

Better Buses Restart: Downtown Flushing Main St Busway

Community Advisory Board | June 26, 2020



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Better Buses Action Plan

- Mayor's 2019 State of the City: Improve bus speeds 25%
- Better Buses Action Plan released April 2019
- 22 projects implemented in 2019
- Planning coordination with MTA Bus Network Redesign
 - 24 projects were planned for 2020, including 11 in BX



NYC Restart

Better Buses 2020

Impact of COVID-19

- COVID -19 highlighted areas of particular need:
 - Essential workers using transit
 - Underrepresented communities hardest hit by virus
- Good bus service needed for restart
 - Continued essential workers needs
 - As commuting rebounds, attract people back to transit

Phase 1

- **June 8**
- Approx. 300k workers returned
- Construction, manufacturing, some retail

Phase 2

- **June 22**
- More retail
- Outdoor dining
- Some office

Phase 3

- **Timing TBD**
- Hospitality focus

Phase 4

- **Timing, TBD**
- Schools, Entertainment

Better Buses Restart

14th Street Transit/Truck Priority Pilot made permanent

Five New Busway Pilots

Main Street (QN)*

Jamaica Avenue (QN)

5th Avenue (MN)

Jay Street (BK)

181st St (MN)

Four Bus Lane Projects

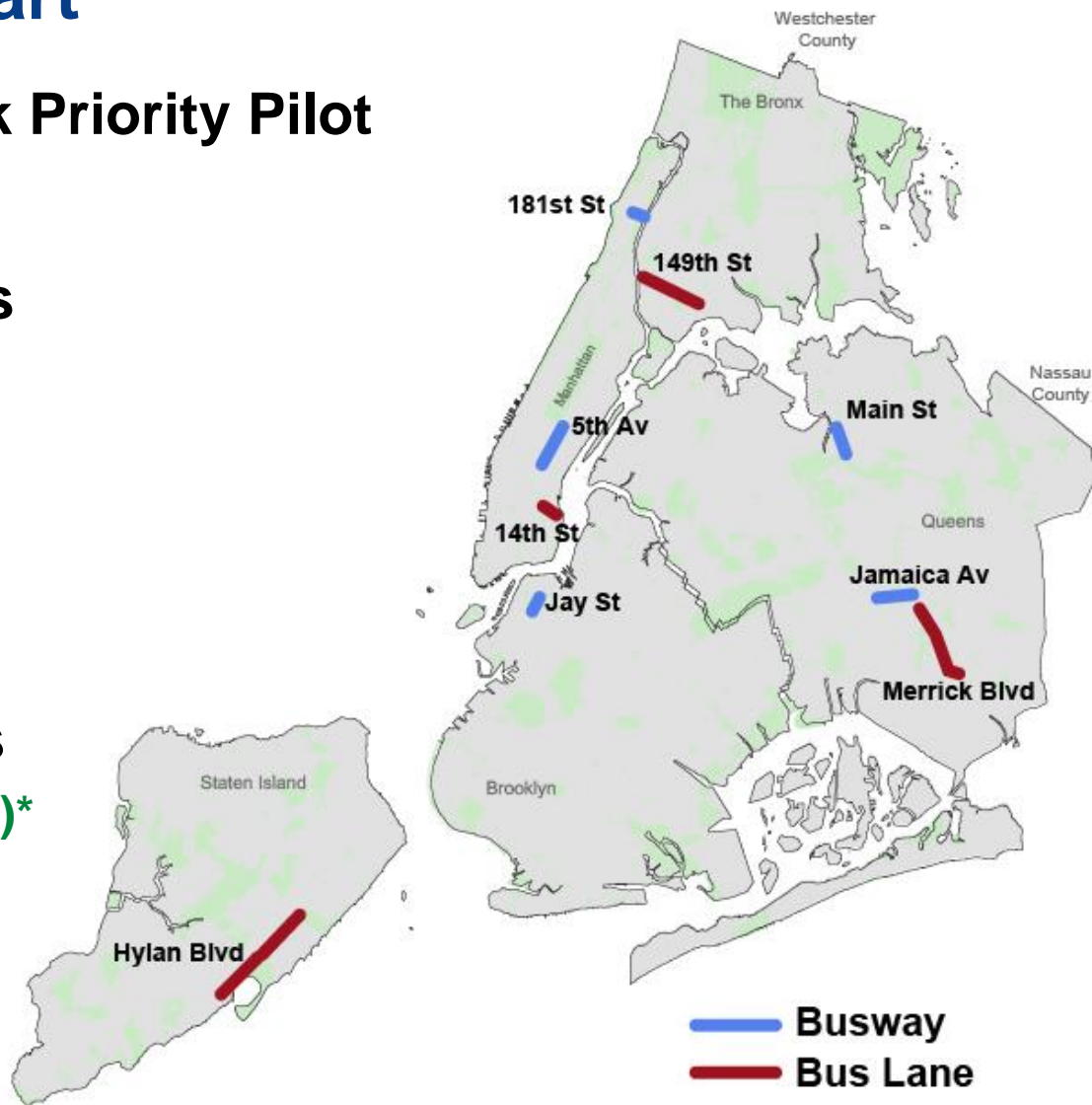
14th Street, 1 Av to Av C (MN)*

149th Street (BX)*

Merrick Boulevard (QN)

Hylan Boulevard (SI)

