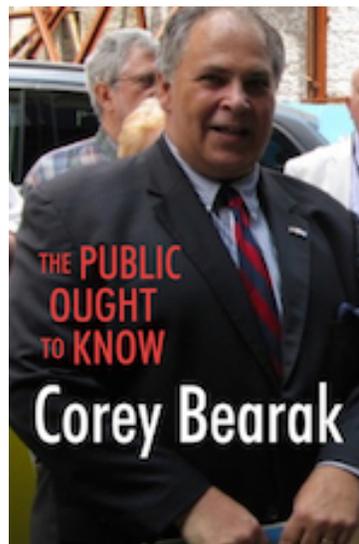


Introduce BQX quickly, efficiently and cost-effectively via Bus Transit service

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By Corey Bearak, *The Public Ought To Know*

New York, NY - Most welcome City Hall's trolley proposal anticipated for 2024 or thereabouts to link existing and expected development along the Brooklyn and Queens East River waterfront. Current estimates suggest \$2.5 billion to construct the 16-mile route between Astoria-Long Island City and Sunset Park, Brooklyn. While trolleys offer something chic and different, perhaps touristy, why not seize an opportunity to deliver new service NOW? Link the waterfront nabes via buses.



With construction on the trolley scheme proposed to begin by 2019-20 and involving disruption, no question that new bus service can be introduced well before that. The MTA and NYC Department of Transportation already enjoy models for community engagement to help design an appropriate route with the proposed trolley route serving as the guide. Several buses already serves some part of the route including the **Q103** (Vernon Boulevard to Borden Ave), **B32** (LIC to Williamsburg), **B37** (Fort Hamilton to Barclays Center), **B61** (Downtown Brooklyn, Cobble Hill, Red Hook to Windsor Terrace) and **B62** (LIC to Downtown Brooklyn). Address any capacity differential between a bus and a trolley by bus frequency and/ or using articulated buses (A bi-articulated bus used in Bogota, Columbia, carries more riders [200] than a trolley [177].). Buses clearly accommodate disabled and those dependent on wheel chairs.

Any claim justifying the trolley as self-funding need only look at how Hudson Yards funded the #7 extension. City taxpayers already paid several hundred million dollars for that project's bonds. What makes Tax Increment Financing (TIFs) less risky for development in Brooklyn and Queens than it proved on Manhattan's Far West Side? Why risk a new project where bond holders get paid out of general fund? The City's Independent Budget office must look at TIFs for the Trolley project and funding of the #7. TIFs for specific projects invites neighborhoods with growing tax bases, generally wealthier and/ or gentrified/ gentrifying nabes to argue diverting funds to specific projects serving those communities.

Forget that trolley. Go with buses.

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