



**NYC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TESTIMONY
HEARING BEFORE MANHATTAN BOROUGH PRESIDENT BREWER
REGARDING CONGESTION IN MANHATTAN**

September 17, 2015

Good morning, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer. My name is Ryan Russo and I am the Deputy Commissioner for Transportation Planning and Management for the New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) here on behalf of Commissioner Trottenberg. Thank you for allowing me to testify today to discuss congestion and mobility in our City.

New York City has never been bigger and more dynamic — we have more people on the streets, more tourists, and more employees traveling to more jobs than ever before. DOT has helped facilitate this growth with the management of our streets and we have a continued duty to maximize safety and mobility for the 8.5 million City residents and the millions of tourists and commuters who come to the City. This challenge is particularly acute in the Manhattan Central Business District (CBD) where the competition is intense for limited street space.

This growth has placed unprecedented strain on our transportation system. DOT is committed to making the most of our role in managing streets by working to actively minimize congestion and keep our City moving with reliable bus service, by designing our streets for all modes of transportation, and by using technology to creatively manage high-traffic areas.

Firstly, Select Bus Service (SBS) allows for faster and more reliable service on busy routes with dedicated bus lanes, off-board fare collection, and transit signal priority. DOT has worked with the MTA to implement eight SBS routes, including the M15 line on the East Side and the newest line that recently launched on 86th Street in Manhattan. These routes collectively carry over 200,000 riders a day and have improved travel times for riders by 15-23 percent. Over the next three years, the City's goal is to add twelve more SBS routes across the City.

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In addition to enhancing bus travel, DOT proactively redesigns streets to improve safety and increase options for more efficient travel, including pedestrians and cyclists. These interventions are tailored to the demands of a growing City and are developed with local community input to support residents, travelers, and local businesses. The redesigns have included a growing network of bike lanes, which combined with an expanding Citi Bike System, has made biking a realistic, healthy, and affordable choice for many New Yorkers, while alleviating congestion on roads and in mass transit.

Lastly, DOT is using technology to address congestion in real time. Midtown in Motion, which covers the Manhattan core, is a congestion management system implemented in 2011 allowing engineers to identify and respond to traffic conditions on the spot. Traffic signals are able to respond to congestion caused by crashes or other disturbances. This week, with US DOT Secretary Foxx, we announced \$20 million in federal funding for a Connected Vehicle Pilot Deployment Program. Under this program, up to 10,000 vehicles, including taxis, NYC DOT fleet, MTA buses, and UPS trucks will be retrofit with innovative technology to communicate crucial vehicle information with each other, surrounding infrastructure, and traffic signals with the goal of safety for pedestrians, and lessening congestion and greenhouse gas emissions.

Also on the technology front, we are in a moment of rapid change in the way people are choosing their mode of transportation. Both taxis and FHV's are flexible forms of transportation, but not the most efficient mode in New York City, especially in the core. Many taxi and FHV trips are relatively short and could be served by Citi Bike or bus. Also, if more people chose to travel by Citi Bike or bus, the buses and remaining taxis would be traveling even faster. That is part of our work at DOT, to help get people and goods where they need to go.

But even with all of these efforts, in the last four years, average daytime Manhattan CBD traffic speeds have declined by nine percent, from 9.3 mph to 8.5 mph. Preliminary data from 2015

confirms this trend, with speeds in May 2015 down to 7.9 mph compared to 8.2 mph in 2014 (a 3.8 percent drop) and 9.2 mph in 2010 (a 13.1 percent drop). For buses specifically, the average running speed in Manhattan south of 96th Street declined by five percent during the evening rush in 2013 and 2014. The decline in bus speeds could be contributing to the drop in Manhattan bus ridership of six percent, as compared to less than one percent drop in the rest of the City. Given the capacity constraints of our streets and the fact that buses can carry far more people than cars, reversing the drop in bus speeds is vital to the continued growth, vitality and quality of life in Manhattan.

We are proud that we are moving more people and goods than ever before, but recognize the challenges that lie ahead and look forward to working with the greater New York City community to keep the City moving and vibrant.

Thank you and I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

