

# Tremont Av Bus Priority Project

Draft Proposal – Community Advisory Board

July 10, 2024



# Agenda

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1. Summary & Work to Date
2. Draft Proposal
3. Next Steps



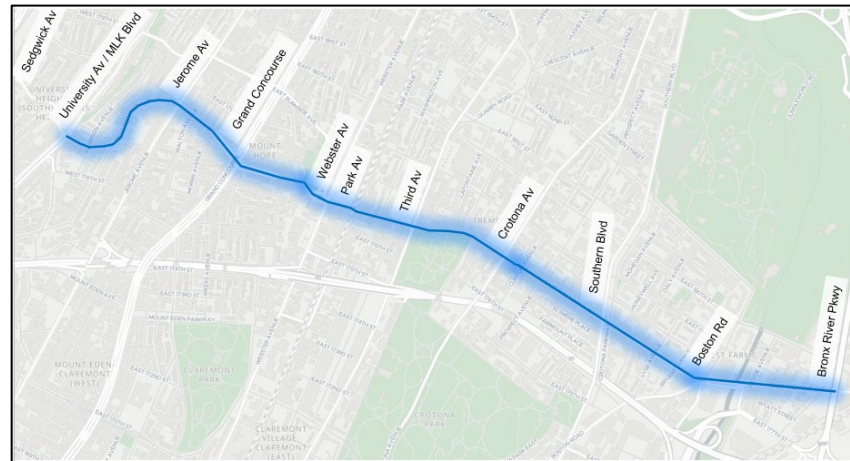
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# Summary & Work to Date

# 1

# Why Tremont Av?

- University Av to Bronx River Pkwy
- Bx36 carries 34,000 bus riders per day – 5<sup>th</sup> busiest route in the Bronx
- Buses move slowly all day, and less than 5 mph in many areas during peak periods
- Critical crosstown route; fills 1.5-mile long gap between subway lines
- 2016 DOT project reduced injuries on Tremont Av, but still 3+ injuries per week on average (2019-2023)
  - One of the Bronx's highest crash corridors



*Tremont Bus Priority Project Limits*



*Tremont Av and Harrison Av*

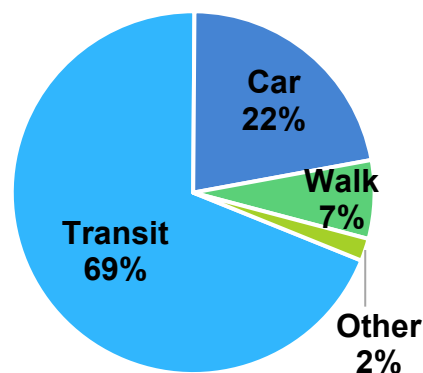
# Demographics

## Census Tracts – Tremont Av (University Av to Bronx River Pkwy)

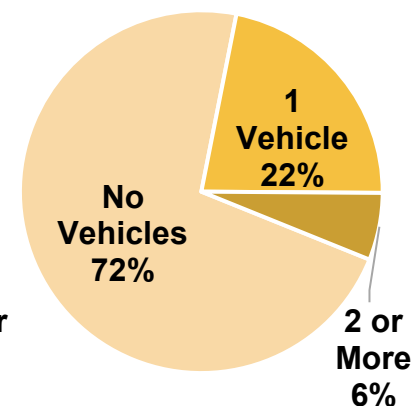
- 118,000 residents
- 72% of households do not have access to a private vehicle
  - Above city average of 55%
- 78% commute to work via public transit, walking, or biking
  - Above city average of 71%
- 45 minute average travel time to work
  - Above city average of 41 minutes
- \$31,000 median household income
  - Below city median of \$77,000



### Travel to Work



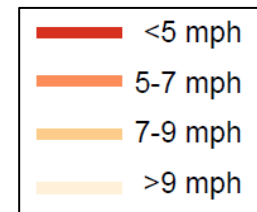
### Vehicle Access by Household



Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

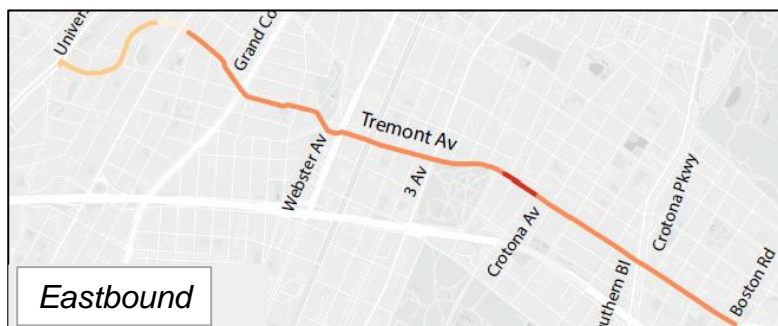


# Tremont Av Bus Speeds

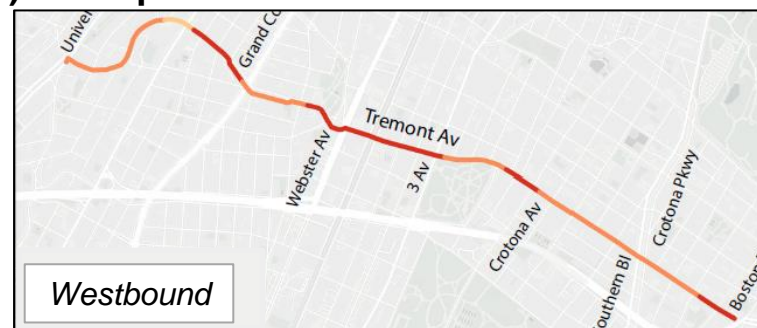
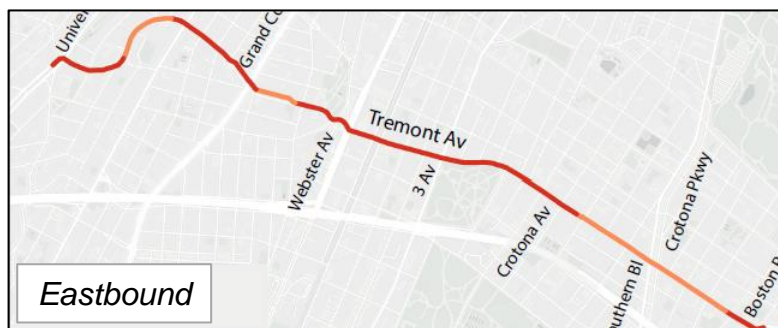


