March 19, 2013

Dear Stakeholder,

We write with exciting news about bus service improvements in your community: Brooklyn’s first Select Bus Service (SBS) line will begin on the B44 route along Nostrand, Rogers and Bedford Avenues this fall. Upcoming improvements include dedicated bus lanes, new high-capacity, low-floor, three-door articulated buses, transit signal priority, end-to-end limited stops, street resurfacing, enhanced SBS stations, and off-board fare collection, which will bring faster service and greater reliability for the 40,000 daily weekday bus riders along this route.

SBS has already brought major improvements to transit service along four of the city’s busiest bus lines: the Bx12 in the Bronx, the S79 in Staten Island, and the M15 and M34 in Manhattan. Bus speeds are 15-20% faster on these routes, and as a result we have seen a 5-10% increase in ridership within the first year of service. This letter provides an update on the changes to come throughout the year in preparation for SBS on the B44.

The NYC Department of Design and Construction has begun construction at the future SBS stations, starting with underground utility work. Later in the spring, summer, and fall you will see construction of concrete bus pads in the roadway and SBS platforms on the sidewalk, roadway resurfacing and bus lane painting, new bus shelters and landscaping, and the installation of fare machines. Meanwhile, the ongoing reconstruction of Nostrand Avenue between Flushing and Atlantic Avenues will include SBS stations and bus lanes, and will be complete by late 2014.

In advance of major work at SBS stations on the right side of the street, the Department of Transportation will be moving the rush hour No Standing regulations to the left side in the coming weeks. These changes will generally apply to Nostrand Avenue between Atlantic and Foster Avenues, and Rogers Avenue between Avenue D and Bergen Street. DOT has sent a postcard (enclosed) detailing these changes to all affected businesses along the corridor, and has performed door-to-door outreach in select areas. There will also be temporary bus stop relocations as construction proceeds from station to station.

This schedule will allow Select Bus Service to launch this fall. The B44 Limited will become the B44 SBS, and the B44 local will continue service at all its current stops. During the start of service we will have Customer Ambassadors at every SBS station to introduce customers to the service and explain the pre-payment system.
This project was developed in partnership with our Community Advisory Committee, comprised of representatives of 78 local stakeholder groups, which met five times throughout the planning process to provide guidance and feedback. We also received important input during our three public open houses and 19 meetings with Community Boards along the corridor. We thank all of you who helped make this project a reality.

Updated project information, including details of the construction schedule, will be online at nyc.gov/brt. You may also contact Keith Bray at DOT at 718-222-7269; kbray@dot.nyc.gov, or Andy Inglesby at NYC Transit at 646-252-2658; Andrew.Inglesby@nyct.com if you have questions or comments.

Sincerely,

Janette Sadik-Khan
Commissioner, NYCDOT

Thomas F. Prendergast
President, MTA New York City Transit