5th Avenue Complete Street
Presentation to Community Board 5, August 24, 2020
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Background
Better Buses Restart

Recovery 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 nine new projects announced
- These projects will help people get around more easily, with better service and less crowding
Background

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
Background

Citywide Bus Connections

- 41 different bus routes coming from all 5 boroughs
  - 9 from Brooklyn
  - 9 from the Bronx
  - 6 from Manhattan
  - 4 from Queens
  - 13 from Staten Island

- 60-160 buses per hour throughout the day

- Bus delays here can impact reliability citywide
Background

Citywide Bus Connections

Routes connect to outer areas of the city ranking high on CDC’s Social Vulnerability Index

• Includes:
  – high poverty
  – low vehicle access
  – aged 65 or older
  – civilians with a disability

• Vital transportation links for communities with limited options
Background

Bus Ridership

110,000 daily bus riders on routes serving 5th Av (2019)

- 51% from Manhattan routes
- 49% from routes originating in other boroughs
Background

Previous Bus Priority Treatments

Double bus lane implemented in 2018
(61st Street to 34th Street)

• From 2017 to 2019:
  – Local routes have had a speed increase of 6-12%
  – Express routes have had a speed increase of 11-20%
Background

Potential to Further 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 benefits that traffic restrictions could provide for buses

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<td>7 – 9 AM</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>11.8</td>
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<td>4 – 7 PM</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>11.7</td>
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Source: MTA Q32 Bus Speeds Data
Background

Public Requests for Complete Street Improvements

• Broad support, including from CB5, for double bus lanes implemented in 2018

• Multiple longstanding requests for a Complete Street design, including protected bike lane

• Requests to accommodate high pedestrian volumes, especially during holidays

5th Av at 45 St
What is a Complete Street?

Providing Safe & Accessible Options

• Provides safe and accessible options for all travel modes and people of all ages and abilities

• Opportunities on 5th Avenue:
  – Improved bus speeds and reliability
  – More pedestrian space & shorter crossings
  – Protected bike lane
  – Vehicle pick-up/drop-off space
  – Street furniture and beautification: Planters, seating

• Supports City’s Vision Zero Initiative
Background

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
- Project allows more space for pedestrians during pandemic recovery
Background

Bicycle Volumes

On average, 1,800 cyclists use 5th Av daily (at 51st Street)

- Highest ridership on a Manhattan corridor without a bike lane
- There are 35 Citibike stations with ¼ mile of 5th Av and 34th St
- East River bike crossings are up 6% in Jan.-June 2020 vs. Jan.-June 2019
**Background**

**Vehicle Travel Speeds**

- During pandemic, speeds greatly increased as volumes dropped

- As traffic begins to return, daytime speeds are dropping

- Important to make changes **now** before congestion fully returns
Safety and Crash History

- High crash rates among all road users – pedestrians, bicyclists, and motor vehicles
- Underscores need for design improving safety for all modes
- Cyclist fatality in June of 2020 on 5th Av near 59th St in bus lane

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<th>Severe Injuries</th>
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<th>KSI</th>
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<td>Pedestrian</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Bicyclists</td>
<td>95</td>
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<td>Motor Vehicle Occupant</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>513</td>
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Source: Fatalities: NYCDOT  
Injuries: NYSDOT  
KSI: Persons Killed or Severely Injured
5th Avenue Complete Street Proposal
Outreach

Stakeholder Engagement

• Community Advisory Board (CAB)
  – Elected officials
  – Community Board members
  – Representatives of local institutions and organizations
  – Property owners
  – Transit advocates and bus riders

• Meeting regularly as project is developed, implemented and monitored

• Two meetings to date, next meeting early-September

• Presented initial proposal in July 2020

• Walkthrough on 5th Avenue with Commissioner Trottenberg in late-July
5th Avenue Complete Street Proposal

Overview

Initial proposal limited southbound through vehicles to buses, bike and emergency vehicles, requiring all others to turn off before 57th Street

• Local access would be allowed via side streets for pickup/drop-off, then requiring vehicles to making the next available turn off the busway

