

Better Buses Restart – 181st Street Busway Pilot

Community Advisory Board Meeting #2 – September 3, 2020



BETTERBUSES Restart



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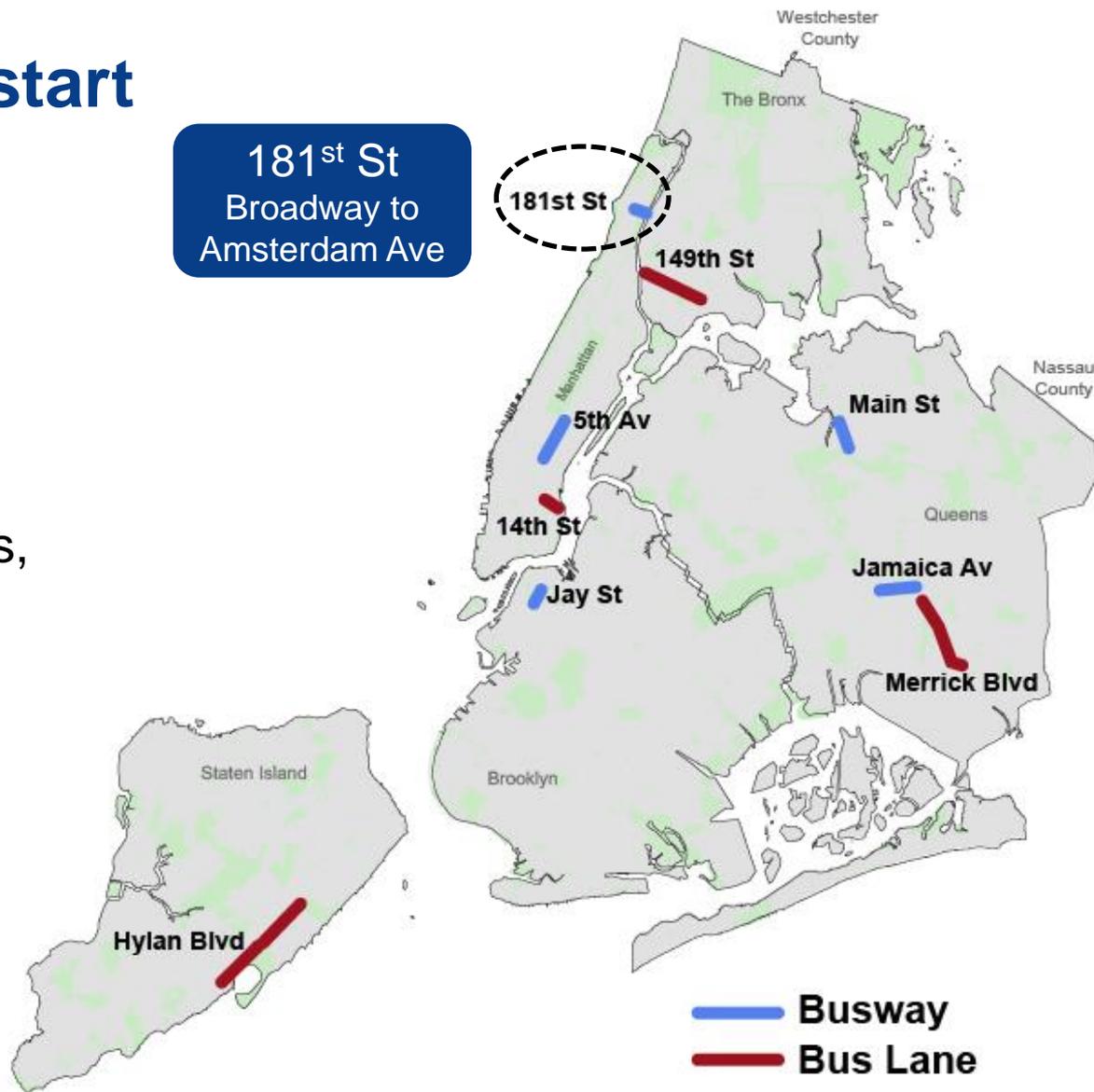
Background

Better Buses Restart

Recovery Plan

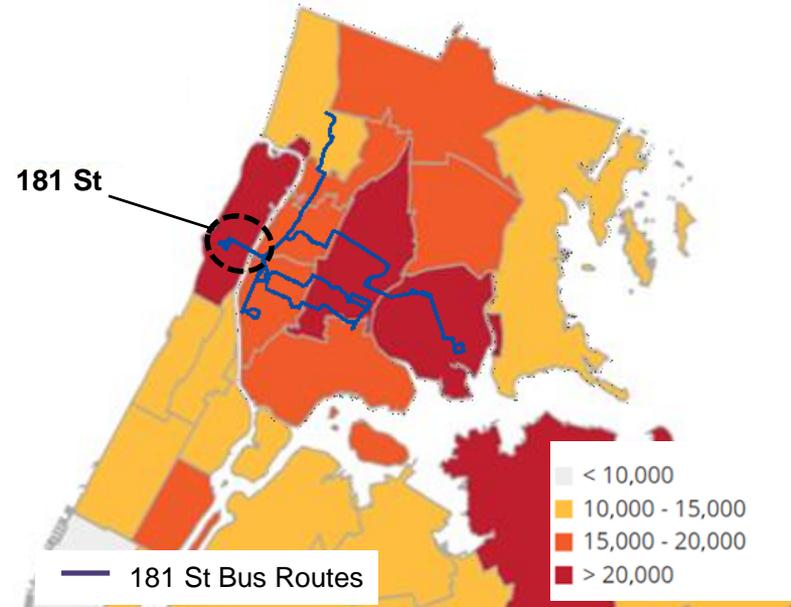
9 busway & bus lane projects announced, focused on:

- Vulnerable populations, essential workers
- Number of bus passengers served
- Ability to implement quickly
- Geographic equity



Why 181st Street?