***Immediate Implementation**



Better Buses Restart

Project Selection Considerations

- Prioritize vulnerable populations, essential workers
- Number of bus passengers served
- Expedited implementation feasibility
- Geographical equity

Why Expedited?

- The Mayor announced these projects on June 8th as part of the city's reopening plan
- These projects will help people get around more easily, with better service, and less crowding
- Buses have played a vital role in moving people on public transit during shutdown and continue to as re-opening begins
- Ridership on buses is already at 50% of pre-Covid levels, while subways ridership is only at 20%



Better Buses Restart

DOT will take an expedited implementation approach

- DOT is committed to the public engagement process throughout this 1 year pilot
- Formation of Community Advisory Boards to guide project during and after implementation
- Work with community to have a robust feedback loop to make timely adjustments as needed

2020 Restart Projects: Expedited Implementation

- Partial use of toolbox (e.g., lane markings, signs) at outset, no red paint
- Significant need for TEAs to ensure compliance
- Focus on available data prior to implementation; data collection and monitoring after

Project Background



Corridor Background



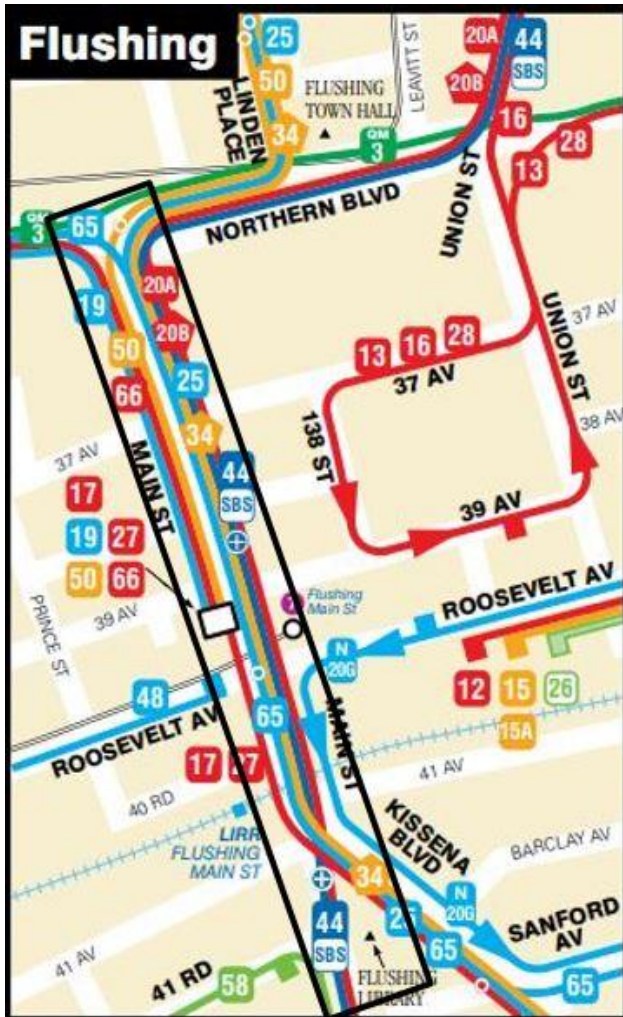
Main St between 39th Av and Roosevelt Av