- Buses move slowly all day, and often **less than 5 mph**
- Between 3-7pm, trips take **7-9 minutes longer** than evening/overnight

## AM Peak Period (6-10am) Bus Speeds



## PM Peak Period (3-7pm) Bus Speeds



Source: MTA NYCT Oct 2023

# Work to Date

- Tremont Av Safety Project (2016)
- MTA Bronx Bus Network Redesign: 50+ public outreach events
- Tremont Av Project Community Advisory Board Meeting (Dec 2022)
- DOT on-street engagement (2023)
  - Merchant survey – 162 responses
  - Pedestrian intercept survey – 131 responses
  - Bus passenger survey – 290 responses
- Existing conditions presentations to Community Boards 5 & 6 (Feb-Mar 2024)
- Draft proposal presentations to Community Boards & elected officials (June 2024)
- Field observations & data analysis
- In this meeting, we are presenting a **draft proposal**



*Tremont Av & Lafontaine Av 2016 Corridor Safety Project*



*MTA Bronx Bus Network Redesign Public Workshop*



# Community Feedback

## DOT Street Ambassador Outreach:

- Bus riders' top requests: timely and more reliable service, less crowding, improved accessibility for older residents and people with disabilities, and faster speeds
- Tremont Av is congested throughout
- Lack of parking for delivery vehicles forces double parking
- Pedestrians feel unsafe crossing the street

## Community Board 5 Feedback:

- Leadership support for a busway along Tremont Av
- Specific request for more bus priority in CB 5 to address slow bus speeds and issues with reliability
- Congestion and pedestrian/bike safety issues throughout the corridor
- Concerns about bus stop removal

## Community Board 6 Feedback:

- Community members use all transportation modes – driving, transit, biking, walking – and value fast, reliable and safe mobility
- Congestion and double-parking a big issue on Tremont Av
- Public transit often not seen as a viable option due to crowded buses, unreliable service, and safety concerns
- Concerns that bus priority could reduce parking availability and cause construction-related disruptions



*A DOT Ambassador talking to a pedestrian intercept survey participant*



*DOT & MTA Presenting at Bronx CB 5, March 12, 2024*



# Tremont Av Bus Passenger Testimonials



"I wish the buses run on time more"



"Más espacio, los buses tienen mucha gente y no tienen mucho espacio/  
More space, the buses have a lot of people and they don't have much space"



"Come on time, more frequent"



"Pasar ma rápido/Go faster"

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Draft Proposal

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# Unique Design Constraints

- Important commercial corridor with many small businesses
- West of Webster Av, there are few alternative driving routes besides Tremont Av
- Most of the corridor is narrow (50' wide), limiting design options
- Existing standard bike lanes