- 42,000 daily passengers on 5 MTA bus routes
- Routes on 181st St serve neighborhoods with high concentrations of essential workers
- Bus passengers comprise 62%-70% of roadway users on 181st St
- Average bus speed is 3.7mph
- 69% of Washington Heights and Inwood households do not have access to a car



What We've Heard

What We've Heard

Action Items / Next Steps

Street Vending

- BID / SBS meeting 7/29/20
- DOT will install 4 city benches and 5 leaning bars at 5 bus stops

Traffic and Truck Circulation

- Traffic analysis on 181st St and surrounding streets to determine potential effects of busway

Neighborhood Development

- Incorporating anticipated increases in trips into traffic analysis

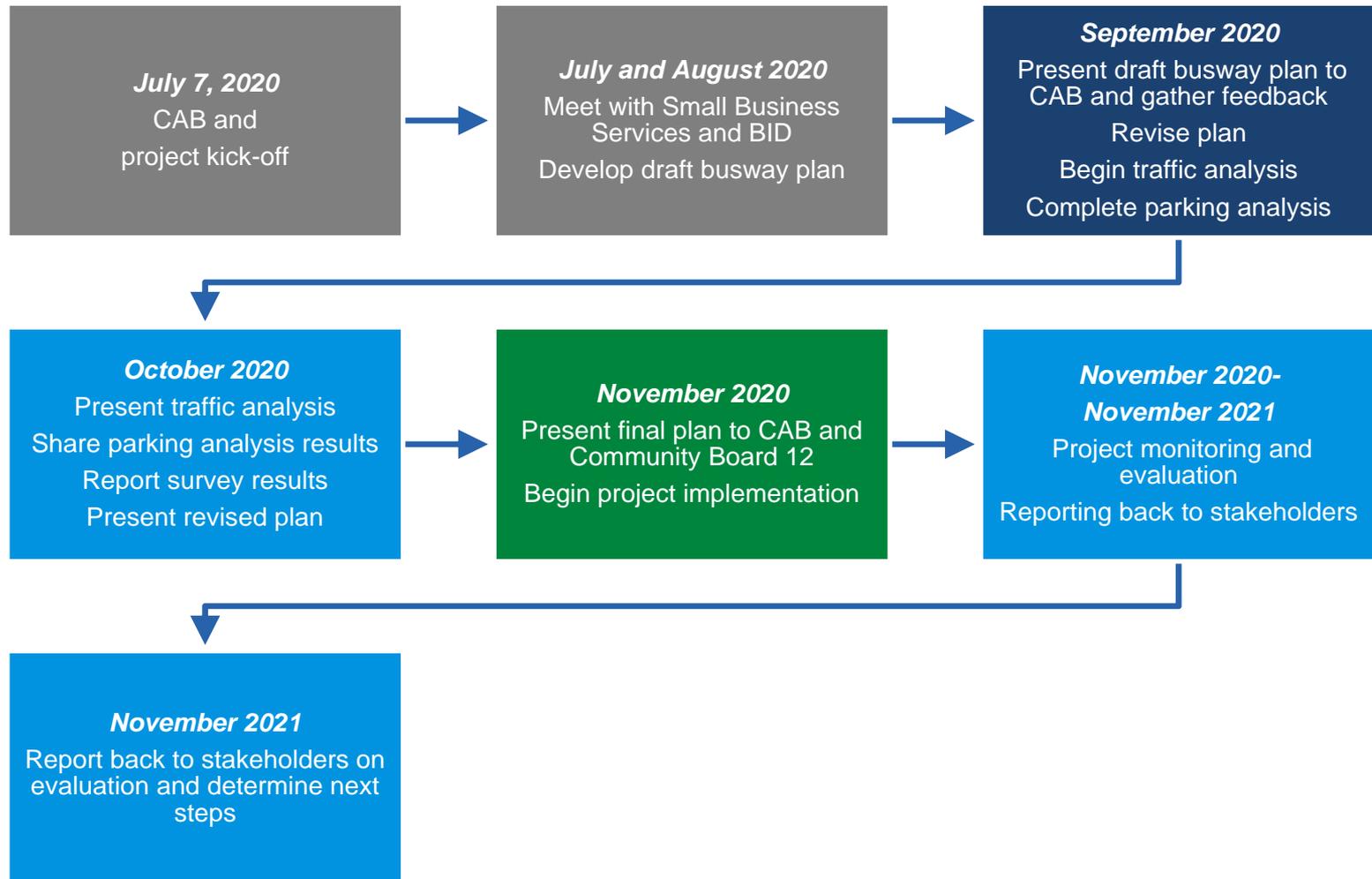
Loading Needs

- Accommodations in Busway Design
- Determining optimal curb regulations for whole corridor
- Scheduling meeting with FDNY

Supporting Local Businesses

- Develop business survey to ensure feedback is received to address concerns

Project Timeline

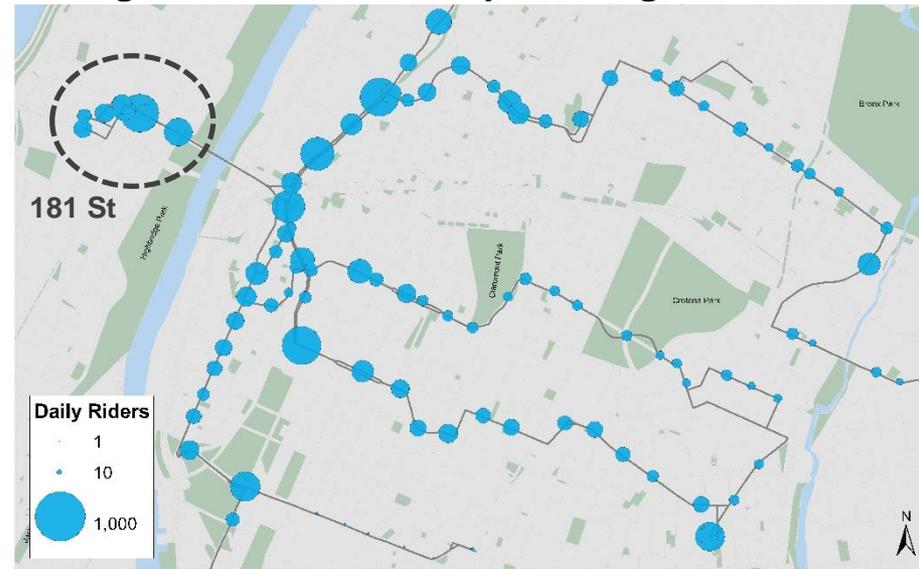


Analysis Updates

Travel Patterns – Transit

- Of the 42,000 daily riders, many are traveling just along 181st St
- 3,660 bus trips on corridor start and end in Manhattan, which would be directly served by the busway