Main St and 39th Av

- Very dense commercial and residential area with strong transit connections
- 11 MTA bus routes along this corridor in the NB direction
- Ridership on these routes is 173,000 (pre-pandemic)
- 35,000 daily bus passengers make a bus to 7 train subway transfer at Main St. (pre-pandemic)
- Buses in NB direction move at a slower speed than walking
- 3rd busiest pedestrian intersection in the city located at Main St & Roosevelt Av
- Safe Streets for Seniors program area
- Main Street is a Vision Zero Priority Corridor within a Vision Zero Priority Area

Project Goals



- Improve overall transportation network
- Increase bus speeds and bus reliability along the corridor
- Improve truck loading and unloading
- Make regulations more clear for local vehicles
- Provide better access to NewYork-Presbyterian Queens Booth Memorial Medical Center by providing faster more reliable bus service through Downtown Flushing
- Allow for emergency vehicles access with less congestion

Improving Overall Transportation Network in Downtown Flushing

DOT is working to address concerns we have heard in recent years by studying:

- Adjustments to the traffic signal at 40th Rd and Main St to provide safer crossing for pedestrian and easier ability for vehicles to turn right
- The possibility of allowing right turns off of the Northern BI Bridge to SB Prince St
- The feasibility of converting 39th Av back to a one-way street
- New signage on Northern BI Bridge approach to downtown Flushing alerting motorists that there is no SB traffic on Main St and to use alternate routes on Prince St, Union St, or Bowne St
- New signage to encourage making a U-turn off of the Northern BI Bridge to access College Point BI

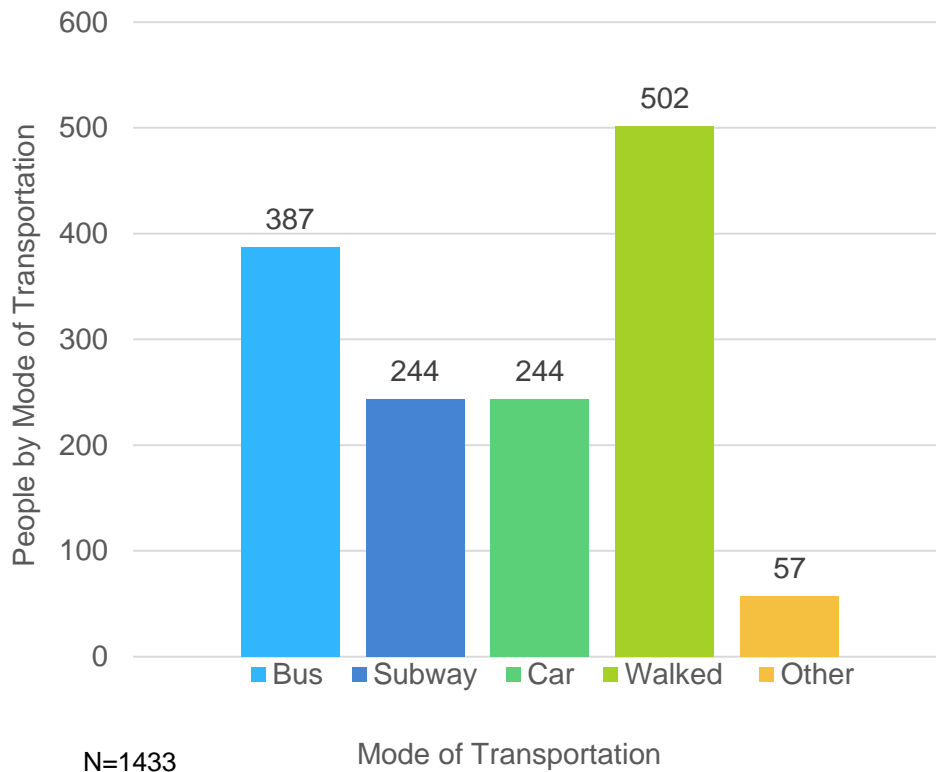
Main St Busway in Context



- Several Studies and projects in the past to address congestion
 - “one-way pair” Study for Main St and Union St
 - Q44 SBS Service
 - Sidewalk widening project and Southbound bus and truck only on Main St from 37th Av to 40th Rd
- Development and growth continue in downtown Flushing
- Important to provide robust, reliable transportation to keep Flushing vital
 - Limited space available, more cars in the area is not feasible
 - Busway will help meet these growing transportation needs

