Bus Rapid Transit

NJ TRANSIT's perspectives on BRT corridor assessment & lessons learned from GO BUS

Presented by:

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NJ TRANSIT Bus Service Planning

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Focus on Improving Bus Operations

- On-going bus studies
  - Urban markets
  - Suburban markets
  - Commuter markets
- Enhancing existing services & facilities
- Early implementation of BRT Elements
  - Near-term introduce new/upgraded services with BRT elements
  - Long-term plans for integrated BRT systems

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Regional Bus & BRT Studies

- Northwest New Jersey Transit Study
- Northeast New Jersey Metro Mobility Study
- Route 46/3 Transit Study
- Greater Newark – Elizabeth Bus Study
- Greater New Brunswick BRT
- Central Jersey/Raritan Valley Transit Study
- Route 9 Bus Lanes
- Route 1 BRT & Dinky Alignment
- Route 55/42/676 BRT Alternatives Analysis
- Bergen BRT Study
- Hudson County BRT Study

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Cost of Congestion.....

- Customer perception is half the battle
- Realize there is no one magic fix
- It is not just about the peak periods
- Impacts on NJT bus operations
  - To fix AM & PM peak - $125K+
  - To fix all day weekday - $250K+
  - Add in weekends - $350K+
  - Expand to 10 routes - $2.5-$3.5M+

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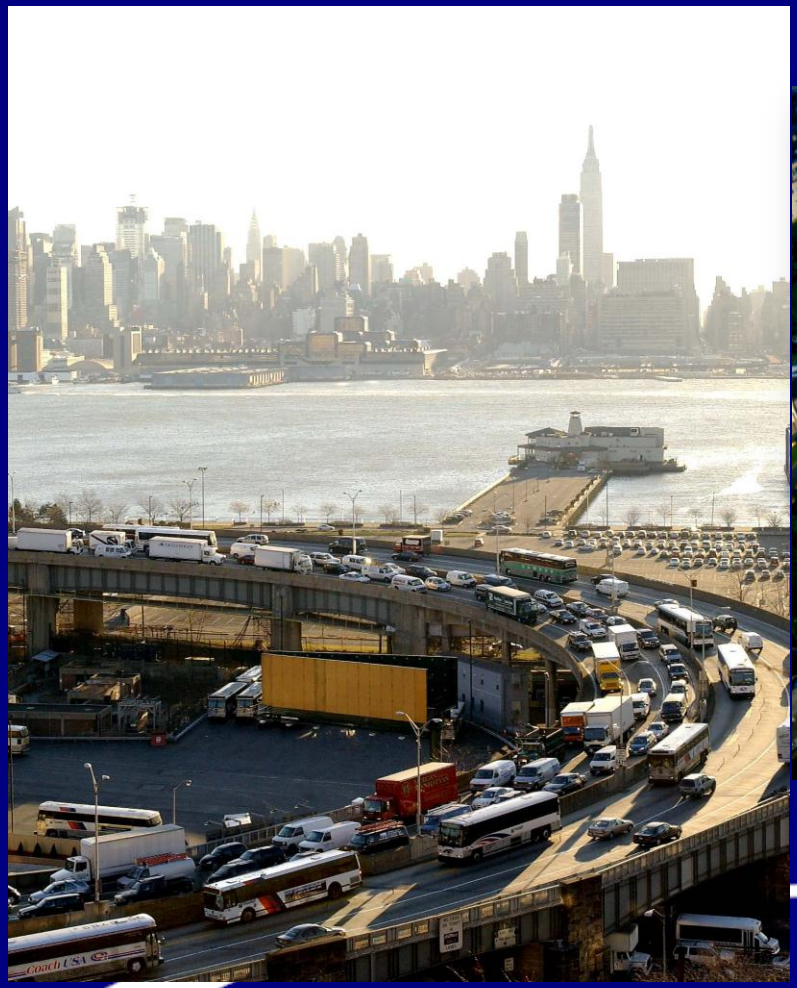
Express Bus Lane (XBL) at the Lincoln Tunnel