Origins of riders with trips ending on 181st St



Destinations of riders with trips starting on 181st St



Source: MTA NYCT

Travel Patterns – Transit

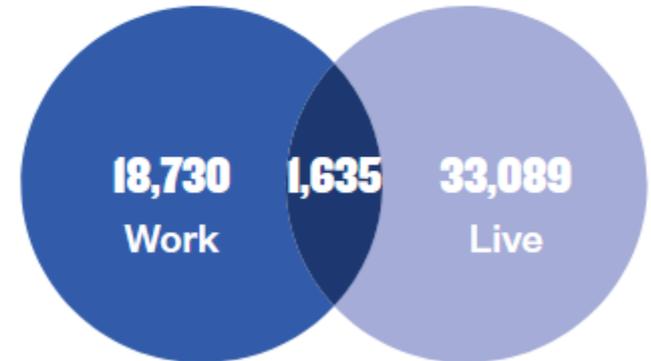
- In addition to local trips on 181st St, ridership data indicates significant amount of Manhattan residents benefit from the bus connections to the Bronx
- During morning rush hours (6am-10am), 3,500 passengers are getting on buses on 181st St
- During evening rush hours (3pm-7pm), 5,700 passengers are arriving from Bronx to 181st St



Travel Patterns – Commuting

- 18,730 people work in Washington Heights that do not live in the neighborhood
- Many rely on public transit to access Washington Heights
- 5,900 bus riders on 181st St coming from the Bronx during morning peak hours (6am-10am)

Commuting Patterns



18,730

Work in Washington Heights,
live elsewhere

1,635

Live & Work in
Washington Heights

33,089

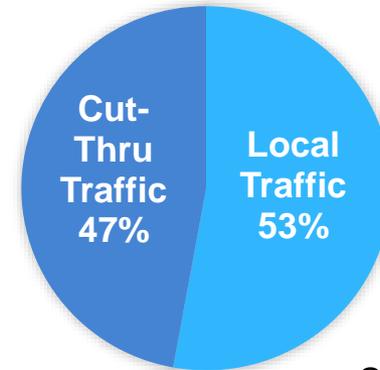
Live in Washington Heights,
work elsewhere

Source: NYC SBS - Commercial District Needs Assessment, US Census

Travel Patterns - Vehicles

- Using Streetlight, an analysis tool that utilizes GPS data, DOT is studying traffic patterns in the area
- Almost half of all traffic is “cut-thru” traffic with destination other than 181st St
- Cut-thru traffic could be redirected to larger roadways (e.g. Cross Bronx, 178 St, 179 St)

Traffic on 181st St



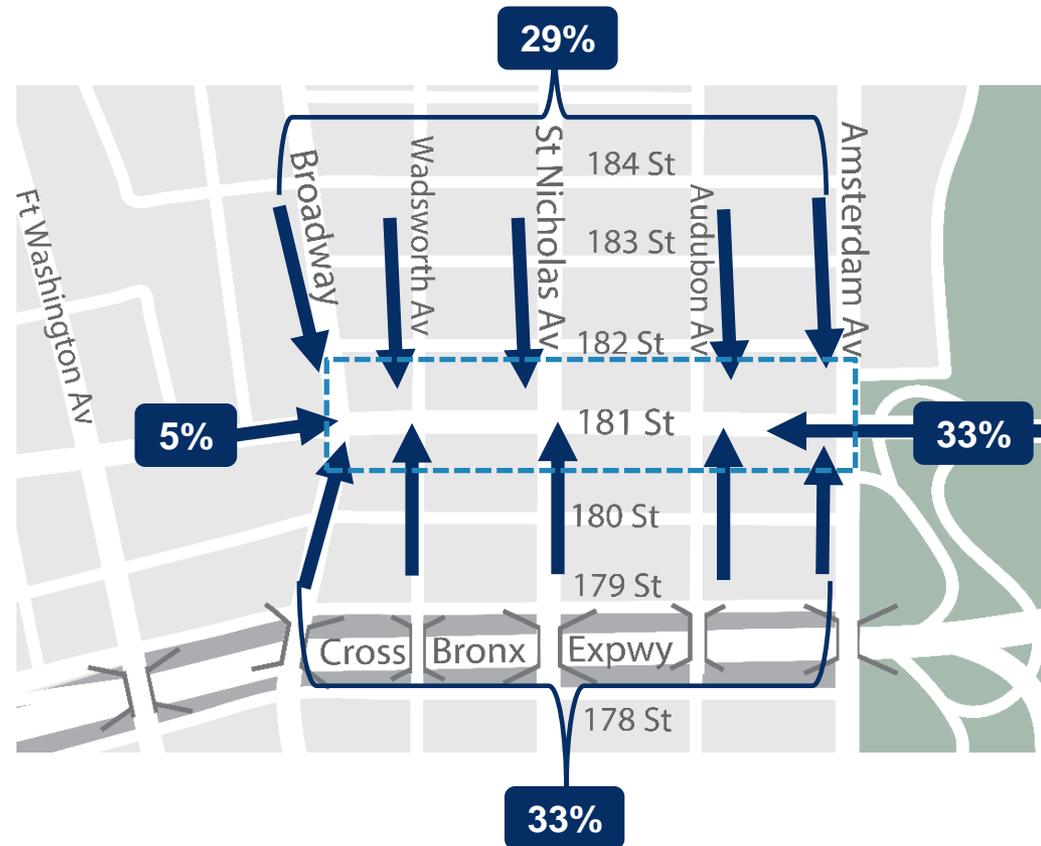
Source: Streetlight



Travel Patterns - Vehicles

Vehicles with 181st Street Destination

- Majority of vehicles with destination on 181st St already using cross streets
- DOT will continue to analyze these data to determine busway effects on traffic network



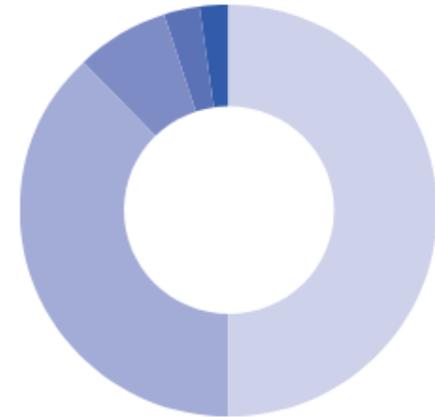
Source: Streetlight

Local Businesses

- Surveys indicate that 88% of people get to Washington Heights businesses via walking or public transit
- Busway would support transit use and walking
- As project develops, DOT will continue to work with local businesses, BID, and SBS to address concerns