2015 MTA Main St Shoppers Study

Survey of People on Main St,
Franklin Av to Northern Bl



- Only 17% (244) of people on Main St arrived by cars vs. 27% (387) arriving by bus
- Only 4% (61) of total people park on Main St, with the majority of drivers instead parking in a garage or lot and the remaining parking on other streets
- Of those whose primary purpose is shopping (459) on Main St only 19% (87) arrived by car

Proposal



NB Main St Busway to Complement Existing SB Restrictions

- In March 2017, bus and truck only regulations were implemented on Main St from 37th Av to 40th Rd in the SB direction
- Presented SB improvements to CM Koo, CB 7 in May 2018, and received agreement to maintain regulations with continued monitoring



Bus Speeds on Main St

Q44 SBS Bus Speed in NB
Direction as of May 2019

Time Period	Speed (mph)
Weekday AM Peak	3.6
Weekday PM Peak	2.6
Saturday 10am-6pm	2.1
Sunday 10am-6pm	3.1

- After SB Bus and Truck Only implementation, bus speeds increased by:
 - 23% in the SB direction
 - 11% in NB direction due to a reduction in turn conflicts
- Similar traffic regulations in the NB direction would help improve bus speeds

NB Busway on Main St & Kissena Bl

- Busway will begin at Sanford Av on both Main St and Kissena Bl and extend to Northern Bl
- Will allow buses, commercial trucks, and local access for private vehicles
- Proposed busway hours will be in effect 24/7, matching the SB regulations
- Minimal parking loss on Main St is expected

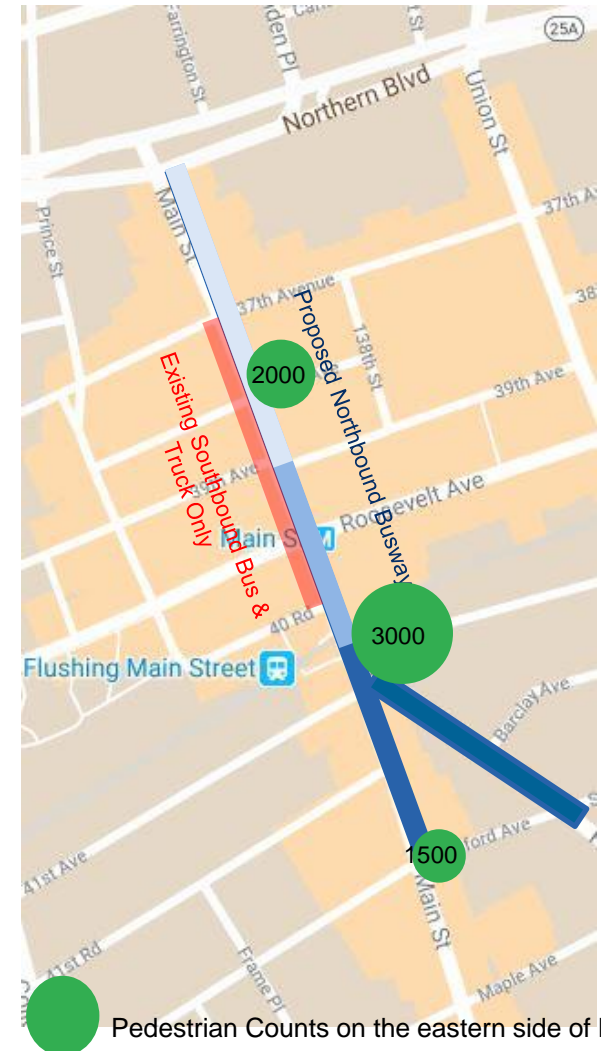


Approach to Implementing Busway

- Similar to 14th St Busway in Manhattan
 - Only buses, trucks, and emergency vehicles will allowed
 - Other vehicles are allowed to drive on busway for local trips, pick-up/drop-off, and garage access but must make the next available right turn off busway
 - All left turns are restricted off of the corridor, except for buses and at 41st Av where there is a separate left turn signal
- Allow for all buses to use Busway, including Commuter and Casino Buses
- Updates to the curb regulations along the corridor to prioritize passenger pick-up/drop-off (taxis and personal vehicles) and commercial loading
- Studying the opportunity to add new turn bays prior to the beginning of the busway to allow vehicles to exit Main St more easily





