Section



Existing condition on Hillside Avenue









169th St Intersection – Sample Offset Plan

- Bus and truck only left turn from westbound Hillside Av onto southbound 169th St
- Typical offset bus lane
- Curb space used for parking/loading







178th St/Edgerton Blvd Street Intersection – Sample Offset Plan

- Typical offset bus lane
- Curb space used for parking/loading



188th St Intersection – Sample Offset Plan

- Typical offset bus lane
- Bus lane shifts to curbside in westbound direction between 189th St and 188th St to maximize traffic flow at this busy intersection
- Curb space used for parking/loading, bus stop







Francis Lewis Blvd – Sample Offset Plan

- Typical offset bus lane
- Curb space used for parking/loading



Existing roadway





Proposed Left Turn Restrictions – buses and trucks permitted

- Restricting left turns for general traffic will allow high volumes of buses and trucks to make turns more efficiently and without conflict
- Few passenger cars currently turn left at these locations
- 169th St Viable detours using parallel routes 88th Ave 87th Rd Merrick Blvd 87th Ave Hillside Ave 86th Ave bath St Atomic Winas Riko 90th Ave Fruit & Vegetables Jamaica El Coma 89th Ave Colosseum Pupuseri. 87th Rd Al Aqsa Ideal Food Basket Fine Fare Loew's Valencia Theatre ide Ave Sutphin Blvd The Hom 161st St 90th Ave







Traffic Analysis









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Traffic Analysis Methodology

1. Count traffic and pedestrians at approx. 100 intersections on Hillside Av and nearby streets

2. Analyze vehicle origins and destinations with anonymized GPS data from drivers on Hillside Av, to understand likely diversion routes, with special consideration of Jamaica Av and Archer Av busways

3. Model each intersection and analyze:

- Signal timing
- Number of lanes and turning movements (left, straight, right)
- · Pedestrian volumes
- Existing conditions and multiple potential future scenarios

4. Validate model with in-person observations of traffic flow, parking movements, double parking and truck loading, etc.

5. Analyze worst case scenario

- Busiest hours of day, longest traffic queues
- Realistically, some drivers divert to other routes, other modes of transportation, or choose to travel at different times of day
- Prepare traffic analyses for a range of scenarios, from no traffic reduction up to a 40% reduction





Example of Synchro Traffic Model Network







- Based on vehicle/app GPS data:
 - 11% of trips are between areas on or near Hillside Av
 - 42% of trips are between Hillside Av and other neighborhoods
 - 47% of trips use Hillside Av as a through route, do not stop on or near Hillside Av
- Traffic analysis anticipates some peak-hour drivers will use an alternate route, travel at a less busy time of day, or use transit or other modes of travel



BETTERBUSES

YORK CITY

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Potential Traffic Hot Spots



DOT has made changes to the project in response to traffic analysis and community feedback, adjustments include:

- Removing the bus lane at approaches to some major intersections
- Additional signal timing accommodations, especially at hotspots and diversion points





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Design Adjustment Example: 212th St/Hollis Ct Blvd

- Initial plan (right): offset bus lane through existing high traffic intersections
- Revised plan (below): offset bus lane drops at 213th St to keep traffic flowing at highway entrances, keeps existing No Standing Anytime condition













Design Adjustment Example: Queens Blvd

Initial design: offset bus lane beginning (EB) and ending (WB) at Queens Blvd



Revised design: westbound offset bus lane shifts to curbside at 143rd St, curbside bus lane ends at 139th St. Eastbound offset bus lane begins after 144th St. Both adjustments ensure efficient flow of traffic approaching and through the Queens Blvd intersection









Making Sure it Works: Post-Implementation Monitoring Plan

- We will be evaluating bus and traffic speeds, traffic volumes and patterns, and congestion closely after launch:
 - In-person observations
 - StreetLight and INRIX (GPS)
 - Traffic counts
 - Bus speed & ridership data
- Adjustments can be made to alleviate congestion and improve bus performance as needed, including:
 - Signal retiming at intersections on and around Hillside Av
 - Curb regulations
 - Roadway markings
 - Signage









Next Steps and Discussion









Summary: Project Benefits

- New, offset bus lanes for most of project corridor
 - Improves access to the subway, jobs, stores, and appointments for over 200,000 New Yorkers daily
- ~650 parking/loading spaces added during peak hours (7-9am, 4-7pm)
 - Adds additional parking and loading for hundreds of local businesses and thousands of homes
 - Includes free alternate-side parking, metered parking on commercial blocks, and loading zones on portions of the busiest blocks
- Emergency response vehicles (police, fire, ambulance, etc.), Access-a-Ride vans, school buses also use bus lanes







Next Steps

Summer/Fall 2025

• Planned implementation – signage and pavement markings installation





Fall 2025 and beyond

Monitor project performance and adjust as needed









Questions?









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