5th Avenue Busway and Complete Street
Presentation to Community Board 5, August 23, 2021
Project Review

Busway and Complete Street Proposals

• In June 2021, DOT presented to the CAB and CB5 a final plan to install a protected bike lane and expanded pedestrian space along 5th Avenue between 59th Street and 34th Street
  • Implementation expected to begin late August, will last 1-2 months
• DOT developed revised Busway proposal over the summer
• DOT met with Community Advisory Board in July and August

Initial Busway Proposal:
• Only buses, bikes, and emergency vehicles would be able to travel through on 5th Avenue between 57th Street and 34th Street
• All other vehicles could access individual blocks from side streets, but would have to make next available turn off the Busway
Updated Busway Proposal

- Traffic restrictions at a limited number of locations

- Reduces vehicle traffic along the corridor to:
  - Ensure bus speeds are maintained
  - Reduce conflicts between buses and right turning vehicles
  - Allow for added bike lane and pedestrian space

- Allows vehicles to travel through the corridor in two segments

- Maintains vehicle access to all blocks

- Busway implementation planned for September
  - Anticipated increased traffic congestion and slower speeds due to return to office, full in-person learning and the holiday season
Where are vehicles traveling to on 5th Ave from 57th St?

- A high number of vehicles traveling down 5th Ave either turn right at 55th St or go through to 34th St
- Other destinations are well distributed along 5th Ave, minimizing effects on any one side street

Busway Restrictions

Vehicles must turn off 5th Ave by 55th St and by 45th St:

- 56th St (to east) – last left turn
- 55th St (to west) – last right turn
- 46th St (to east) – last left turn
- 45th St (to west) – last right turn

Southbound right turns restricted at:

- 51st St
- 49th St
- 47th St

Access to 5th Ave unchanged:

- From side streets
- South of 45th St

Initial proposal was for 24 hour restrictions, DOT is evaluating potential modifications to the hours
**Busway Restrictions**

**55th St Required Turn:**
- Large percentage of vehicles already turn right at this location
- Modified from 57th St to allow better southbound access on 7th Ave

**45th St Required Turn:**
- Allows through travel for ten blocks
- 46th St is a through street for better eastbound circulation around Grand Central

**Right-turn Restrictions (51st, 49th, 47th):**
- Consistent with holiday season restrictions
- Keeps bus lanes clear of vehicle conflicts
- Improves pedestrian safety at busiest intersections
Key Benefits of Updated Busway Plan

- Reduces through volumes to keep buses moving while creating space for bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Keeps bus lanes clear and reduces pedestrian conflicts at critical intersections
- Maintains more vehicular access along 5th Avenue than the initial proposal
Monitoring Traffic Impacts

Initial Launch:
- TEAs to enforce busway restrictions and maintain traffic flow
- DOT in-person monitoring to make live signal timing adjustments

Throughout One-Year Pilot
- Traffic data collection to compare volumes on 5th Ave and adjacent corridors
- Traffic speed monitoring using Midtown-in-Motion and INRIX data
- Bus speed comparisons on 5th Ave and adjacent bus corridors
Next Steps

Project Timeline

- **August 23rd**: Present proposed Busway restrictions to CB 5
- **End of August**: Begin implementation of bike and pedestrian project
- **Early September**: Finalize design details, incorporate feedback from CB 5, update CAB members
- **By end of September**: Implement Busway restrictions
- **Fall 2021-Fall 2022**: On-going monitoring and community engagement
Thank You!

Questions & Discussion