



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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CHRISTINE BERTHET
Chair

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District Manager

March 13, 2014

Thomas Pendergast
Chairman, CEO
MTA New York Transit
347 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10017

RE: M11 Rapid Transit Bus Line on 10th Avenue and Improved Service

Dear Chairman Pendergast:

Manhattan Community Board #4 reiterates its recommendation for improved weekday and increased weekend M11 bus service. We also support the recommendation of several community members to extend a dedicated bus lane along 9th Avenue.

The M11 bus line continues to be plagued by unreliable service and a bus that is scheduled to run every 10 to 15 minutes during rush hour and 15 to 20 minutes on the weekend. Its infrequent schedule and unreliability discourage local, commuter, and tourist traffic.

The bus line would seem ideal for heavy usage. Several high density housing complexes are along the bus route including West Village Houses, Westbeth, Lincoln Towers, Amsterdam Houses, Douglas Houses, Grant Houses, Morningside Gardens, Manhattanville Houses and, in CB4, Manhattan Plaza, London Terrace, Fulton and Chelsea Elliot Houses, and Penn South. Most of these larger housing complexes are also Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORC's), whose residents often prefer easier to access bus lines than subways. It also runs near several major tourist attractions including the Museum of Natural History and Haydon Planetarium, Lincoln Center, Riverbank Park, and in CB4, Theater Row, the High Line and Chelsea Market. Several Universities and Colleges are also along the bus line from Columbia College and City College uptown to John Jay and Julliard in Midtown. In many

areas, including in most of CB4, the bus does not run along a subway line, which should also increase ridership demand.

While the MTA declines to increased service (except for scheduled increased Saturday service for the spring) or Rapid Bus Line as recommended by Assembly members Gottfried, Glick and Rosenthal, we hope they will consider extending the 9th Avenue bus lane to be for entire 9th Avenue route. One of the major reasons for the frequent delays and unpredictable service, acknowledged by the MTA, is the traffic conditions along 9th Avenue, particularly near the Lincoln Tunnel ramp areas. A dedicated bus lane will assist alleviate this condition.

Given the lines natural location suitable for students, seniors, tourists and commuters, we feel the MTA should see the potential substantial ridership that more reliability and improved scheduling would provide. The MTA rejects major efforts to alleviate the acknowledged unreliable and infrequent service because of stagnant demand - we instead see the stagnant demand as a reaction to the poor scheduling and service.

An extended 9th Avenue Bus Lane would be one good step. Increased scheduling around school hours, theater/concert hours accompanied by an appropriate marketing campaign to those audiences would be another. Tourist marketing, particularly with the increased hotels further west, would also likely increase usage. Creative solutions, instead of perpetuating a cycle of infrequent and poor service and resulting declining usage, seems a preferable for both the MTA and for community residents. We encourage the MTA to (pardon the pun) take that route.

Sincerely,



Christine Berthet
Chair



Jay Marcus
Co-Chair, Transportation
Planning Committee



Ernest Modarelli
Co-Chair, Transportation
Planning Committee