How people get to businesses in Washington Heights

Walk		50%
Public transportation		38%
Car		7%
Taxi/Ride share		3%
Bike		2%

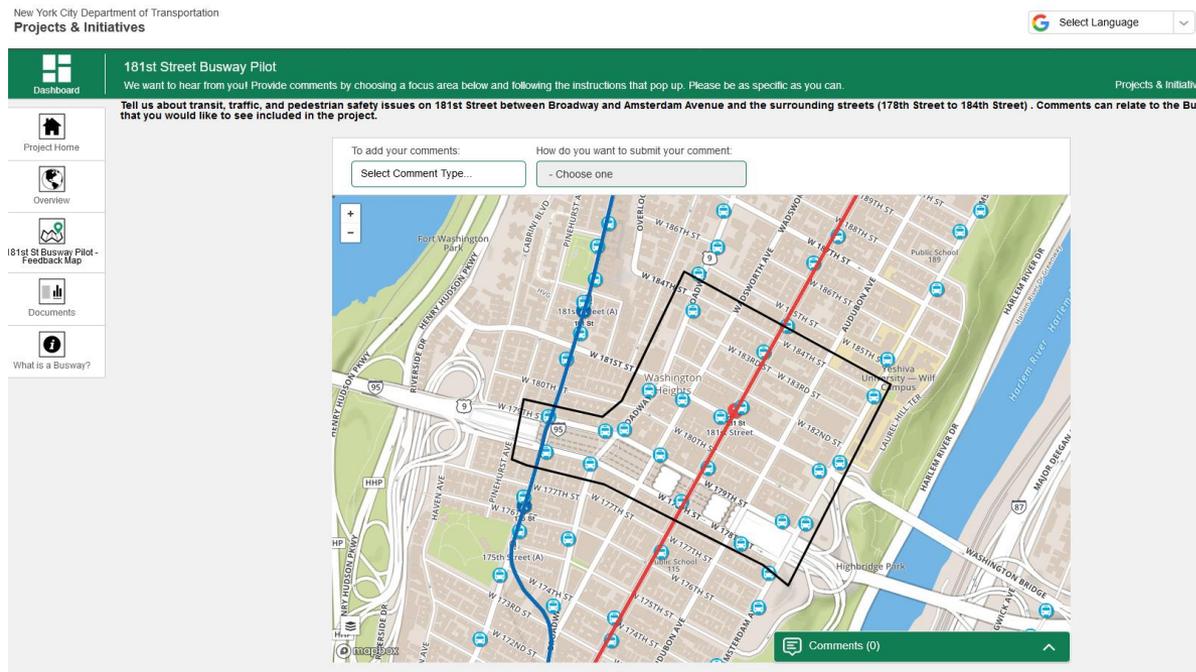


Source: NYCSBS - Commercial District Needs Assessment, CLOTH

Online Outreach

Online Project Website

- Launched online website detailing information about the project
- Feedback map allows for comments at specific locations
- Available in multiple languages (via Google Translate)



<https://nycdotprojects.info/181St-Busway>

Online Survey

- Developing survey for general public to gather feedback
- Will be available in English and Spanish
- Expected launched by end of September



181st st Busway Survey

Opening Page

NYC DOT is studying a busway on 181st Street between Broadway and Amsterdam Avenue. A busway prioritizes the movement of Buses, Trucks, Access-A-Ride, and Emergency Vehicles. General vehicles would still be able to access 181st Street for delivery, shopping, and pick-up/drop-off, but must make the next available turn off of the corridor.

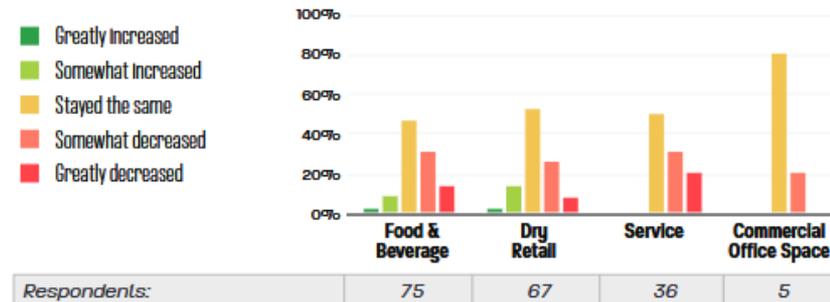
We'd like your help, this survey will only take a few minutes. Thanks, we really appreciate it!

Business Outreach

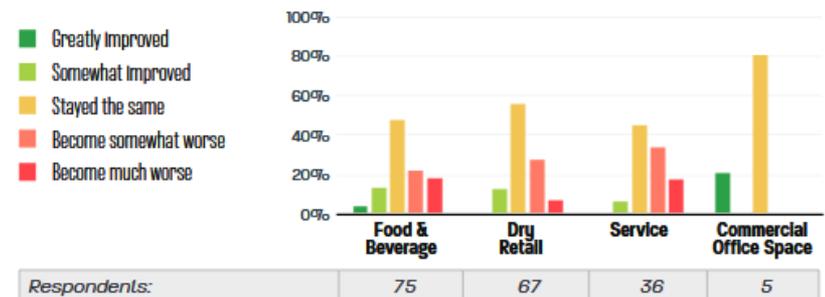
- DOT will develop specific online survey for businesses as part of monitoring plan
- Committed to hearing from businesses to ensure that needs are accommodated where feasible
- Design can be adjusted after implementation if concerns arise

Example questions from 14th St Survey

Since the 14th Street Project changes, the number of customers visiting my business has:



Since the 14th Street Project changes my business has...



"Business is about the same, we receive about the same amount of customers as before as we have a lot of foot traffic."

Source: Sam Schwartz Engineering

Traffic and Parking Analysis

Traffic Analysis

Traffic Modeling

- Builds off model created by Port Authority for GWB Bus Terminal project
- Model calibrated with latest traffic counts available (Fall 2019)
- Additional investigation of GPS data to determine origins and destinations of vehicles on 181st St
- Detailed results including:
 - Expected bus speed improvements
 - Anticipated traffic diversions



Traffic Analysis

Fridays

- Traffic analysis will focus on weekday morning and evening rush hours, which are the most congested time periods
- Will also look specifically at Friday afternoons/evenings

