



6 Facts About #6MinuteService for New York's Buses

New York's bus system, the largest in the nation, would see the biggest frequency improvements if Governor Kathy Hochul and legislative leaders fund #6MinuteService on buses and trains in the next state budget. The city's bus riders are overwhelmingly low-income New Yorkers of color, immigrants, frontline workers, and parents, for whom time is uniquely precious but has long been squandered by long waits for transit that has been plagued by disinvestment.

By simply running more buses, service every six minutes or better would bring major transit improvements to most City neighborhoods, dramatically enhancing public transit and cutting travel times for millions of New Yorkers who live far from the subway. In this policy brief, we detail six arguments in favor of running New York's 100 busiest bus routes at least every six minutes, all day, every day.

1. Sixty percent of the city's 100 busiest bus routes already run at least every six minutes during rush hour and could quickly achieve six minute service off-peak with more operating funds.

Sixty of the 100 busiest bus lines run very frequently during rush hour but spend too much of the rest of the day and week parked at the depot. Just by operating those buses more frequently – adding drivers and additional fuel and maintenance – Governor Hochul and the MTA can deliver significantly more bus service all day and all week in a matter of months following the adoption of the state budget next April.

2. Of the 100 busiest bus routes, only 19 lines run every six minutes or better during the midday and just 12 on weekends. A targeted investment of new state revenue in additional operating funds would dramatically improve off peak service.

Right now, frequent bus service is focused on the traditional rush hours even though bus riders and bus-dependent communities increasingly travel at off-peak times. By delivering six minute or better service all day, every day, Governor Hochul can tighten the bonds between New York's neighborhoods and bring more opportunities closer to more New Yorkers who need them.

3. Eighty-six of the busiest 100 bus routes serve boroughs outside of Manhattan, and overwhelmingly reach neighborhoods far from the subway, bringing benefits of six minute service to just about every corner of New York.

Six minute service would bring better public transit to the city line from Rosedale to Riverdale all at once – and reach the New Yorkers least likely to work remotely, who typically have the longest commutes, often from more affordable neighborhoods far from the subway. Running buses more frequently is a unique opportunity for Governor Hochul to improve quality of life, cut anxiety and frustration for millions of New Yorkers, and cut driving consistent with the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, all with a single policy initiative.

4. Thirty-six of the busiest 100 bus routes serve Queens riders, the most of any borough.

Half (18) of the busiest routes in Queens stop in Jamaica, including seven that serve Southeast Queens neighborhoods, including Addisleigh Park, Cambria Heights, Hollis, Laurelton, Rosedale, South Jamaica, Springfield Gardens, and St. Albans. Five of the busiest routes stop in Flushing and four serve Northeast Queens neighborhoods including Auburndale, Bayside, Bay Terrace, Bellerose, College Point, Floral Park, Fresh Meadows, Glen Oaks, Hillcrest, Jamaica Estates, Kew Gardens Hills, Oakland Gardens, and Whitestone. By funding more frequent bus service, Governor Hochul can quickly and substantially improve public transit and cut travel times for New York communities home to several hundred thousand bus riders and prospective riders who endure some of the longest and most challenging commutes in the entire United States.

5. One-third of the busiest 100 bus routes serve Brooklyn; 85% of those routes serve Southern Brooklyn, Canarsie or East New York.

While many subway lines serve the city's most populous borough, riders who travel within and between southern and eastern Brooklyn neighborhoods often depend on buses or must seek out a less efficient and affordable way to get around. While nearly half of Brooklyn buses run at least every six minutes during rush hour, only two routes run that frequently on the weekend, subjecting off-peak riders, including many low-income service workers to very long waits. In the wake of her historic election victory, six minute or better service on buses would demonstrate not only that Brooklynites have Governor Hochul's back, but also that she has theirs too.

6. Of the 23 top 100 routes serving the Bronx, 74% already run at least every six minutes during rush hours, the most of any borough, and would see a big, fast off-peak improvement in travel times with six minute service.

Bronx bus riders, 95% of whom are New Yorkers of color and whose average annual income is \$20,000, depend on the borough's bus network for all east-west travel and to reach major healthcare facilities in the North and East Bronx and Northern Manhattan. The Center for an Urban Future found that healthcare workers suffer the city's longest commutes, largely because so many involve a bus trip and a destination outside of Manhattan's core. As New York continues to rebuild from the pandemic, Governor Hochul can help repay our common debt to essential workers by funding six minute service on Bronx buses and across New York.

Since taking office, Governor Hochul has offered New Yorkers generational projects like the Interborough Express and immediate initiatives to address safety in transit. But riders are still waiting for a positive vision from our governor for what transit service should do for the millions of people who depend on it every day and the millions more (all New Yorkers!) who depend on people who show up to work on buses and trains.

#6MinuteService has extraordinary potential to transform New Yorkers' lives, our experience of the city, and access to opportunity in a very short span of time. For Governor Hochul. #6MinuteService affords an unparalleled chance to boost transit ridership, address safety concerns, and advance equity and resilience with a single if bold new budget item.

This brief detailing what #6MinuteService would mean in the lives of millions of New York bus riders is supported by Amazon. No specific policy recommendations have been endorsed by the company. Ridership data are from 2020; scheduling information is current as of December 2022.