Launched in the early 1970's
720+ bus in the peak hour
37,000+ riders on-board

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US Route 9 Peak Shoulder Bus Lane

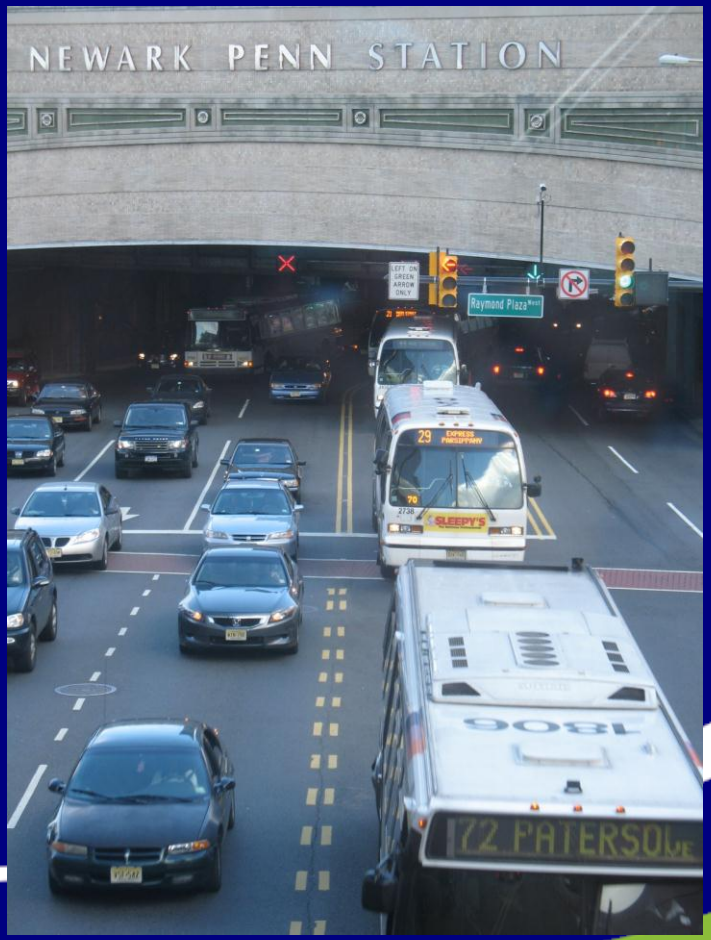
Hours: 5-9 AM & 4-8 PM

Converts shoulder in to a 3.3 mile bus lane

3,300 riders on-board

Newark Bus Lanes
Broad St. - Market St. - Raymond Blvd.

Launched in the 1980's
Broad Street : +17K riders
Market Street : +9K riders
Raymond Blvd: +1,400 riders



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Introducing...

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GO Bus Service Goals

- Increase reliability and reduce travel time
- Improve intermodal connections
- Improve the overall customer experience
- Increase bus ridership
- Phased approach