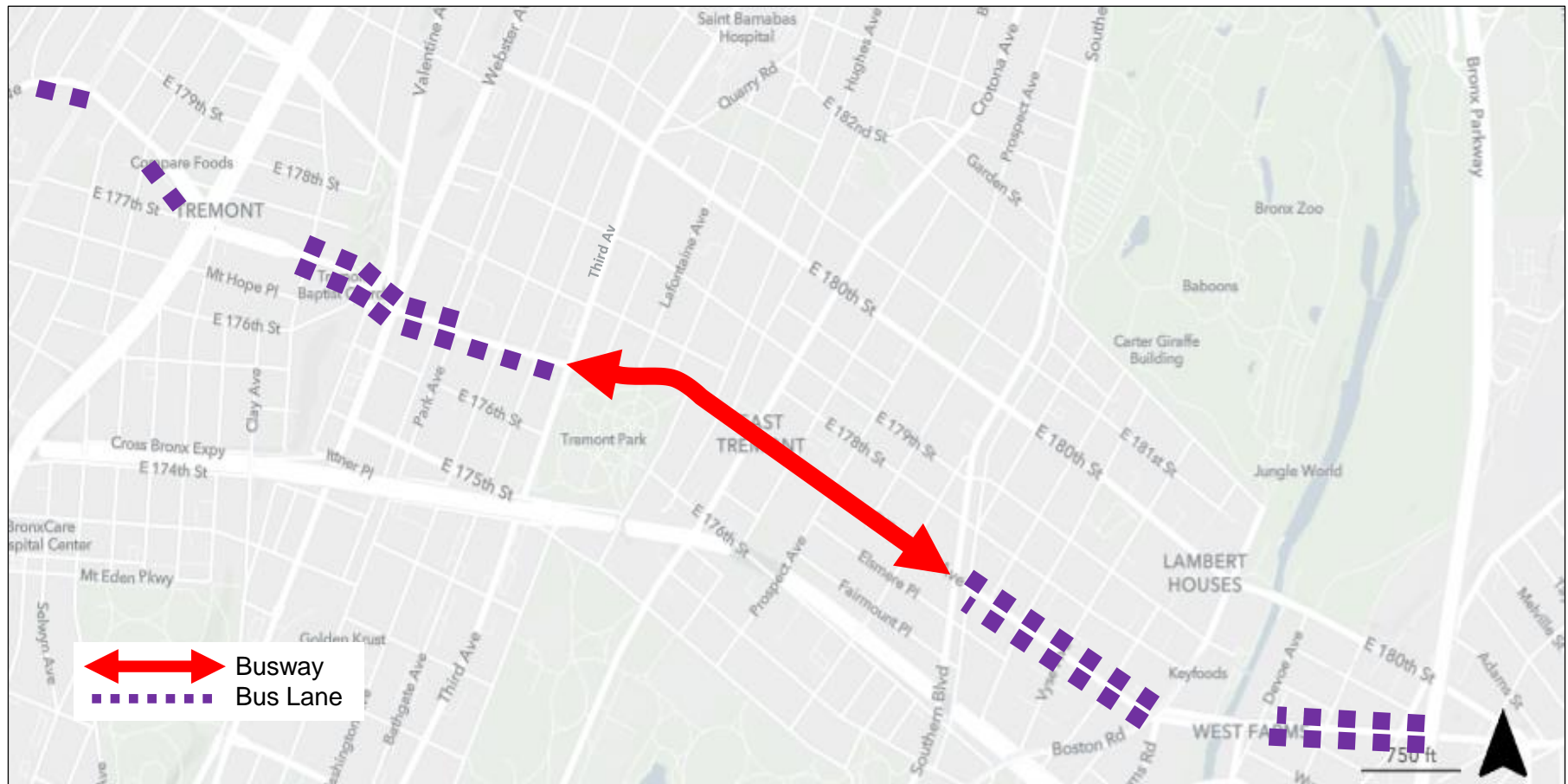
*Tremont Av and Arthur Av*



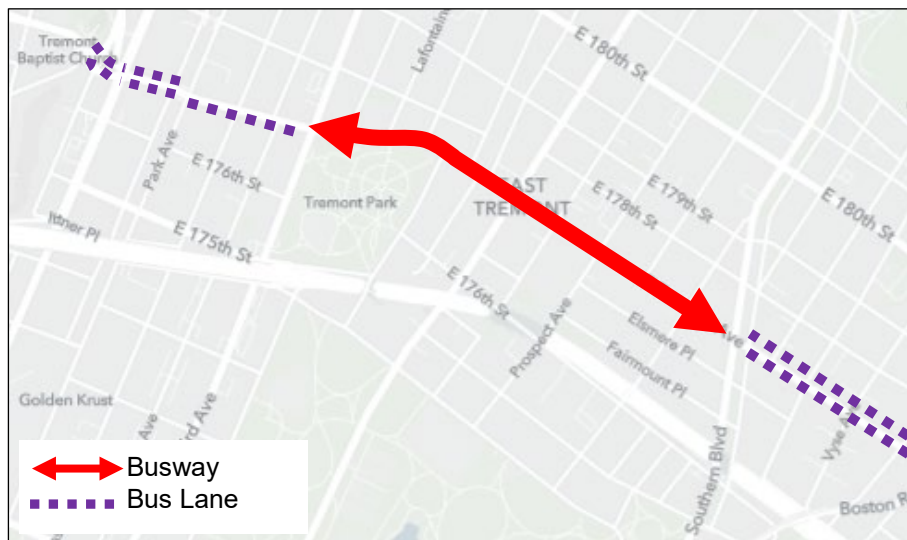
*Tremont Av and Hughes Av*



# Draft Proposal



# Draft Proposal, Part 1: Busway



## Busway between Third Av and Southern Blvd in both directions

- Buses are as slow as **4.5 mph**, and 6 mph or less from 7am-9pm
- 57% of people travelling along this section of Tremont Av ride the bus
- Dense commercial corridor
- Vision Zero Priority Corridor
  - 2019-23: 283 injuries, 22 severe injuries, 2 fatalities

# Busway

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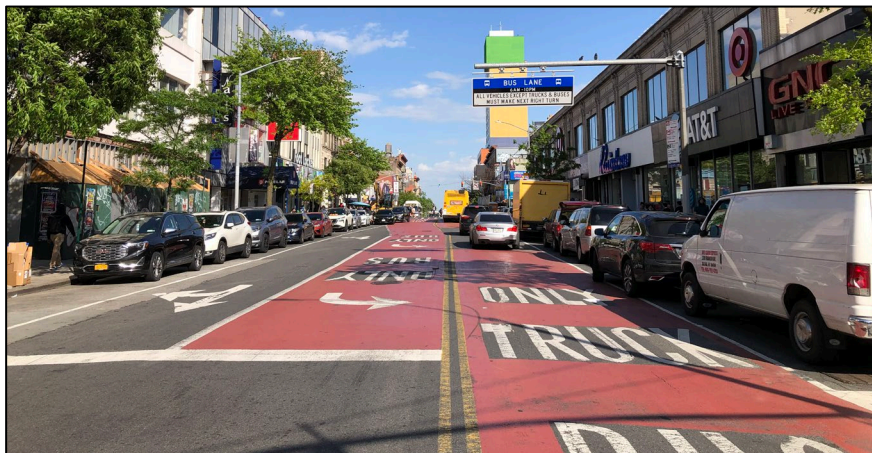
- Buses, trucks, and emergency vehicles can travel along the entire corridor
- Local access allowed for other vehicles, including cars, taxis & for-hire vehicles
  - Vehicles access the corridor from side streets
  - Must leave the corridor at the next required turn, using posted signage
- Allows parking, loading, deliveries & customer access to businesses
- **Any vehicle can still access every block & every building**
- Signage & red paint make the rules clear & direct traffic