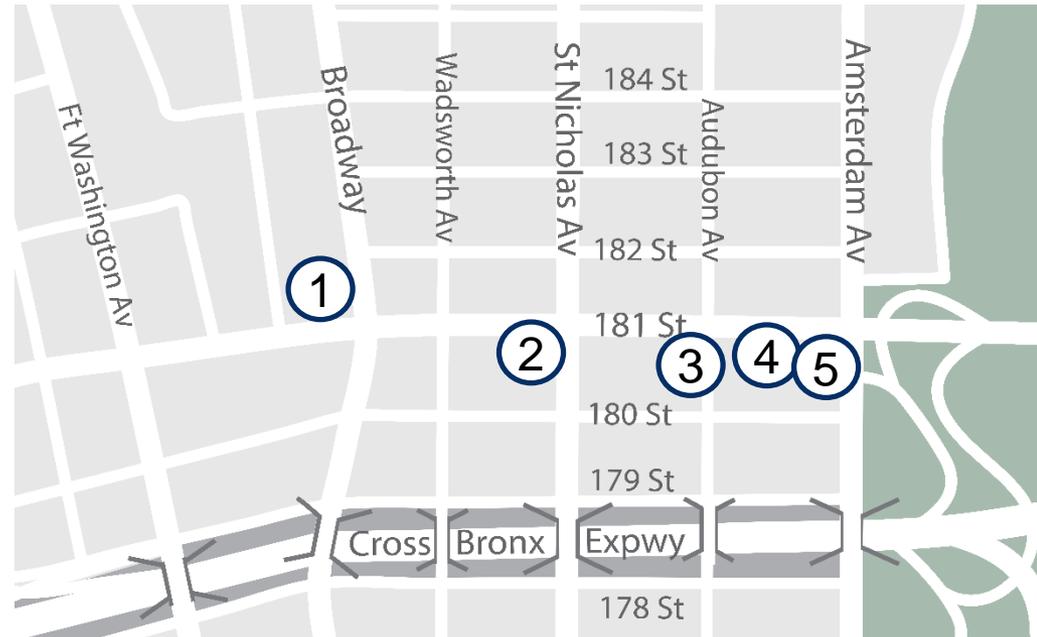
Are there other time periods that DOT should investigate?



Traffic Analysis – New Development

New development to be incorporated into model

1. Coliseum Theater Redevelopment
2. Target
3. Supermarket – 312 Audubon Ave/544 W 181st St
4. WHIN Charter School – 508 W 181st St
5. 2420 Amsterdam Ave (hotel/commercial)

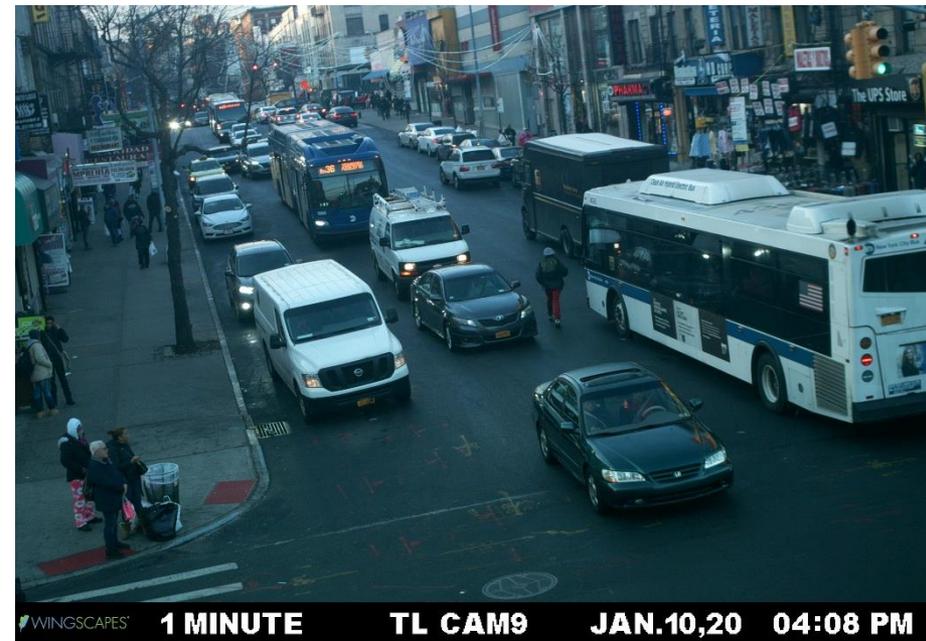


Are there other locations that DOT should investigate?

Parking Analysis

Time Lapse Study

- Images taken every minute between 6am and 10pm between Thursday, January 9 and Monday, January 13, 2020
- Images uploaded to DOT parking analysis tool for study
- Detailed results including:
 - Parking duration
 - Illegal parking/loading/unloading
 - Double parking
 - Types of vehicles parking/loading
- Parking regulations will be catered to specific needs of individual blocks



Washington Bridge Construction

Bridge rehabilitation

- Coordinating with DOT Bridges on rehabilitation activities
- Traffic patterns will be monitored during various stages of construction
- DOT Bridges will present detailed construction plans in September to Community Boards and Elected Officials



NYC DOT

November 18, 2019

Washington Bridge Notice:

Repairs of the Washington Bridge over the Harlem River (181st Street) will require all hours closure of the Manhattan-bound center lane until further notice.

Both the left and right Manhattan-bound Lanes will remain open.

