

STAFF SUMMARY

Subject	Date
Promotional Transfer Policy for the Queens Bus Network Redesign	May 28, 2025
Department	Vendor Name
Finance	N/A
Department Head Name	Contract Number
Jai Patel	N/A
Department Head Signature	Contract Manager Name
	N/A
Project Manager	Table of Contents Ref #
Sarah Wyss	N/A

Board Action						Internal Approvals		
Order	To	Date	Approval	Info	Other	Order	Approval	Approval
1	Board	5/28/2025	X			1	CFO	
						2	Legal	
						3	Chief of Staff	
						4	Chief External Relations & Policy	

Purpose

To obtain Board approval to launch a promotional transfer policy beginning on June 29, 2025, when Phase 1 of the Queens Bus Network Redesign takes effect. This promotional transfer policy would be in effect for at approximately six months, to January 2026.

Discussion

On January 29, 2025, the MTA Board unanimously approved the Queens Bus Network Redesign plan, an historic effort to bring new and improved transit service to New York's largest and most bus-dependent borough. When implemented, the Queens Bus Network Redesign will bring faster, more frequent, and more reliable bus service to Queens riders.

Currently, the MTA allows customers to make one transfer within two hours from the time of the initial paid fare tap at the start of the journey. Today, 22 Queens bus routes have “Special Transfer Privileges”, allowing bus customers using those routes for an additional transfer from other transit routes.

The Queens Bus Network Redesign represents a significant change to the current service plan, including the introduction of “rush routes” and enhanced coverage in many Queens neighborhoods. Allowing customers to use an additional bus transfer would encourage customers to fully utilize these new options, as they decide on their preferred routes to work, school and recreational activities.

Therefore, the MTA is proposing this promotional free transfer policy to allow Queens bus riders tapping with OMNY one additional free bus transfer within a three-hour period from the time of the initial paid tap. The existing transfer window of two hours will remain. Additionally, the existing restrictions on the use of free transfers will remain to minimize the opportunity for round-trip travel (e.g., the restriction on using the free transfer for travel on the same bus route).

By implementing this promotional policy, the MTA will identify permanent “Special Transfer Privilege” routes for 2026.

Impact on Funding

Currently, MTA forgoes \$2.2M annually in fare revenue due to the 22 Queens bus routes with Special Transfer Privileges and would expect approximately comparable rates of forgone revenue for the duration of the pilot.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the MTA Board adopt this promotional transfer policy.