



February 8, 2024

Richard Davey
President
MTA New York City Transit
2 Broadway
New York, NY 10004

Dear President Davey,

We, the undersigned, are city, state, and federal elected officials representing the Brooklyn neighborhoods of Midwood, Park Slope, Gowanus, and Red Hook. We are writing in response to the proposed new B81 transit bus route in MTA's Brooklyn Bus Network Redesign. We are thrilled to hear about the connection from Midwood to Red Hook but strongly recommend that the MTA New York City Transit extend the proposed B81 bus line into Lower Manhattan via the Hugh L. Carey Tunnel. Red Hook is a transportation desert where residents have been underserved for many years. For Red Hook residents to travel to Manhattan using public transportation, they must access the nearest subway station on Smith-9th Streets, a non-accessible station 87.5 feet above ground, or take a NYC transit bus to another subway station further away. Providing bus service directly to Manhattan would simplify interborough travel for thousands of residents.

Local elected officials and community activists have advocated for a direct route from Red Hook to Lower Manhattan for many years. The terminus for the new B81 route (Pioneer St/Conover St) is less than half a mile from the entrance to the Hugh L. Carey Tunnel. The Bus Network Redesign Draft Plan has express buses from the farthest corners of Brooklyn crossing that tunnel, but none from Red Hook, the neighborhood where the tunnel is located. A bus connection from Red Hook to Lower Manhattan and vice-versa would benefit New Yorkers in both boroughs creating a long time gap that would re-vitalize both boroughs and make accessibility greater for the residents of Red Hook. Red Hook has experienced population growth and is also home to close to 3,000 public housing residents in Red Hook East and West NYCHA developments.

Linking the transit desert neighborhoods of Red Hook to Flatbush, Park Slope and Lower Manhattan through a new or expanded bus route from Flatbush and Red Hook to Manhattan would:

- Connect seniors, students, families, NYCHA residents, and people with disabilities to schools, stores, cultural institutions, and vital medical centers located in Manhattan and greater Brooklyn.
- Support the MTA and NYC Transit in encouraging more New Yorkers to utilize public transportation and rely less on vehicular modes of transit.

Our offices would like to see all possible options for a Red Hook to Manhattan connection in the next Brooklyn Bus Network Redesign. The community wants a connection between Red Hook and Manhattan - extending the B81 is one straightforward way to resolve this community demand. We also wish to highlight the efforts that our colleagues in Brooklyn have made by advocating for the re-establishment of the B71 bus route, which was a vital crosstown connector between Columbia Street Waterfront and Crown Heights and several neighborhoods in between. Since the discontinuance of this vital bus line, a coalition of elected officials, community residents, schools, civic groups, advocates, and cultural institutions have called on the MTA NYCT and City DOT to reinstate the route.

We appreciate the MTA's commitment to a new, more efficient rerouting of buses and hope you take our comments into serious consideration. The MTA has the opportunity here to greatly increase the quality of life in a neighborhood that has otherwise felt left behind. We ask that the MTA provide Red Hook residents an efficient way to travel to Manhattan, without long walks or transfers.

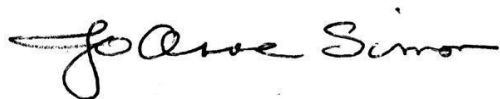
We thank you for your timely attention and consideration of this matter. Sincerely,



Marcela Mitaynes
Assemblymember, AD 51



Daniel S. Goldman
Representative of the House, NY 10



Jo Anne Simon
Assemblymember, AD 52



Andrew Gounardes
Senator, SD 26



Antonio Reynoso
Brooklyn Borough President



Alexa Avilés
Councilmember, CD 38



Shahana Hanif
Councilmember, CD 39

Cc: Frank Annicaro, Senior Vice President, New York City Transit Department of Buses
Cc: Janno Lieber, Chair and CEO, MTA