Pedestrian and Vehicular Volumes

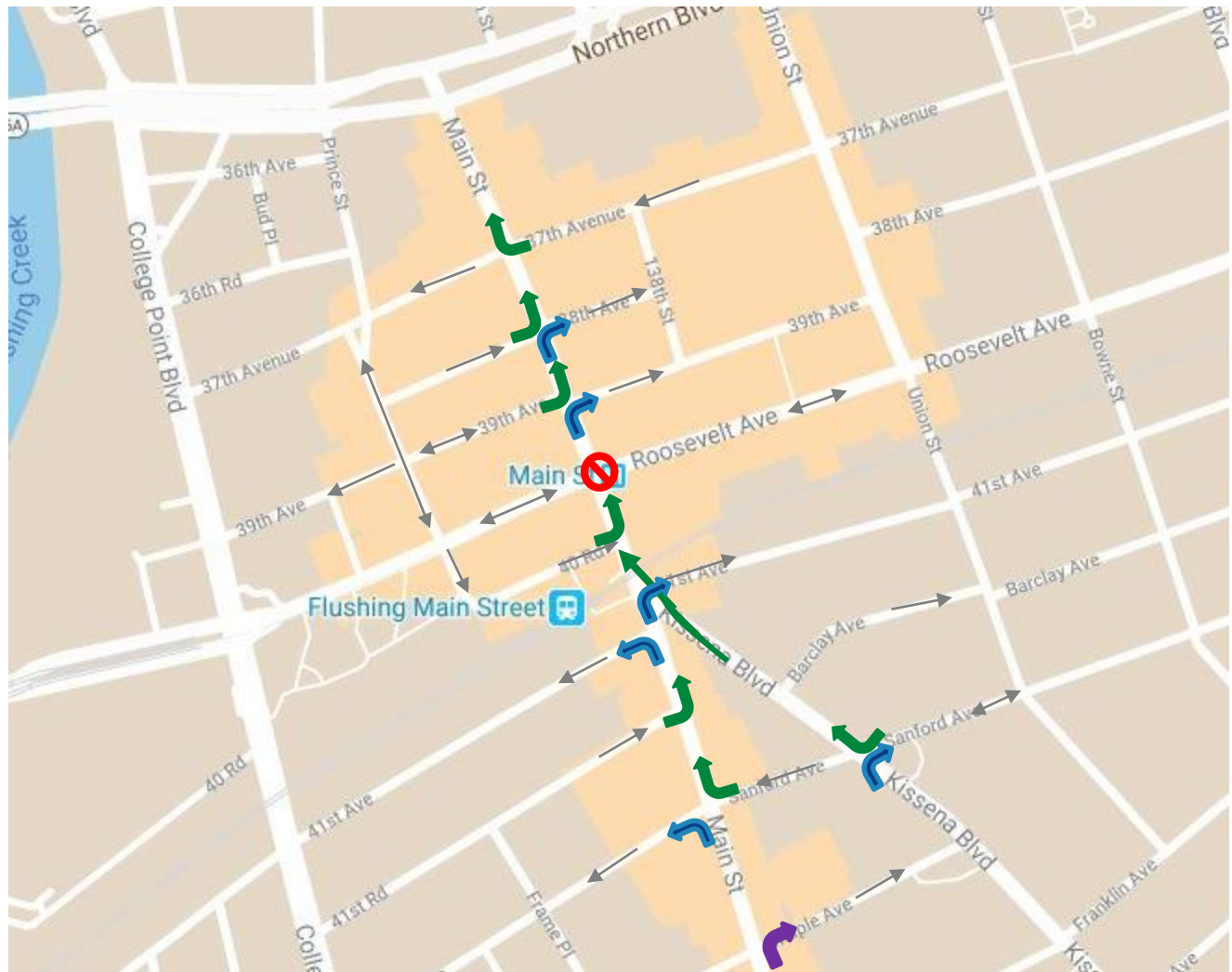
- Pedestrian and Vehicle Volumes increase in the NB direction, north of Sanford Av
- A shorter length busway corridor, may be perceived as lower impact but is likely to cause more traffic disruptions on Main St and more vehicle/pedestrian conflicts
- Requiring vehicles to turn at or before Sanford Av, decreases the number vehicle/pedestrian conflicts and the potential for congestion created by long queues of turning vehicles further north on Main St at busier intersections