NYC 311

NYC Emergency Management

NYPD 23rd Precinct

NYPD 25th Precinct

NYPD 40th Precinct

Manhattan Community Board 11



Preliminary 181st Street Busway Proposal

Preliminary Busway Proposal

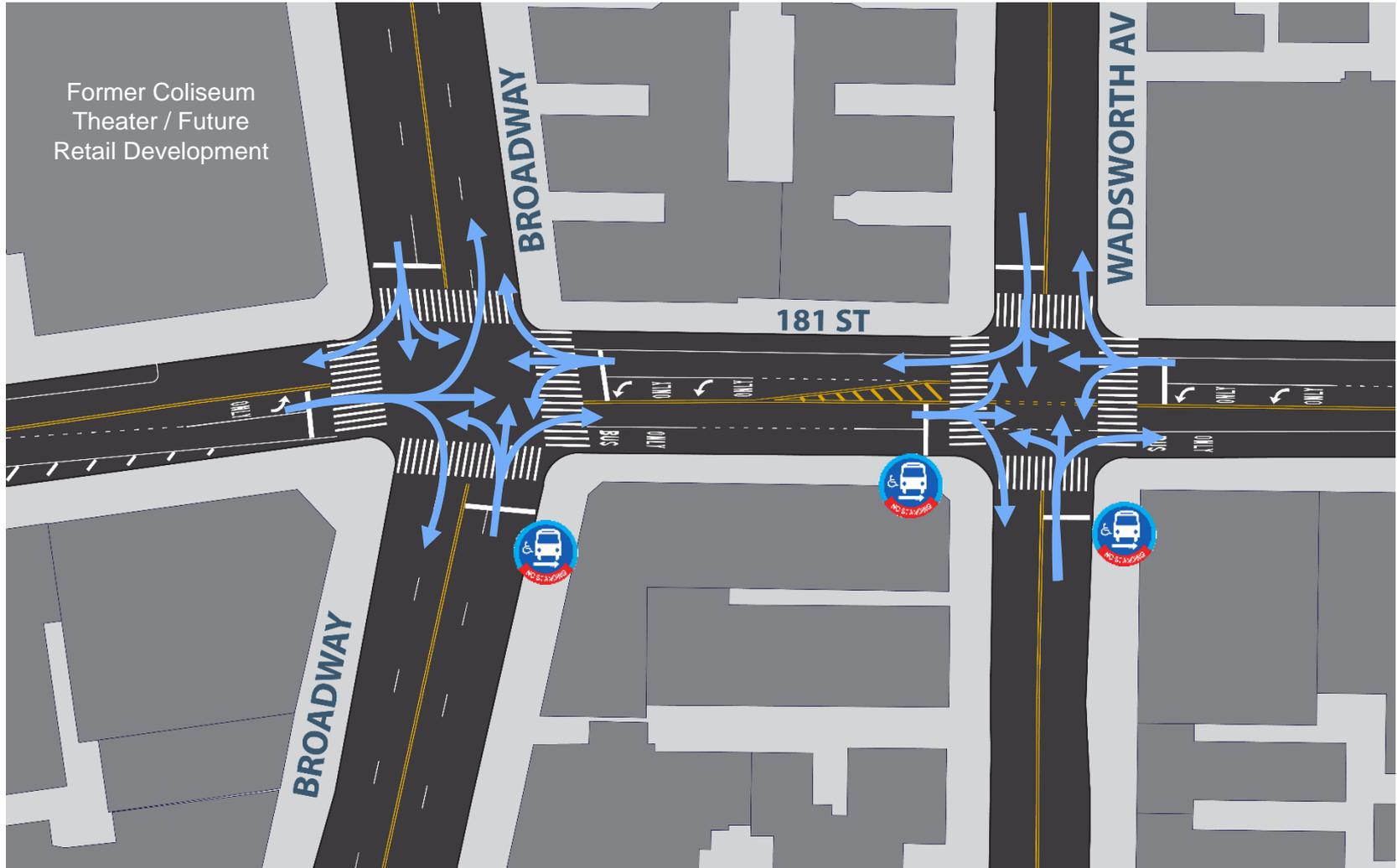
- **Busway Extents:**
 - Eastbound
 - Broadway to Amsterdam Av
 - Westbound
 - Amsterdam Av to Wadsworth Av
- **Busway hours TBD**
- **Busway will be adjusted based on feedback and traffic analysis**



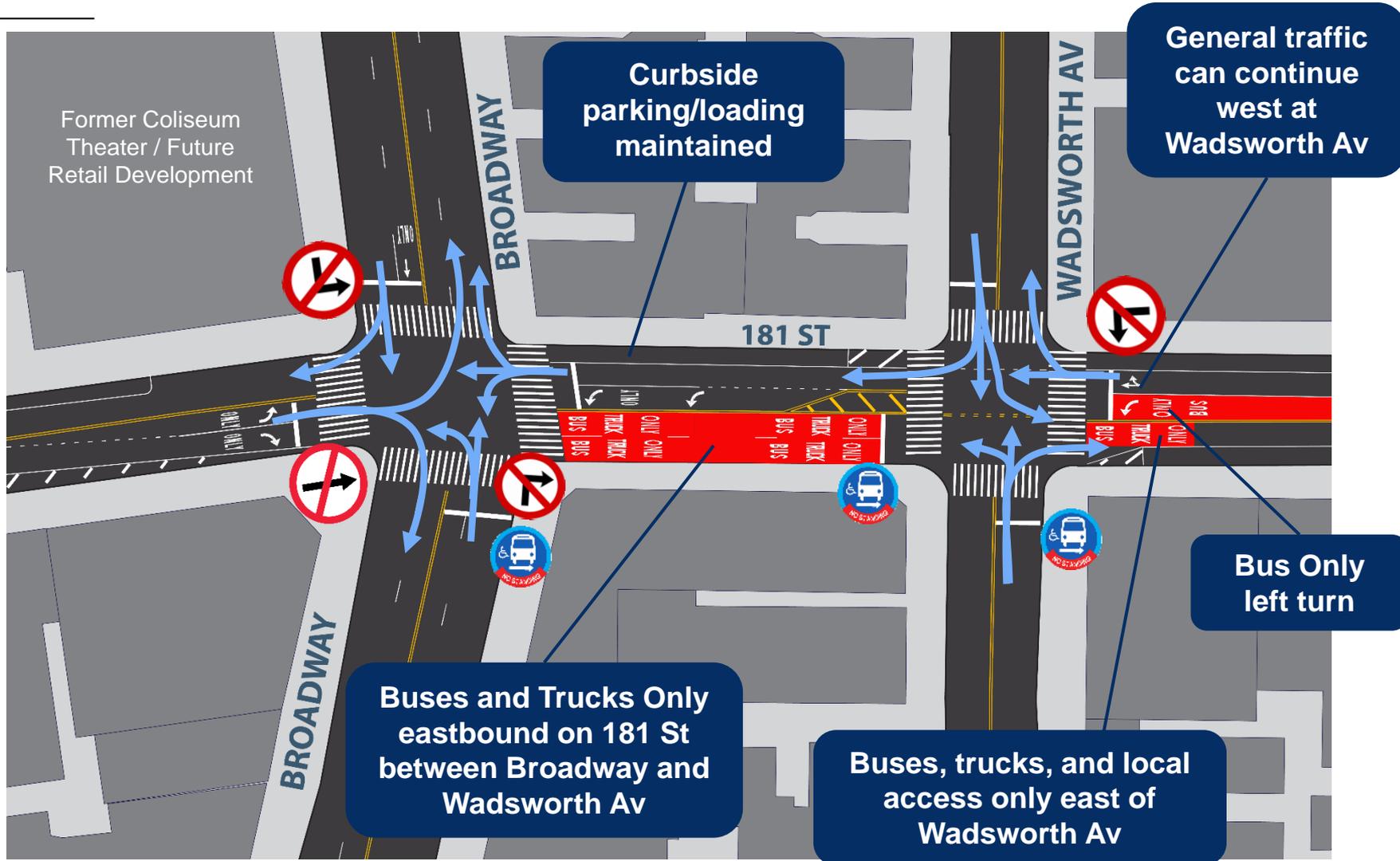
Only Buses and Trucks permitted eastbound on 181 St between Broadway and Wadsworth Av

Due to Washington Bridge rehabilitation, westbound vehicles coming off bridge may continue on 181 St but would have to turn right at Audubon Av. Eastbound vehicles may continue onto bridge

