



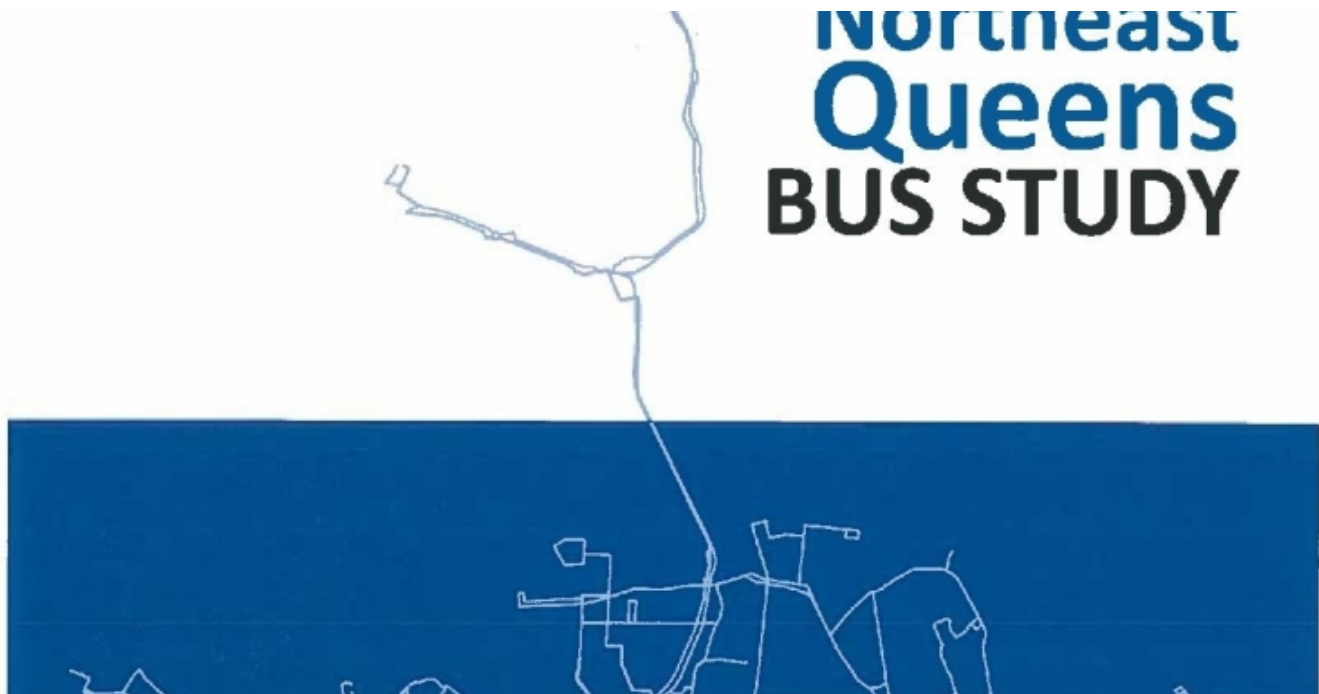
NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Tony Avella

## Senator Avella Announces Release of Major MTA Northeast Queens Bus Study

ANDREI D. VASILESCU October 20, 2015

| ISSUE: **MTA (METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY)**



(Queens, NY) Today, State Senator Tony Avella announced that MTA will be unveiling the results of a year-long study on New York City Transit and MTA Bus Company service performance in his Senate District. As a result of the study funded by Senator Avella, there will be modifications and additions to bus services to the areas where the study found room for improvement, a new pilot program to create “limited-zone bus service”, and other short and long-term adjustments.

As an area largely underserved by other methods of public transportation, such as the MTA Subway system, Senator Avella sought to bring about improvements to the area's bus service. The Senator's bill, S.6353E, allocated \$500,000 of New York State's 2014-2015 fiscal budget to provide the MTA the funding to conduct the comprehensive review.

As one of the largest bus studies ever to be conducted by the MTA, multiple metrics were assessed to accumulate data. MTA primarily used GPS-data and automatic Fare Collection MetroCard data, but also received community input from public meetings with Community Boards 7, 8, 11 and 13, as well as a public workshop held at the Queensborough Community College where over one-hundred participants attended.

MTA analyzed thirty-nine bus routes operating in Northeast Queens, an area covering the 31 square miles bound by Flushing Bay and Van Wyck Expressway on the west, Hillside Avenue to the south, and Nassau County line to the east. While Northeast Queens bus lines were found to operate more reliably than the rest of Queens or other boroughs, many opportunities for improvement were found as a result of the study.

The recommendations were broken into short-term and long-term timeframes. Some of the adjustments will be made to address the bus routes experiencing the largest increase in ridership, while others will be made to account for bus routes that were diverging most from their intended schedules. MTA will also look to fill the gap of late night hours that some bus routes don't service, especially those necessary for connecting to the 7 line.

In the short-term, MTA will be looking at scheduling additional trips to Q12, Q13, Q28, and Q58 bus lines, will create 24-hour service on the Q20A line in conjunction with the roll out of the Q44 SBS, will analyze the feasibility of overnight service on the Q13, Q30, and Q88, while overall striding to improve all bus lines' adherence to their schedules. In addition, the MTA will look at modifying the travel path of the Q65 in Flushing to provide more reliable all-day

service on Parsons Boulevard alongside the part-time Q26.

In the long-term, MTA will study alternatives to expand north-south service throughout Northeast Queens, and implement an additional Select Bus Service along major transit corridors, such as Hillside Avenue, Northern Boulevard and Union Turnpike. MTA will also explore the creation of a Downtown Flushing Bus Terminal where new developments are currently occurring.

The most exciting development that is resulting from the study is the proposed creation of a “limited-zone” bus route, the first route of its kind, specifically catering to the needs of Queens residents. The limited-zone bus route functions as a cross between local and limited service lines, stopping only a few blocks apart in some areas while subsequently traveling across non-stop sections. Currently, the Q12 and the Q88 are being studied to take part in this pilot program.

“Northeast Queens is heavily reliant on regular bus scheduling for supporting the transit needs of its community and I’m proud to have provided the means for MTA to refine and improve service in my district. Whether servicing commuters on their morning trip to work, students on their way to schools and colleges in the area, or the high population of senior citizens in Queens who rely on them for their daily errands, MTA and New York City Transit Bus lines are vital for our Borough.

It is incredibly impressive how thorough the study conducted by the MTA was in assessing the needs of Northeast Queens; the solutions offered to address the findings were more impressive still. The proposed pilot program for new limited-zone bus lines is but one example of how productive MTA’s study was for improving local transit and I look forward to seeing its implementation,” commented State Senator Tony Avella.

“While this study confirms that bus service in Northeast Queens generally exceeds the performance of buses throughout Queens and citywide, some areas were identified for potential improvements. We’ll look at some immediate, and possible mid-range and long term, solutions that embody our commitment to better service including a pragmatic approach to service delivery as we look at new ideas like limited-zone bus service in Northeast Queens,” said MTA New York City Transit Senior Vice President of Buses and President of MTA Bus Company Darryl Irick.