

The Public Ought To Know

February 10, 2015

By Corey Bearak

New York need to plan more when it comes to bus service

This afternoon (February 10, 2015) the City Council's Transportation Committee considers legislation to require planning for Bus Rapid Transit ("BRT") throughout New York City.

Int. No. 211 would require NYC's Department of Transportation to develop a plan "create a citywide network of bus rapid transit lines connecting the boroughs..." DOT would submit the plan to the City Council, the five borough presidents and 59 community boards, and post it on the web.



Reviewing the plan and hearing notice led me to recall a topic covered in my [ebook](#) which shares its name with this column. In "Bus travel in Queens poses ultimate challenge," I recommended a strategic look at public bus service. Crossing paths this weekend with bill's lead sponsor, Council Member Brad Lander, we discussed an approach not limited to BRT. Indeed why not a plan that addresses local, limited and BRT bus service. In New York, the DOT and MTA call their collaborative attempt to install some BRT routes, Select Bus Service (SBS). Amalgamated Transit Union Locals 1056 and 1179 will recommend that approach in testimony to the Council. Advantages this approach offers include:

- *identifying any need for new bus terminals – downtown Flushing remains a prime candidate,
- *noting which bus depots need repair or replacement,
- *addressing congestion on local bus lines particularly during rush hours,
- *off-bus fare collection not just for SBS,
- *looking at dedicated bus lanes for local and limited such as enjoyed in one borough.

Certainly, a city which puts a premium not only on planning but engaging the community ought to embrace a holistic approach to ensuring improved bus service.

****Corey Bearak can be reached at StrategicPublicPolicy.com. Find his ebook, [The Public Ought To Know](#), at [Kindle](#), [Nook](#) and [Apple iBooks](#).***