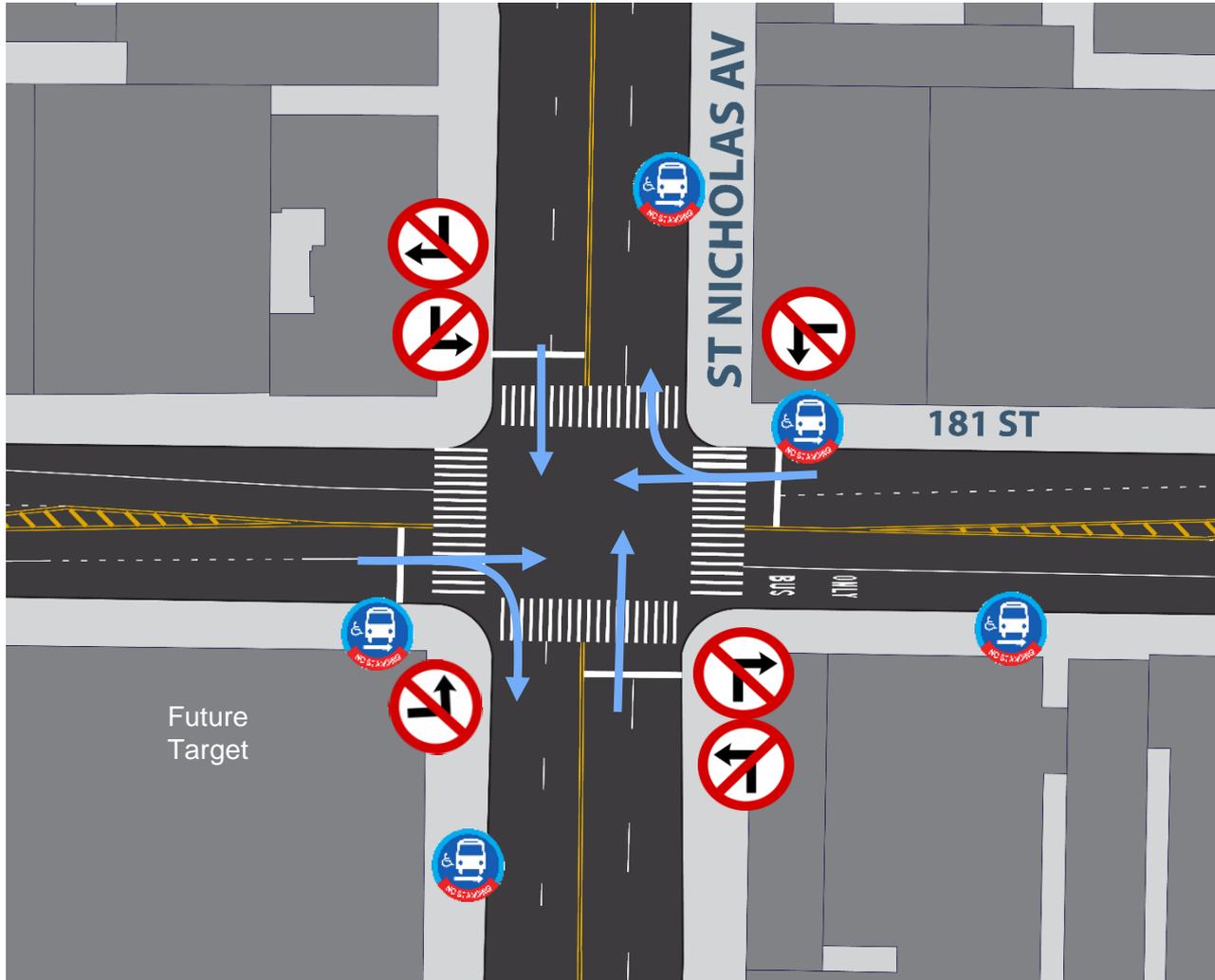
Broadway – Wadsworth Ave: Existing Conditions



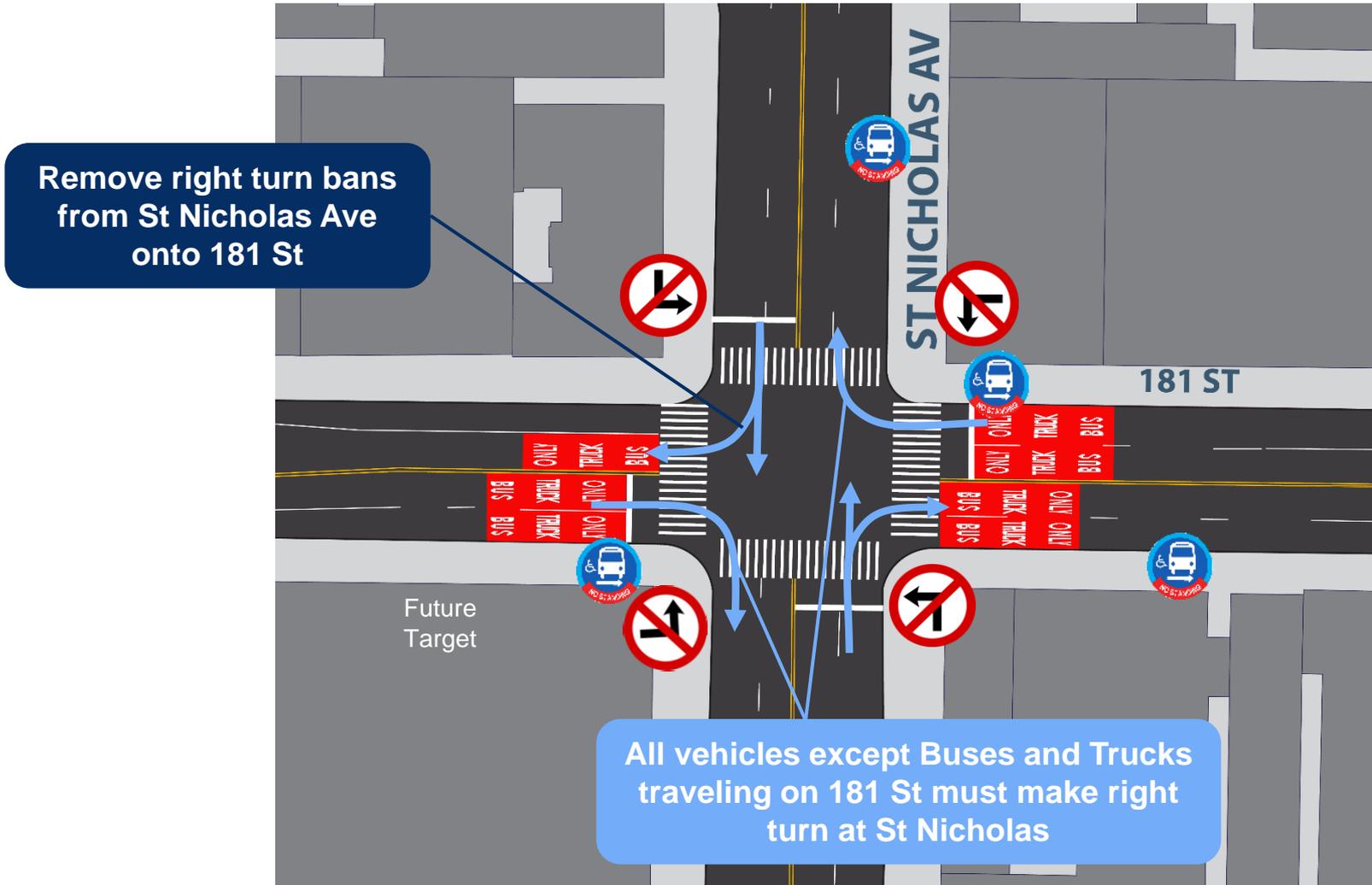
Broadway – Wadsworth Ave: Preliminary Proposal