*Jamaica Ave Busway, Queens*

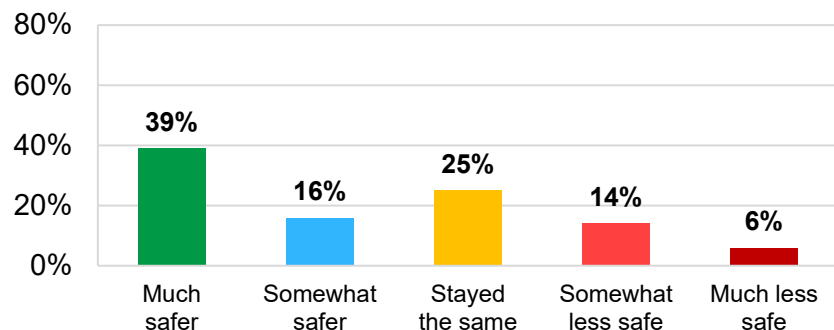


# Busway Benefits



181<sup>st</sup> St Busway, Manhattan

## Experience Crossing 181st Street feels...



Source: Public survey of passersby/merchants along project corridor conducted in Apr 2022.

Data collected on-street and via QR codes.

Display values rounded; answer choices were combined where applicable.

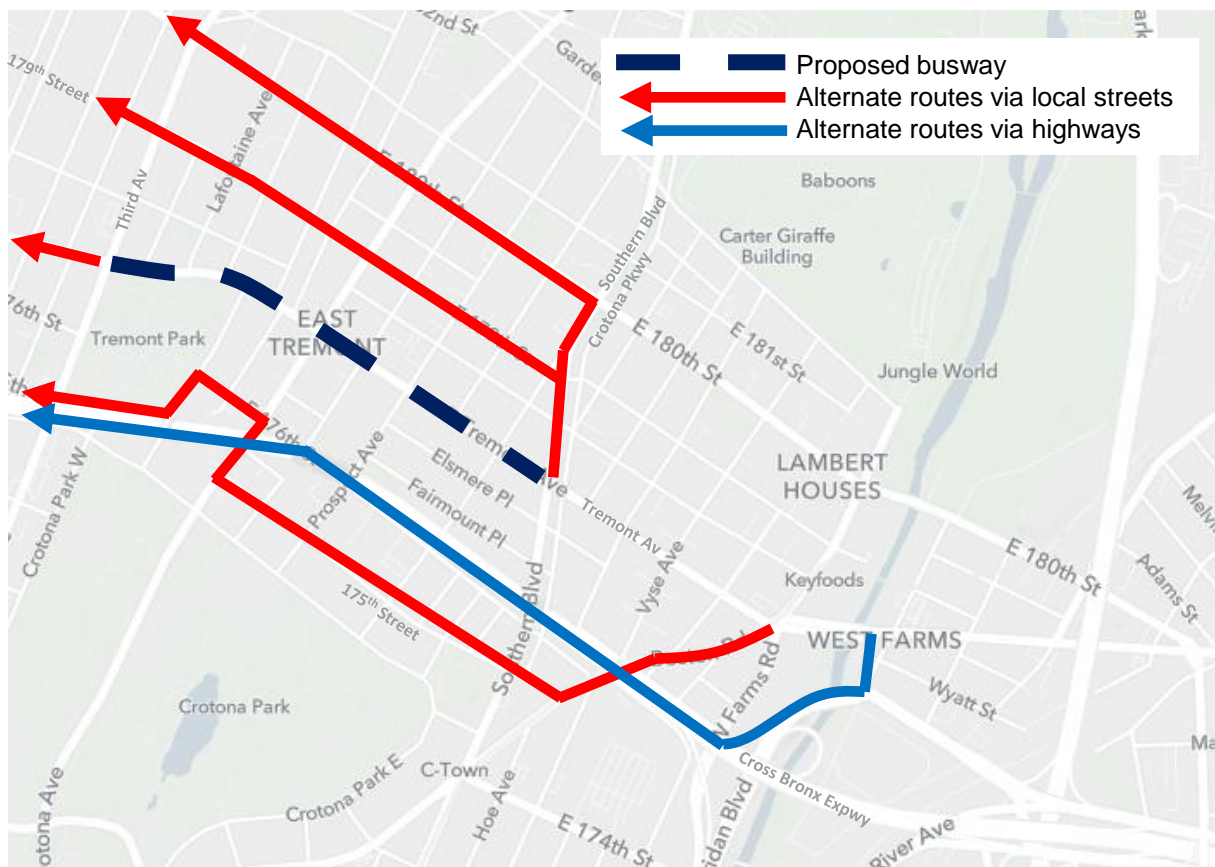
- Busway regulations reduce congestion
  - Improve bus speeds and reliability
  - Create more viable transportation options

## Case Study: 181<sup>st</sup> Street

- Launched in April 2021
- Bus speeds increased up to 28%
- Pedestrian and bicyclist injuries decreased by 40%
- Travel speeds for streets around the busway had minimal changes
- In post-implementation surveys, participants mentioned:
  - Faster, more frequent bus service
  - People feel safer crossing the street
  - The area feels more enjoyable

## Westbound Alternate Routes

- Vehicles passing through the area can choose from multiple alternate routes to divert around the busway



## Eastbound Alternate Routes

- Vehicles passing through the area can choose from multiple alternate routes to divert around the busway



