Table of Contents

1. Background  
2. Existing Conditions  
3. Transporting Essential Workers During and After COVID-19  
4. Proposal  
5. Next Steps
Background
Better Buses Action Plan

- Improve bus speeds by 25%
- Install 10-15 miles of new bus lanes per year
- Improve 5 miles of existing bus lanes per year
- Support MTA Bus Network Redesign efforts with borough bus priority plans
Bus Priority Corridors

- NYCDOT analyzed Bronx corridors to determine where bus lanes and other bus priority treatments are most needed.

- E 149th St identified as a top ten Bronx corridor due to:
  - High ridership
  - Slow and unreliable bus service
  - Important east-west connection
Existing Conditions
Bus Service Overview

- 4 bus routes, 55,000 daily riders
  - Bx2, Bx4, Bx17, Bx19
- Major connections:
  - 1 2 3 4 5 6 A B C D
  - The Hub
  - Lincoln Medical Center
  - Hostos Community College
- Key issues:
  - Congested corridor w/ slow bus speeds
  - High traffic volumes between Exterior St and Grand Concourse
  - Double parking, weaving & merging
Current Bus Speeds

- Within CB 4, buses on 149th St move at **walking speed or slower**
  - **Eastbound**: 3.3 mph
    (Exterior St to Grand Concourse, 6am-6pm)*
  - **Westbound**: 2.9 mph
    (Grand Concourse to Gerard Ave, 6am-6pm)*

- This bottleneck causes backups across the entire route

*Data is available by segment; these are the segments closest to CB 4’s boundaries.*
Existing Geometry

- Each direction has 2 travel lanes + 1 parking lane
- Buses stuck in heavy traffic at all times of day
  - Causes buses to arrive off-schedule, 2-3 at a time
  - Slows down emergency response vehicles
- Cars waiting to turn left or right block through traffic

Bus stuck in traffic on E 149th St between Walton Ave and Gerard Ave
Time Lapse Photo Study

• In March 2020, DOT hung a time lapse camera at Gerard Ave, an observed traffic hotspot
  • Took a photo every minute, from 6am to 8pm, to observe congestion throughout the day and week
• Footage showed severe congestion all day, especially eastbound (right side of photos)
• Note: photos taken March 4-8, before COVID-19 outbreak
Transporting Essential Workers During and After COVID-19
Transporting Essential Workers

- 38% of NYC transit riders are frontline workers (nurses and medical workers, transit workers, postal/courier workers, grocery store workers, etc.)
- 79% of the city’s frontline workers are Black, Hispanic, or mixed race
- The bus routes that use 149th St serve high concentrations of frontline workers
- Roughly half of frontline workers commute during off-peak hours

Transporting Essential Workers

- **Lincoln Medical Center makes 149th St a key corridor** for transporting frontline workers during the COVID-19 crisis.

- **Better bus service** can get frontline workers to their jobs **quickly and on-time**, during and after the crisis.

- **Bus improvements** can help **keep buses evenly spaced** along the route, which minimizes crowding and allows social distancing onboard.

- **Emergency vehicles** use bus lanes to improve response times.
Proposal
Proposed Treatments

Bus Lanes
Webster Ave, The Bronx

Pedestrian Islands
Baychester Ave, The Bronx

Turn Bays
Webster Ave, The Bronx

Curb Management (Meters, Loading Zones)
178th St, The Bronx
Existing: Exterior St to Gerard Ave
Proposed: Exterior St to Gerard Ave

- New left turn bay onto Gerard Ave
- New queue jump signal gives buses a head start after the bus lane ends
- Eastbound bus lane begins at River Ave
- Widen pedestrian island at Gerard Ave (from 6' to 15', ADA accessible)
- Repurpose 1 legal parking space

Exterior St
River Ave
Bx13 bus stop
Bx19 bus stop
E 149th St
Gerard Ave

Bx13 bus stop
Bx19 bus stop

MTA
BETTER BUSES
NEW YORK CITY DOT
Existing: Gerard Ave to Grand Concourse

- Existing, 1-block bus lane on Grand Concourse
- Bx19 bus stop
- Vision Zero Priority Intersection; all left turns currently restricted (except buses)
Proposed: Gerard Ave to Grand Concourse

- New queue jump signal gives buses a head start after the bus lane ends
- Widen pedestrian island at Grand Concourse (6' to 9', ADA accessible)
- Remove rest of island for new left turn bay at Walton Ave
- New right turn bay at Walton Ave keeps through lanes clear
- Repurpose 11 legal parking spaces
- Repurpose 5 legal parking spaces
- Widen pedestrian island at Gerard Ave (from 6' to 15', ADA accessible)
- New right turn restriction onto Grand Concourse
- New queue jump signal gives buses a head start after the bus lane ends
- Widen pedestrian island at Grand Concourse (6' to 9', ADA accessible)
- Remove rest of island for new left turn bay at Walton Ave
- New right turn bay at Walton Ave keeps through lanes clear
- Repurpose 11 legal parking spaces
- Repurpose 5 legal parking spaces
- Widen pedestrian island at Gerard Ave (from 6' to 15', ADA accessible)
- New right turn restriction onto Grand Concourse

Bx19 bus stop
Bx1/Bx2 Bus Stop
Hostos Community College
Existing: Grand Concourse to Park Ave

Major bus stop (connect to 2/4/5 trains, Bx1/Bx2 buses, Hostos CC)
Proposed: Grand Concourse to Park Ave

Wide bus lane lets buses pass each other at major bus stop

New left turn restriction onto Anthony J Griffin Pl

New left turn bay onto Park Ave
Proposed: E 144th St – Walton Ave to Grand Concourse

**E 144th St** between Walton Ave and Grand Concourse:
- Currently 35’ wide, with 1 parking lane and 1 travel lane in each direction
- Sub-standard street width has generated community complaints
- Right turn restriction from eastbound 149th St onto southbound Grand Concourse would add additional vehicles to this block (see green arrow)

**Proposal:** change the south curb only (7 spaces) to No Parking, Mon-Sat 8am-6pm
- Matches the adjacent blocks of E 144th St from Walton Ave to Exterior St
- Overnight and Sunday parking remains
Making it Work

Based on community feedback and data analysis, DOT will consider additional changes to this proposal.

Changes being studied:
1. New metered parking zones and truck loading zones, to reduce double-parking and lane blocking
2. Changes to traffic signal timing, to keep traffic flowing smoothly
3. Opportunities to improve parking availability around the corner on side streets
4. Other refinements based on community feedback
Next Steps
Project Timeline

Fall 2019
• Present potential treatments to CB 4, CB 1
• Collect traffic data
• Survey merchants

Winter/Spring 2020
• Develop draft street design plan
• Present draft plan to CB 4, CB 1
• Analyze traffic data

Summer/Fall 2020
• Develop detailed final plan
• Present detailed final plan to CB 4, CB 1
• Implement project improvements (as conditions allow)
Continuing Community Engagement

Suggestions on additional organizations or stakeholders we should reach out to?

Past and present outreach:
• MTA Bronx Bus Redesign / NYC DOT Better Buses
  • Open Houses
  • Community Board Presentations
• Community Board 4
• Community Board 1
THANK YOU!

Questions?