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CARLINA RIVERA
COUNCIL MEMBER, 2ND DISTRICT
CITY OF NEW YORK

June 4, 2018

Andy Byford
President
New York City Transit
Metropolitan Transportation Authority
2 Broadway
New York, NY 10004

Polly Trottenberg
Commissioner
NYC Department of Transportation
55 Water Street, Floor 9
New York, NY 10041

Dear Mr. Byford and Commissioner Trottenberg:

Thank you for the work your agencies have done to provide comprehensive transportation alternatives for New Yorkers during the upcoming, 15-month L Train Shutdown. As Councilwoman for one of the most heavily-impacted districts, I understand that this task is not an easy one; however, I want to highlight the importance of continued outreach and engagement with our east side communities throughout this process. After my own discussions with these communities, I would like to formally share my recommendations for the L Train Shutdown:

14th Street Busway

- **Hours of Exclusivity:** After meeting with various community groups and speaking with residents throughout the district, I have several recommendations regarding the Busway on 14th Street. A Busway that only operates during rush hours will be insufficient in dealing with the massive number of vehicles that will be traveling this corridor throughout the day. However, I also understand that vehicular traffic is significantly lower on weeknights, which is why I support a 7 AM-8 PM Busway that allows for private vehicular access during late-night hours;
- **New Vehicle Types:** I also recommend that the city pilot of double decker buses along certain express routes be expanded for use on the new L train-replacement routes that

travel along the Busway. This would allow us to effectively have the amount of space a bus takes up on the road compared to a traditional articulated bus;

- Health and Environment Considerations: In addition, residents in Brooklyn and Manhattan that live along the new bus routes will be facing a significant increase in pollutants near their homes. It is critical that all buses used for the L1, L2, and L3 routes are powered by clean, electric motors instead of diesel engines.

14th Street Accessibility

- Private Garages: I urge NYC DOT and NYCT to present a clear and detailed proposal at their planned presentations to local Community Boards in June that outlines how residents who live on 14th Street will be able to access private garages. In addition, NYC DOT must work with NYPD, Garage Associations, and Property Owners to distribute easily-identifiable decals for car owners that contract at these garages so that law enforcement can readily spot authorized users as they monitor traffic on 14th Street. I suggest the decals be provided only to long-term parking space lessees at these garages that have executed a contract with the operator by January 1, 2019;
- ADA-Compliant Taxis: In order to assist individuals with mobility issues who live along the 14th Street corridor, I recommend that NYCT and NYC DOT work with the Taxi and Limousine Commission to allow for yellow taxis that are ADA-compliant to pick up and drop off passengers along the 14th Street corridor. In some areas, there may be a need for a dedicated taxi stand exclusively for these vehicles;
- Access-A-Ride: In some specific areas in my district, there are zones for Access-A-Ride pickups and drop-offs. I ask that both agencies work to identify and create additional zones along 14th Street that would allow for seniors and people with disabilities to easily and safely board Access-A-Ride.

Williamsburg Bridge HOV

- I support the agencies' proposal to restrict travel on the Williamsburg Bridge to buses and high occupancy vehicles. However, I urge the agencies to expand these restrictions from just rush hour to a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week restriction. The Delancey Street area is already a high congestion zone for both pedestrian and vehicular traffic. I want to ensure that additional backups to and from the bridge do not deter visitors from frequenting small businesses in this area which operate well into the evening.

Delancey St – Essex St Subway Station

- With the additional buses and J/M/Z trains riding over the Williamsburg Bridge, I join my colleague, Councilwoman Margaret Chin, in raising concerns regarding the capacity at the Delancey Street – Essex Street Subway Station. Commuters from District 1 and District 2 use this major transfer station to get to work, school, and other destinations.

According to a May 17 *Village Voice* report, the Williamsburg Bridge can only accommodate a small number of additional trains. I ask that the NYCT release a comprehensive report on how the extra pedestrian traffic at this station will be safely monitored and what crowd-control plans will be implemented.

L1 Bus Route

- Manhattan Community Board 6 has raised concerns about the L1 Bus Route. The proposed L1 route will leave bus passengers on 1st Avenue and 15th Street, a congested area that already includes a number of bus stations. I recommend the agencies work with the Community Board to resolve this issue and consider having a bus stop between 15th and 16th streets, which allows for the L1 to turn left on 17th Street as it heads to its southbound route on 2nd Avenue.

13th Street Two-Way Protected Bike Lanes

- I will continue to fight and advocate for the expansion of bike infrastructure, and I am proud of the protected bike lanes that already exist in my district. However, I also want to ensure that any new street infrastructure is always implemented with thought given to the effect on nearby neighbors. After discussions with residents, I recommend that DOT develop a westbound protected bike lane on 13th Street and an eastbound protected bike lane on 12th Street, instead of the proposed two-way protected bike lane on 13th Street. 13th Street features a mental health clinic, firehouse, and various construction projects that may require additional access to space that a two-way bike lane would eliminate.

My constituents understand the importance of making these critical repairs to the Canarsie Tube and other L Train infrastructure since, in many other ways, we are still recovering from the devastation and destruction of Hurricane Sandy. I understand the difficulty of balancing the needs of a variety of communities with the cost-effective implementation of this plan. However, I hope you consider the above recommendations as you make final modifications to the plan.

If you have further questions, please contact John Blasco at 212-677-1077. I look forward to receiving a written response from both your agencies.

Sincerely,