• Added new pedestrian space, protected bike lane and pickup/drop-off space
Outreach

Stakeholder Engagement

• Initial feedback on proposal
  – Business needs
  – Direct pickup & drop-off
  – Southbound through travel
  – Signage clutter

• DOT continues to evaluate feedback and suggestions and will reconvene CAB in early-September
5th Avenue Complete Street Plan & Design

Overview

DOT is analyzing stakeholder concerns about the effects of potential traffic restrictions

- Implement safety elements, including protected bike lane, expanded pedestrian space and pickup/drop-off zones

- DOT will return to CB5 in September with update on proposed turn restrictions and monitoring plan to make 5th Avenue work as well as possible for buses, bikes and pedestrians
Proposed Cross Section

Typical Midblock - Draft

Existing

Proposed

10’ Bus Lane

11’ Bus Lane

12’ Travel Lane

11’ Travel Lane

11’ Travel Lane

55’

10’ Bus Lane

11’ Bus Lane

10’ Travel Lane

8’ Pickup & Drop-off Lane

6’ Bike Lane

7’ Painted Pedestrian Space

3’ Buffer

22
Right turns can be made from bus lanes where permitted.
Proposed Treatments: Pedestrians

Sidewalk Extensions

Painted curb extensions would create more space for pedestrians where volumes are high

- Allow for better social distancing
- Bollards, planters, or other elements would provide separation
- Can shorten crossings, increasing pedestrian safety

Midtown MH © NYC DOT

8th Av & 42 St © NYC DOT
Proposed Treatments: Bikes

Protected Bike Lane

Curbside bike lane would be protected by parked cars or vertical elements

- Accommodate increases in cycling associated with Citi Bike expansion and COVID-19 pandemic
- Designs would accommodate adjacent loading of people and goods

1st Av Protected Bike Lanes (60-72 St)
Proposed Treatments: Bikes

Interim Designs

- In early phases of project rollout, temporary materials could be used to provide physical separation from vehicles for cyclists and pedestrians.

- Due to COVID-19 and Local Law mandating a 45-day waiting period, Complete Street elements may not be fully implemented this year in permanent materials.

Temporary Protected Bike Lane, Smith St, BK
Proposed Treatments: Curb Regulations

Local Traffic Access and Pickup/Drop-off Zones

New pickup/drop-off zones each block

- Provides space for taxis & FHVs to pull over out of travel lane
Proposed Treatments: Bus Lanes

Strategies to Improve Bus Speeds and Reliability

Make existing bus lanes work as well as possible

• Cyclists currently using bus lane will be relocated to new bike lane

• Install bus lane cameras for enforcement

• Monitor use of new pickup & drop-off zones

• Seasonal traffic restrictions on 5th Ave

• Traffic restrictions are being evaluated
Project Monitoring for Potential Adjustments

Tracking Project Effects Over Time

NYC DOT will track bus speeds, traffic flow, and travel time

• Midtown in Motion, a monitoring system for Midtown Manhattan, captures traffic, congestion and travel times

• Bus speed and reliability data provided by MTA

• DOT will provide more detail on monitoring thresholds in September presentation
Next Steps
Next Steps

Stakeholder Engagement

• DOT to discuss details of updated design with CAB in early-September
• DOT will return to CB5 in late-September
• Project information is now available at:
  – nyc.gov/busprojects
• Project feedback portal live:
  – https://nycdotprojects.info/5thav
Next Steps

Project Timeline

**June 2020**
- Begin outreach
- Begin project coordination

**July-September 2020**
- Community Advisory Board (CAB) & CB 5 Meetings
- Project design and coordination
- Ongoing stakeholder engagement and outreach
- Begin installing new street design

**Fall-Winter 2020**
- Ongoing CAB & CB 5 Meetings
- Finalize & implement initial traffic restrictions
- Ongoing stakeholder engagement and outreach

**Spring-Summer 2021**
- 5th Ave performance evaluation through pilot end date
- Ongoing stakeholder engagement and outreach
Thank You!

Questions & Discussion