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Unique Brand Identity

Vehicles

Shelters

Signage

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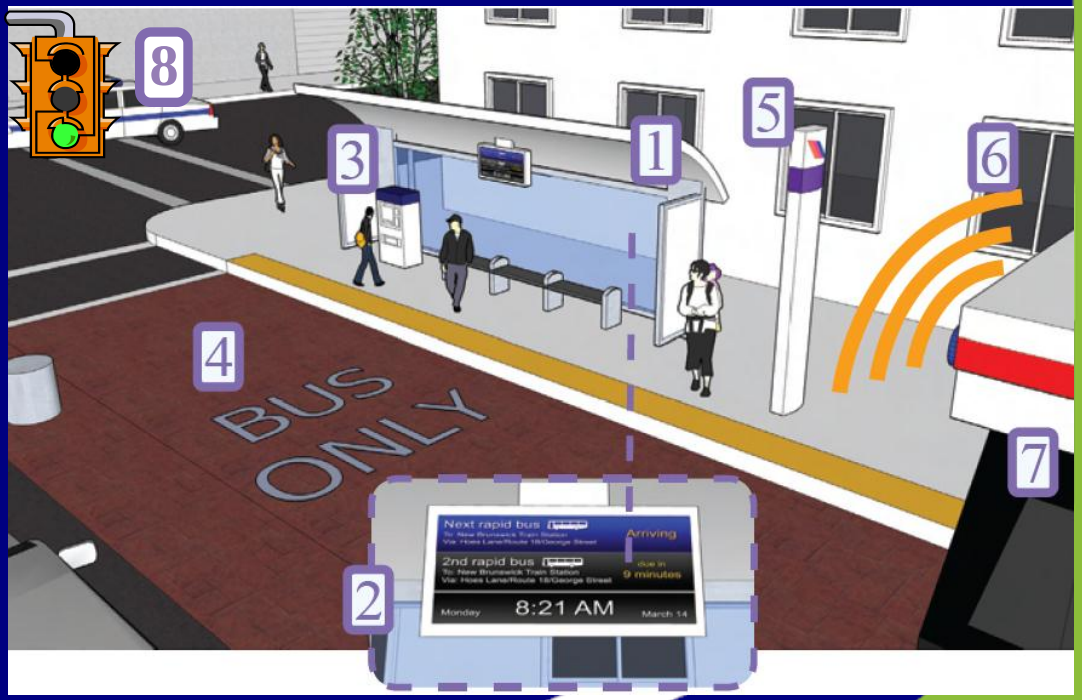
New Bus Strategies & Technologies

1. Improved Stations
2. Real-time Customer Info
3. Off-board Ticket Vending
4. Dedicated Lanes & ROW
5. Recognizable Branding
6. Advanced Communications
7. Low-floor Buses
8. Signal Priority



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Choosing the Corridor

- Corridors with high passenger demand
- Existing intermodal connections & transfers to the NJT bus system & others
- Low cost to implement
- High rider & community acceptance
- Potential for new development or re-development

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Just a few with some good ideas..

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GO Bus 25 & 28 - Service Benefits

- **Rapid** - incremental improvements improve travel time and on-time performance
- **Safe** - improved lighting, enhanced security, stops located in well-travelled areas
- **New/Virtually New buses** ground-up mechanical re-build
- **Faster load/unload** enter front door/exit rear door

- **Easy to use** - share some boarding locations with local bus
- **Easy to ride** - same fares and routing as regular bus
- **Easy to understand** – i.e., clock-face departures, easy to remember stopping patterns
- **Identifiable** – unique brand identity distinguishes “go bus” service from other bus routes

