



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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COREY JOHNSON
Chair

ROBERT J. BENFATTO, JR., ESQ.
District Manager

July 27, 2011

Thomas F. Prendergast
President
MTA New York City Transit
2 Broadway
New York, NY 10004

Re: Reduction in Frequency of M42

Dear Mr. Prendergast:

Manhattan Community Board 4 (CB4) strenuously objects to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) plan to reduce the frequency of the M42, which travels on 42nd Street from the Circle Line at Twelfth Avenue to First Avenue. Instead of reducing the service further, which will be an encouragement to increase the private options, we ask that the MTA not reduce the frequency and work closely with NYPD and the Department of Transportation (DOT) to devise short term and long-term solutions to service the growing communities on the far West side.

MTA plans to increase wait times of at least one to two minutes between buses starting in September. The MTA said the change in service is based on demand as well as an increase in estimated travel time and is not an indicator of economic concerns.

While we agree with the estimated increased travel time, we feel any reduction in demand is likely to be related to that, rather than any reduced potential demand. The 2010 Census shows an 889% increase in population of the far west of 42nd Street since 2000, to an estimated 3,024 residents. MiMA, a 60 story residential tower recently opened on West 42nd Street and a 1,800-student school is being relocated to 43rd Street between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues. Many parcels of land are under construction now that the trough of the real estate crisis has passed.

Even today, according to NYPIRG's Straphangers Campaign, the M42 moves 12,847 riders on an average weekday and ranks 79th in riders out of the 194 local bus routes¹.

What seems likely is that the growing demand cannot be satisfied by the M42 because of the extraordinary slowness of the bus. The M42 won the 2009 and 2010 Pokey award, given to the bus with the slowest bus speed, due to its travelling at 3.6 miles per hour as clocked at 12 noon on a weekday.

The delays on this line are due to a lack of enforcement of no parking in bus lanes, and legal and illegal bus stops for airport buses and jitneys around the bus terminal, as well as the substantial traffic along the route. As a result, each building on the far west side has contracted its own fleet of private buses, which ferry its residents to midtown every five or ten minutes. These private buses clog our streets and take away ridership of public transit.

Instead of reducing the service further, which will be an encouragement to increase the private options, we need the MTA to work

¹ <http://www.straphangers.org/pokeyaward/10/>

closely with NYPD and with the Department of Transportation to devise short term and long-term solutions to service these new communities:

- Increase no standing enforcement on the corridor
- Work with DOT and the Hell's Kitchen Study team to relocate airport buses and jitneys to other locations. The MTA is a partner in the study and the relocation is part of the scope.
- Using buses that enable front entry and exit for handicapped rider by lowering the platform to the curb (rather than the older buses more typically used on this route that require the driver to park the bus, step out and lower the back doors for handicapped accessibility).
- Fast-track installation of pre payment systems and bus stop and smart phone applications that indicate the bus arrival time.
- Work with DOT to study a bus rapid transit option similar to the one being studied for 34th Street.
- Pursue the building of the 7 line subway Station at 41st Street.

Sincerely yours,



Christine Berthet
Co-Chair
Transportation Planning Committee



Jay Marcus
Co-Chair
Transportation Planning Committee

cc: Head of Bus Operation - MTA
DOT
NYPD
REBNY
Elected s
Board of Transit Riders
Straphangers Organization
Tri-State Transportation Alternatives