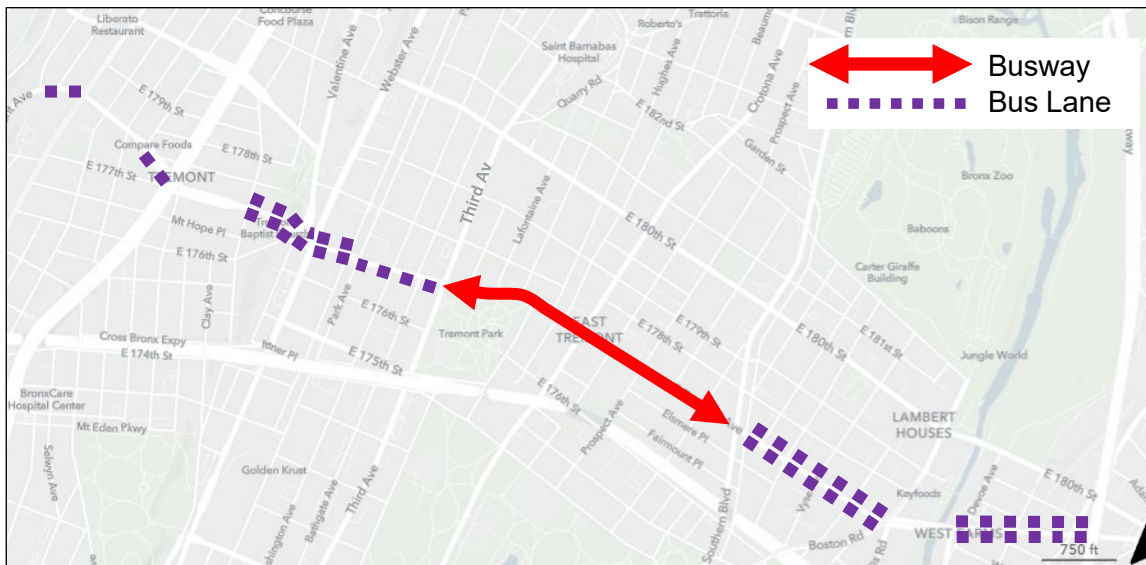


# Why a Busway from Third Av to Southern Blvd?

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- Busway proposal was carefully designed to reflect actual, block-by-block conditions
- Tremont Av between Third Av & Southern Blvd:
  - Very slow bus speeds – as low as **4.5 mph**
  - 57% of people travelling along this section are bus riders
  - Busway preserves parking & curb access for local businesses
  - Third Av and Southern Blvd are familiar to local drivers, wider streets with multiple lanes
  - Avoids conflicting with capital project at Tremont Av/Devoe Av/177<sup>th</sup> St
  - 283 injuries, 22 severe injuries, 2 fatalities in last 5 years
  - More alternative routes for vehicles than other parts of Tremont Av
- Busway is best for bus speeds, parking & safety

# Draft Proposal, Part 2: Bus Lanes



**Considering bus lanes on several segments of Tremont Av**

## *Curbside Bus Lanes*

- Bus lane at the curb
- Can be targeted to the most congested hours of the day and days of the week, with parking permitted at other times
- On Story Av, bus speeds increased by 5-11% after curbside bus lanes were implemented



*Curbside bus lanes on Story Av, Bronx*



*Offset bus lanes on Webster Av, Bronx*

## *Offset Bus Lanes*

- Bus lane next to the parking lane
- Preserves curb space for parking & loading at all times
- On Webster Av, bus speeds increased 19-23% after offset bus lanes were implemented

# Bus Lanes – Draft Proposal

- Evaluating a combination of curbside and offset bus lanes
  - Considering factors including land use, parking, traffic, business activity, street width, and existing bike facilities to determine the extents of the bus lanes
- Block-by-block plan is under development; we will present it to all community stakeholders for input
- Studying potential designs that accommodate both buses and bicyclists
- Ensuring that our plans are compatible with Tremont Av/Devoe Av/177<sup>th</sup> St capital project and construction plans