Pedestrian Counts on the eastern side of Main St

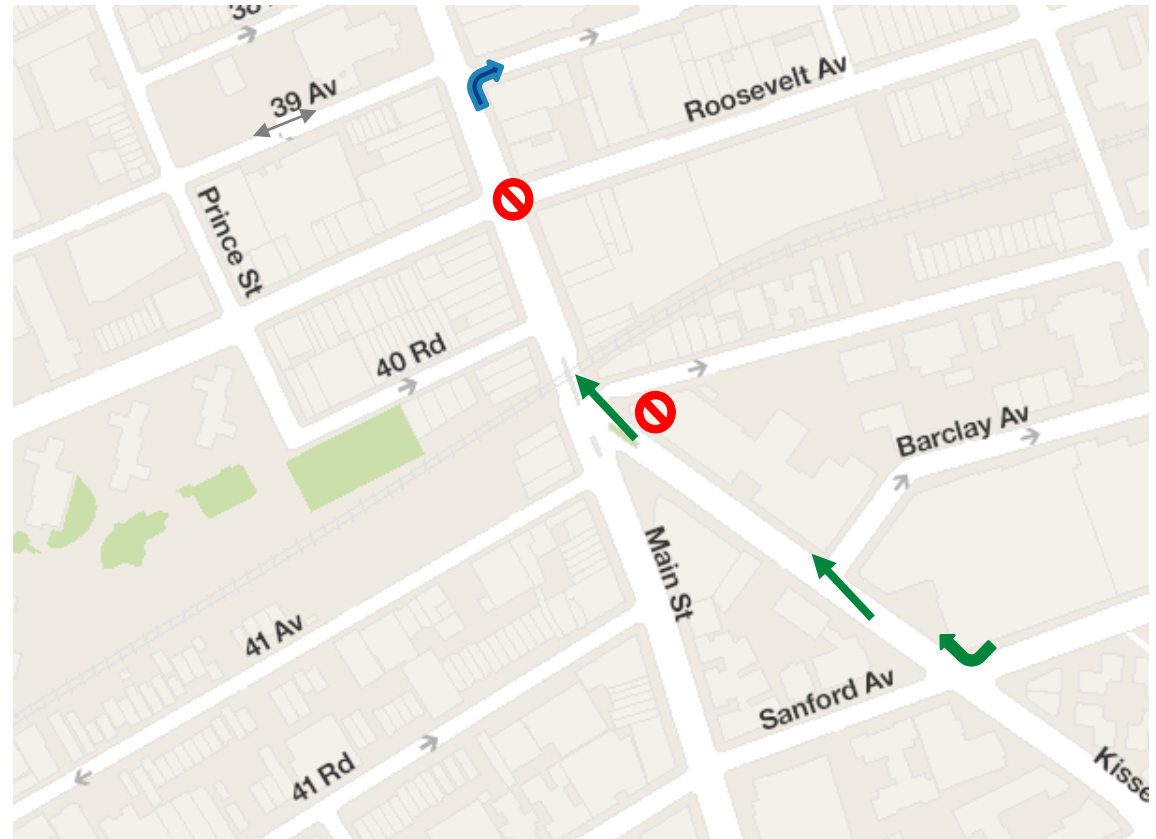
Local Access Circulation on Busway


-  Existing No turns allowed
-  Local access permitted
-  All vehicles must exit, except for buses, trucks
-  Last available right turn before busway begins





Local Access Circulation on Busway- Kissena Bl

- Enter busway from Sanford Av
- Vehicles requiring access Kissena Bl between Sanford Av and Barclay Av should turn right at Barclay Av
- Vehicles requiring access to Kissena Bl between Barclay Av and 41st Av will continue north on busway and must turn right at 39th Av



