



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RELEASE # 13-055

Friday, October 11, 2013

Contact: Seth Solomonow (212) 839-4850

**NYC DOT, MTA AND STATE SEN. PERKINS ANNOUNCE 125th ST.
SELECT BUS SERVICE TO START IN APRIL 2014, STREETSCAPE
IMPROVEMENTS TO BE INSTALLED ALONG THE ENTIRE CORRIDOR**

*M60 SBS to bring faster, more reliable bus service to one of the borough's most-used routes,
reducing congestion on Harlem's busiest corridor*

Project includes addition of attractive street lights, new pedestrian wayfinding signs to corridor

New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) Commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan, Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) Chairman and CEO Thomas F. Prendergast and State Sen. Bill Perkins today announced that M60 Select Bus Service (SBS) will launch in April 2014, speeding the commutes of more than 30,000 bus passengers who travel on 125th Street routes daily. Using dedicated bus lanes, consolidated stops and allowing passengers to pay before boarding the bus, the streamlined service will improve one of the borough's most-used local bus routes, reducing congestion and providing faster, more reliable connections throughout Harlem and with LaGuardia Airport. DOT and MTA conducted more than 50 meetings with the community and elected officials over the last year, and following extensive outreach to address specific concerns with the community this summer, the project is now proceeding with support from local elected officials, including Sen. Perkins, State Sen. Adriano Espaillat and City Council Member Melissa Mark-Viverito. DOT also announced streetscape improvements planned for 125th Street, including the planned installation of the city's first City Lights—62 attractive and energy-efficient new LED street lights from Morningside Avenue to Fifth Avenue using \$500,000 in funding from Assembly Member Keith Wright. The project will also bring the City's new pedestrian wayfinding system to 125th Street, with maps at all 12 SBS stations, and equipped with real-time bus arrival information and new parking spaces will be established along parts of 124th and 126th streets. DOT and MTA will continue to advise the community and inform them of details as the project moves forward.

“With new businesses and historic destinations drawing record numbers of visitors to the heart of Harlem, 125th Street has never been more dynamic, yet congestion has kept buses at a standstill,” said Commissioner Sadik-Khan. “By bringing dedicated bus lanes and speeding up boarding times, SBS will provide a lifeline to thousands of residents and visitors and bring world-class streetscapes to one of the world's most famous streets.”

-more-

“The 125th Street corridor is a vital thoroughfare for Harlem residents and businesses alike,” said MTA Chairman and CEO Thomas F. Prendergast. “I’m glad we will be able to improve service for our customers while still maintaining commercial loading zones for businesses in the area. Select Bus Service will speed up bus service by as much as 20 percent on the M60 where half of the route’s boardings and alightings happen right on 125th Street.”

“I am happy to announce Select Bus Service will come to the 125th Street corridor after a thorough community task force vetting which included the residents, businesses, disabled communities and the local community boards,” said Senator Perkins. “I am satisfied that this a service that will be of benefit to the community and look forward to its successful use by my constituents and the community at large. However, the task force and I will continue to monitor its progress and share input with DOT as this service moves forward.”

“I’m very pleased that the DOT has been able to bring a home a project we’ve long awaited,” said Assembly Member Wright. “The new lighting, the first of its kind in New York City, will bring much added value to the commerce along our busy corridor. The 125th Street BID, led by Barbara Askins, deserves to be commended for its perseverance.”

“Streetscape improvements represent a major concern for both property owners and merchants across 125th Street,” said Barbara Askins, President and CEO of the 125th Street Business Improvement District. “The Select Bus Service is a critical first step for developing a comprehensive Streetscape and Transportation Plan for 125th Street. The state-of-the-art wayfinding signage and the attractive LED lights are critical aesthetic elements and amenities consistent with the BIDs goal of providing a safe, walkable environment for residents and visitors alike. We look forward to continuing our work with the DOT, MTA and the community to improve safety and accessibility and create a vibrant 125th Street.”

The M60, which serves more than 17,000 riders alone, is one of the slowest routes across 125th Street, often traveling slower than pedestrians on the route. The new M60 SBS will be the city’s seventh SBS line and is expected to reduce bus travel times by about 20 percent— cutting crosstown trips by five minutes, and helping increase ridership. SBS routes across the city already serve more than 100,000 daily riders.

The M60 SBS will replace the M60 local, and the number of stops on 125th Street will be reduced from 11 to six, maintaining connections to Metro North and all subway lines at St. Nicholas Avenue/Frederick Douglass Boulevard, Lenox Avenue, Madison Avenue/Park Avenue, and Lexington Avenue, as well as M15 Select Bus Service at Second Avenue. In order to provide faster bus service on 125th Street and balancing the needs of other motorists on the corridor, offset, dedicated bus lanes for buses will be installed in both directions between Lenox Avenue and Second Avenue, at the approach to the Robert F. Kennedy Bridge. These bus lanes, which will be available to right-turning vehicles at intersections, are expected to reduce congestion for all vehicles on the corridor by preventing double parking and reducing the need for frequent lane changes—one of the biggest contributors to delay. To further reduce double parking, commercial loading zones during the morning rush hour will be added at select

-more-

locations, allowing delivery trucks access to the curb, and the existing alternate-side parking regulations east of Fifth Avenue will be converted to metered parking, increasing parking turnover. Additionally, new left-turn restrictions at Fifth Avenue and Lexington Avenue will improve safety for pedestrians by eliminating potential conflicts and further reducing congestion caused by vehicles blocking through traffic.

All 11 existing bus stops will continue to be served by the others routes on the corridor: the Bx15, M100 and M101, and these local routes will also use the dedicated bus lanes and will see quicker travel times through the improved lane configuration. At these six M60 SBS stops, riders will also use off-board fare machines to pay for their ride before boarding, and then using any door to board the bus, eliminating the need to swipe cards upon boarding, and reducing the amount of time the bus spends at each station. New bus shelters will be installed at 12 SBS stations, and each will be lengthened to allow buses to more easily reach the curb.

The announcement route is in the City's efforts to expand faster, more reliable and sustainable transportation choices for New Yorkers as set forth in PlaNYC, the City's long-term sustainability agenda. The M60 will be the seventh SBS route since the start of Bx12 SBS service on Fordham Road in 2008. Improvements on this line and the M15 and M34 routes in Manhattan, the S79 in Staten Island, and on recently launched the Bx41 SBS service on Webster Avenue have improved bus speeds by as much as 20 percent and attracted new riders, with passenger satisfaction at up to 98 percent. Additional SBS routes will be launched later this year on Nostrand and Rogers avenues in Brooklyn, and the MTA recently announced enhanced service on the Q70, connecting Woodside and LaGuardia Airport.