149<sup>th</sup> St, Bronx



Webster Av, Bronx

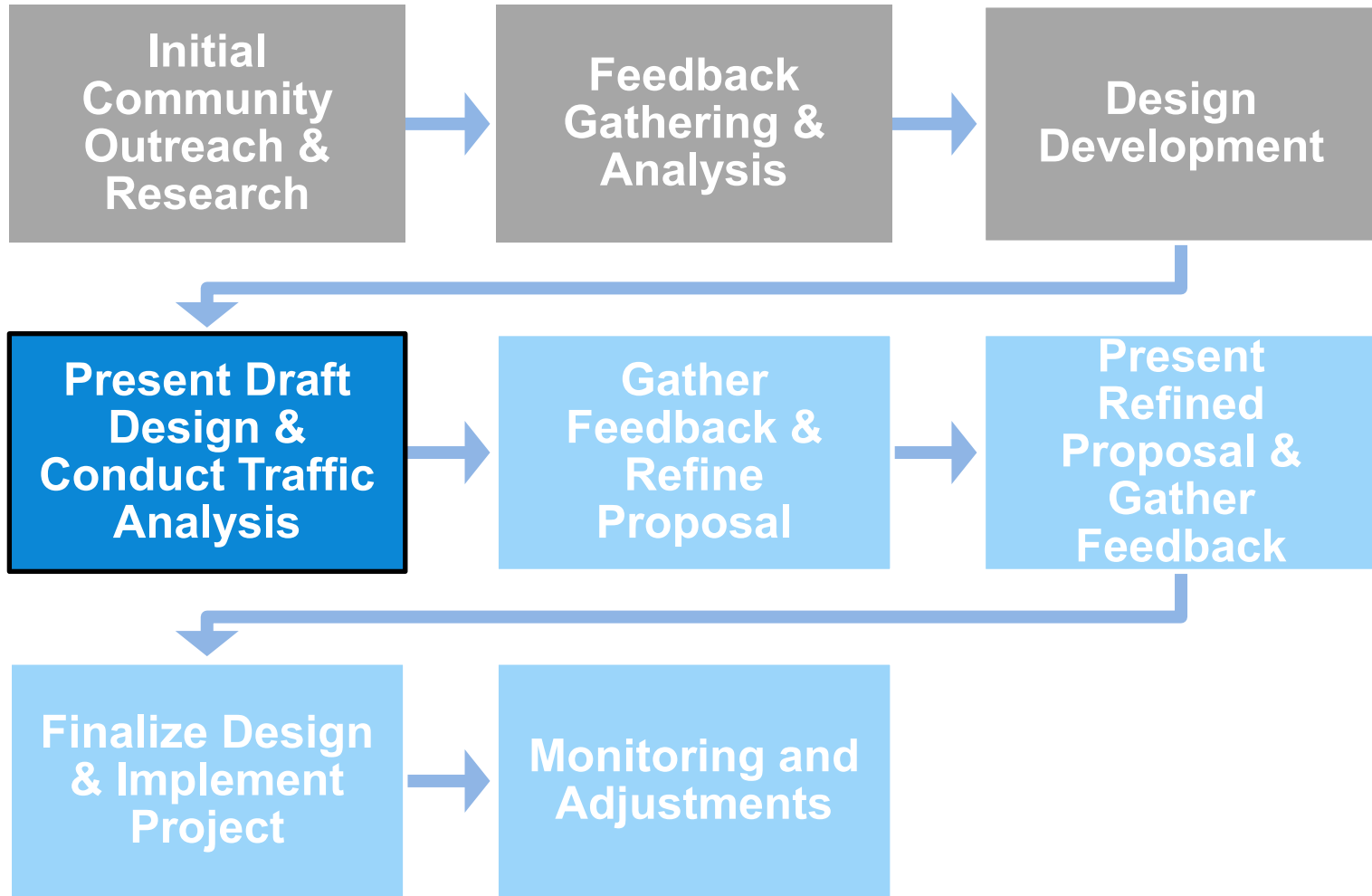


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## Summary & Next Steps

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# Project Timeline



# Traffic Analysis

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- Traffic analysis will include:
  - Data collection: existing traffic volumes at 100+ intersections on & near Tremont Av, as well as adjacent corridors
  - Model of existing traffic conditions in the area
  - Analysis of how the proposal would affect traffic patterns, both on Tremont Av and on alternate routes around busway
  - Any changes to signal timing to improve traffic flow
- Traffic analysis report will explain how the proposed busway & bus lanes would affect traffic patterns
- We will share analysis results with the community



# Next Steps

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## Summer 2024:

- Meet with Community Advisory Board
  - We need your input! Feedback will help shape refined proposal
- Incorporate community feedback
- Determine best design for adding bus lanes to this existing bike corridor
- Continue fieldwork & traffic analysis; refine the proposal

## Late Summer/Fall 2024:

- Share & discuss **refined proposal** with all community stakeholders
  - Will include details on traffic analysis, curb regulations, and design

## **Implementation: Late 2024 or 2025**

# Thank You!

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## Open Discussion



NYC DOT



NYC DOT



nyc\_dot



NYC DOT

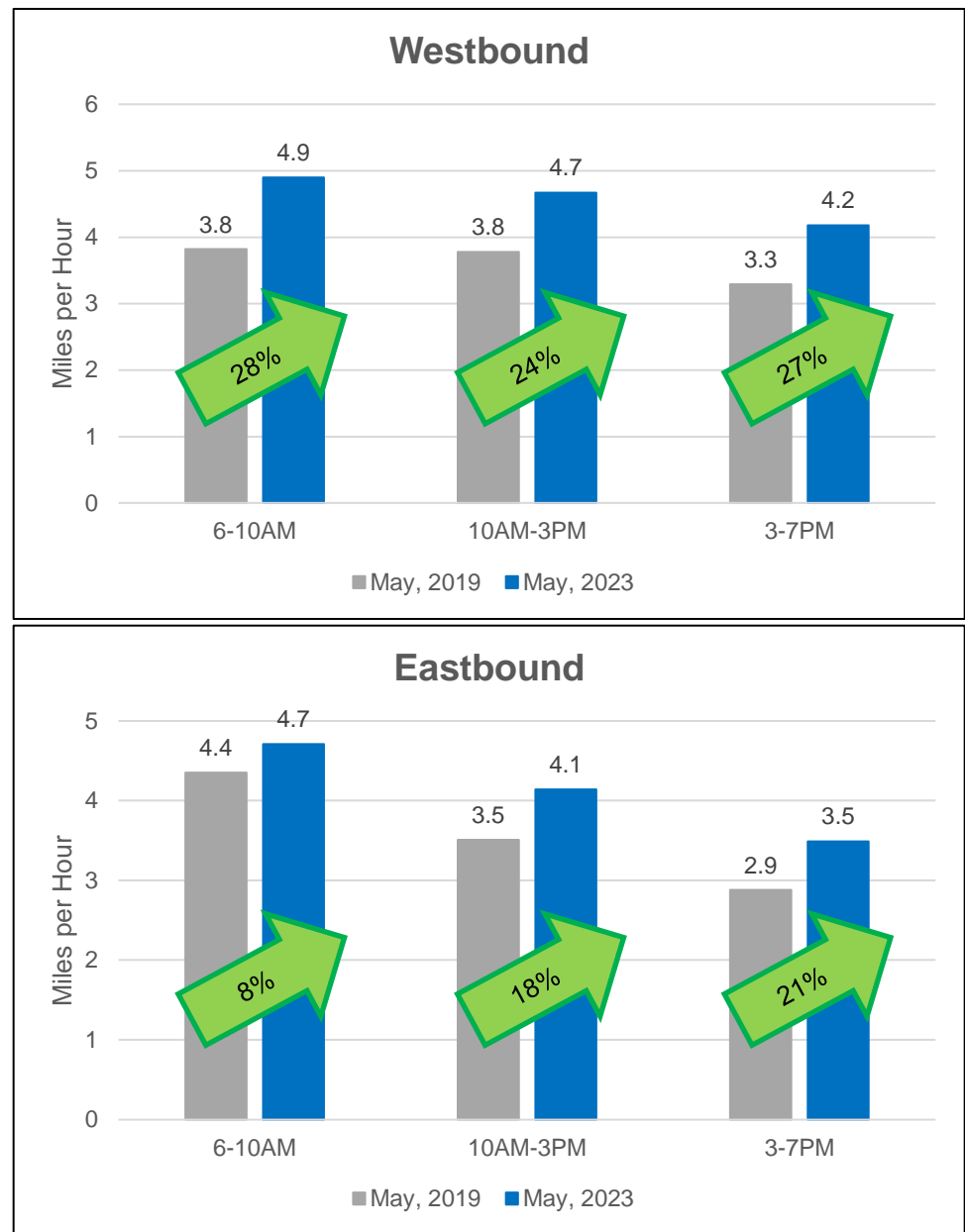
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# Appendix