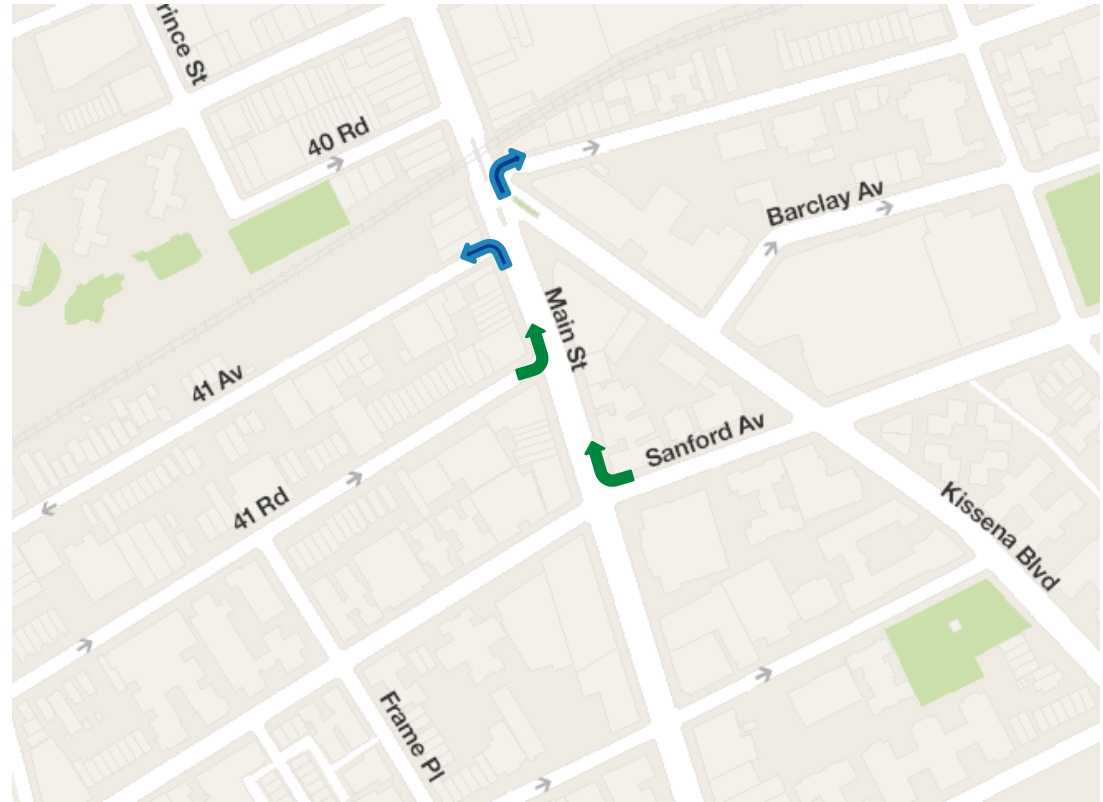
 Existing No turns allowed

 Local access permitted

 All vehicles must exit, except for buses, trucks

Local Access Circulation on Busway Main St (Sanford Av- 41st Av)

- Enter busway from Sanford Av or 41st Rd
- Vehicles must turn right or left at 41st Av



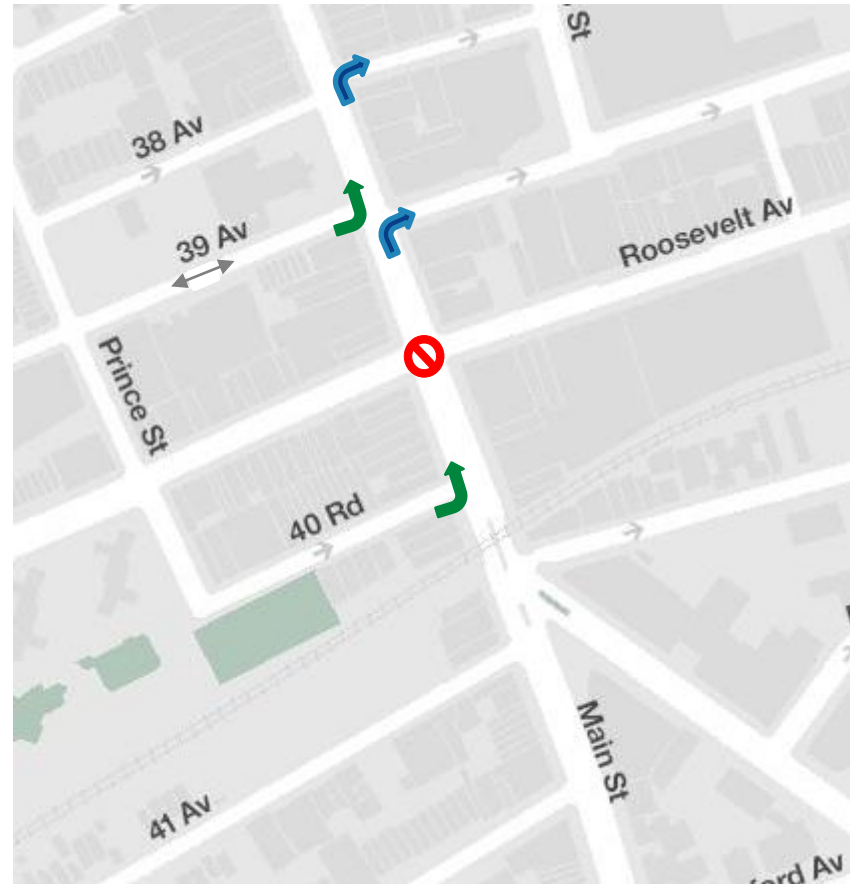
Local access permitted



All vehicles must exit, except for buses, trucks

Local Access Circulation on Busway (41st Av -38th Av)