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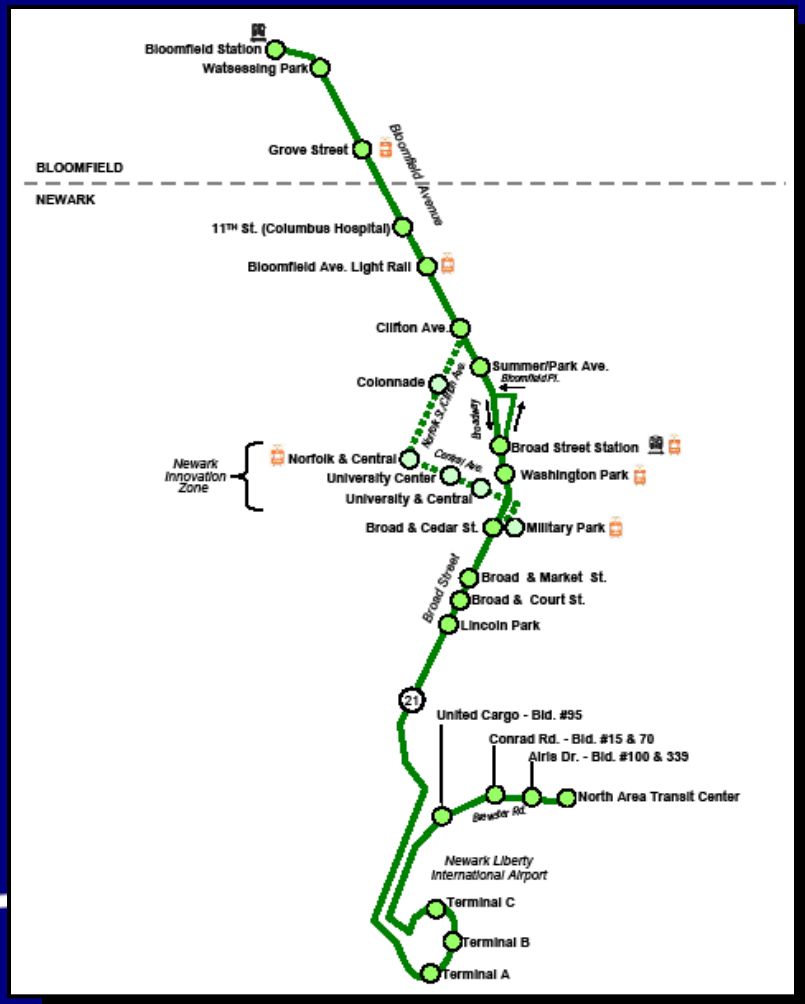
GO 28 - Liberty Corridor (BRT)

- Federal earmark for BRT initiative
- Approximately 12 mile route serving Bloomfield, Newark Innovation Zone/University Heights, Downtown Newark, Newark Liberty International Airport and connections to Port Newark/Port Elizabeth
- Build upon features of the GO Bus 25 route with more BRT elements
- Implement service in mid-fall 2009



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Lessons learned from the GO Bus

- Actual increase in GO 28 ridership with about 12% diverted from auto. Demand for Newark Airport is high on GO 28.
- Longer distance travel needs proved to be more popular vs. shorter distance travel needs.
- On GO 25 and even on GO 28 some riders that would have been on NY-PABT buses now taking bus to PATH or NJT Rail.
- Extensive market research always needed – perception does not necessarily yield positive ridership results in all cases.
- Need to identify different standards for success in less traditional bus markets - complete new starts will take time to develop ridership.

Lessons learned from the GO Bus

- Rider perception of travel time savings is almost 2X of what it really is. This is not just the actual time savings based upon schedule, but the perception of time savings and speed from the service.
- While some operational decisions such as headway operation (fewer time points) instead of fixed schedule proved popular with bus operators, difficult for customers to plan transfers.
- Branding is important so riders could easily identify a GO Bus vs. regular NJT bus. Riders look for the distinctive colors and choose to wait if they saw the bus approaching.
- Regular riders learned about the fact GO Bus did not stop at every stop by the distinctive colors of the shelter combined with the bus.

Lessons learned from the GO Bus

- Labeling new service as “BRT” is beneficial with general public and elected officials.
- Other bus customers now desire GO Bus treatments on their regular NJT bus routes.
- Signal priority proved to be very beneficial in terms of performance – resulted in a +/- 3 minute travel time savings.
- Where free alternative service options are offered – cannot compete effectively.
- Complete dedicated ROW still elusive in densely populated areas; municipal acceptance for such a big issue, looking at shoulder/dedicated lanes for future route segments.

Where is BRT headed in NJ….

- Implemented: Go Bus Newark/Bloomfield
  Route 9 Shoulder Phase I
- Proposed: Route 9 Shoulder Phases II, III
  Route 1 BRT Elements
  Union County Sustainable Corridor
  South Jersey 42/55 BRT
  Bergen County BRT
  Hudson County BRT

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Vision for Elizabeth Station from the Union County Sustainable Corridor Study

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