# 181<sup>st</sup> Street Busway Speed Analysis

- 181<sup>st</sup> Busway launched in 2021
- Average bus speed for all routes using the 181<sup>st</sup> busway increased at all times of the day compared to the same period in 2019
- Overall, eastbound speeds increased by 15% and westbound speeds increased by 26%



Source: MTA

# Traffic Analysis Methodology

**1. Count traffic & pedestrians** at over 100 intersections along Tremont Av and on side streets

**2. Analyze origin-destination** with anonymized GPS data from drivers on Tremont Av used to understand diversion routes likely under a busway

**3. Model each intersection and analyze:**

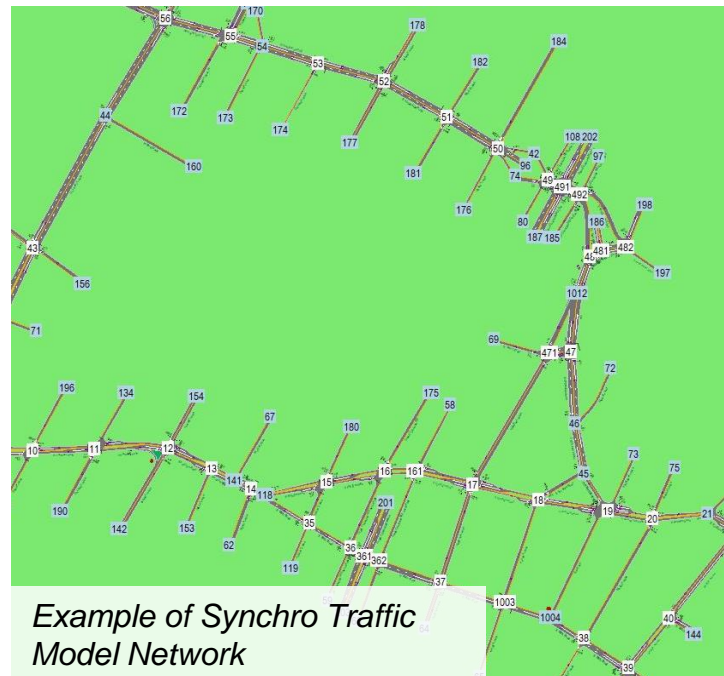
- Signal timing
- Number of lanes and turning movements (left, straight, right)
- Time and number of pedestrians crossing streets
- For multiple alternatives, scenarios & improvements

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

**5. Worst case scenario is analyzed:**

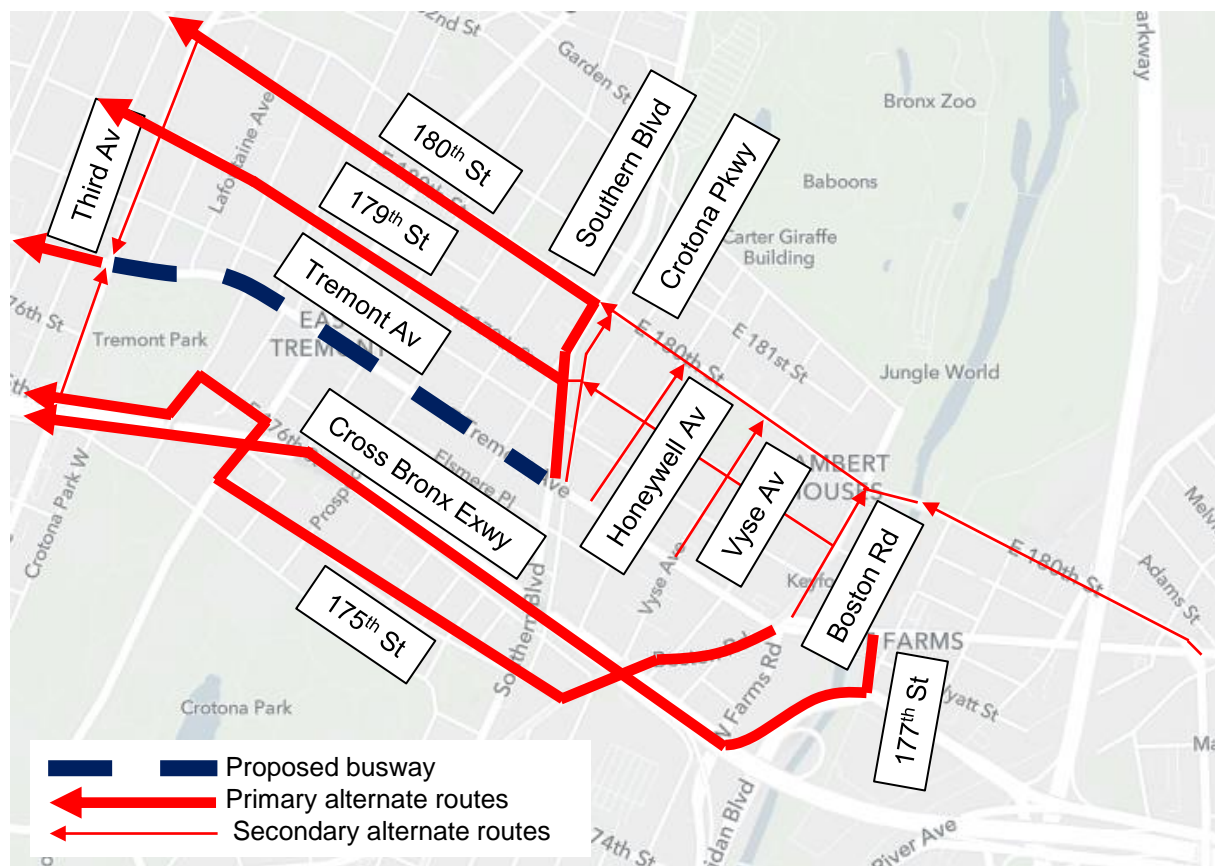
- Traffic analysis software analyzes worst hours of day, longest queues, diversion patterns.
- Realistically, some drivers divert to other routes or choose to travel at different times of day
- Traffic analyses were prepared for a range of scenarios from no volume reduction up to a 40% reduction.