St. Nicholas Ave: Existing Conditions



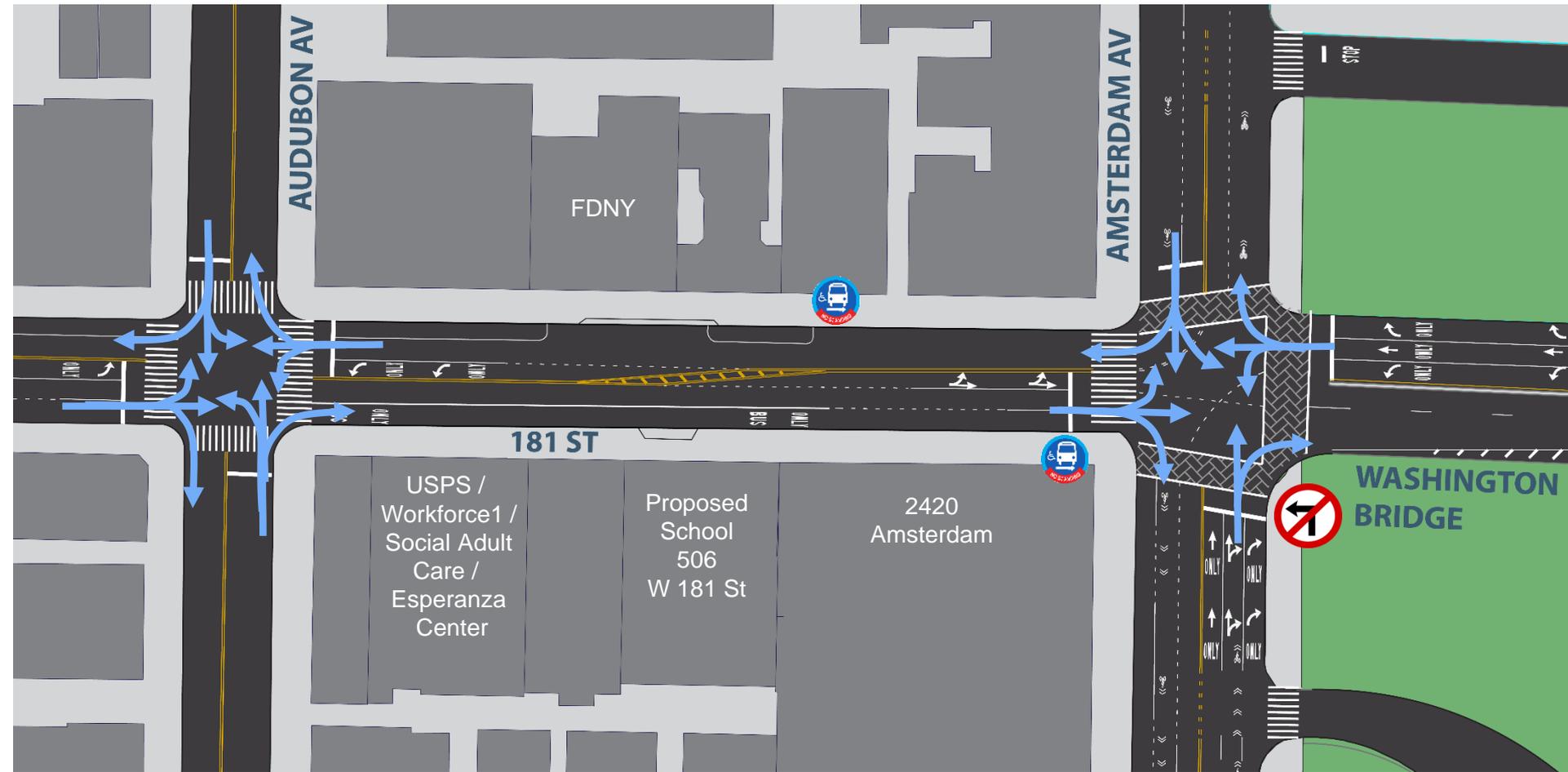
St. Nicholas Ave: Preliminary Proposal



Remove right turn bans from St Nicholas Ave onto 181 St

All vehicles except Buses and Trucks traveling on 181 St must make right turn at St Nicholas

Audubon Ave – Amsterdam Ave: Existing Conditions



Audubon Ave – Amsterdam Ave: Preliminary Proposal

Curb extension

AUDUBON AV

FDNY

AMSTERDAM AV

WASHINGTON BRIDGE

USPS /
Workforce1 /
Social Adult
Care /
Esperanza
Center

Proposed
School
506
W 181 St

2420
Amsterdam

Parking/loading area allows
for curbside uses without
impeding bus flow

Left turn ban at
Amsterdam Ave

Thru movement onto
westbound 181st St
maintained due to bridge work
(Note: will be re-evaluated as
Washington Bridge rehab
progresses)

Preliminary Busway Proposal Summary

- Busway Extents:
 - Eastbound
 - Broadway to Amsterdam Av
 - Westbound
 - Amsterdam Av to Wadsworth Av
- Local access permitted on all blocks except eastbound between Broadway and Wadsworth Av
- Parking will be available for pick-up/drop-off activity, short-term parking, and loading/unloading
- Busway hours to be determined
- Busway will be adjusted based on feedback and traffic analysis

Next Steps

CAB Next Steps

At the next Community Advisory Board meeting, DOT plans to discuss:

- Additional transit and traffic trends
- Traffic analysis, including the effects of future development
- Parking study results
- Online survey responses
- Updated busway plan based on feedback and studies

Thank you

Questions?



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