- Enter busway from 40th Rd
- Vehicles must turn right at 39th Av
- Enter busway from 39th Av
- Vehicles must turn right on 38th Av



Local access permitted



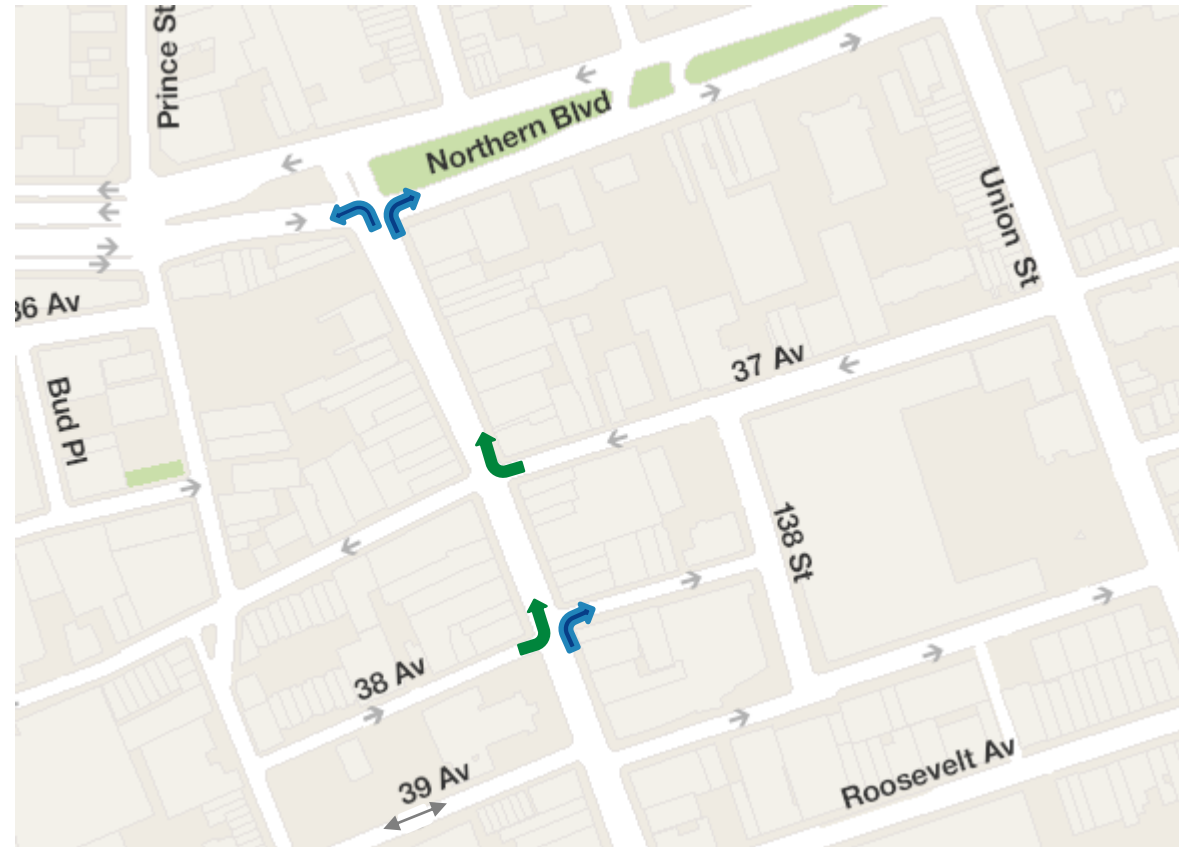
Existing No turns allowed



All vehicles must exit, except for buses, trucks

Local Access Circulation on Busway (38th Av-Northern BI)

- Enter busway from 38th Av or 37th Av and take right at or left at Northern BI



Local access permitted



All vehicles must exit, except for buses, trucks

THANK YOU!

Questions?



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