**Result is a prediction of the future according to engineering standards**



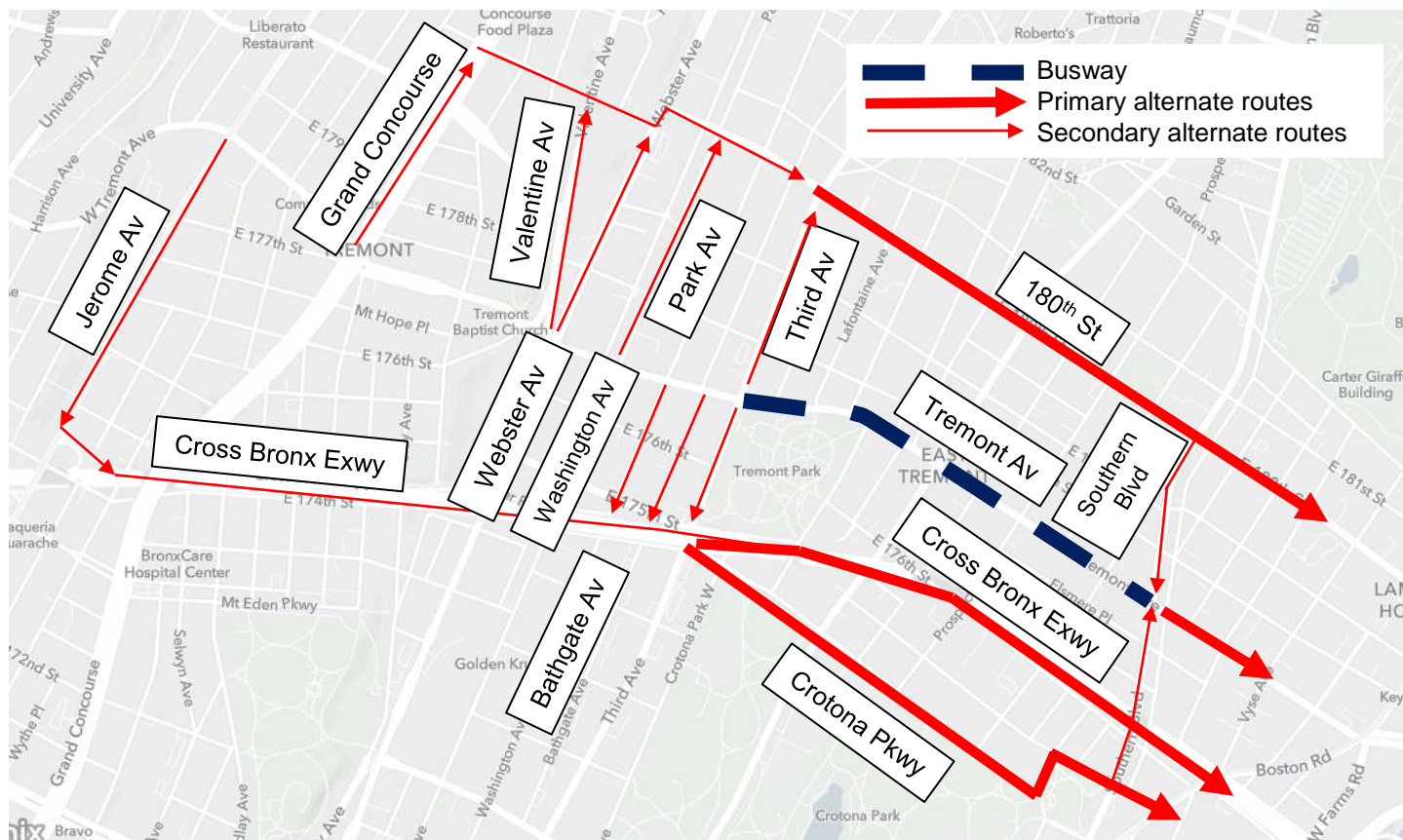
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# Parking

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- Curb regulation plans are under development; we will share them as part of the refined proposal plans in the coming months
- Based on the existing draft, we estimate roughly 46 of existing parking spaces will be repurposed, either part time or full time
- This is an early draft estimate and is liable to change
- Parking changes should be minimal within the busway