

Toward Regional Water Mass Transit

New York Metropolitan Transportation Council
Brown Bag Presentation

October 23, 2013



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Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance



Agenda

- About the Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance
- History of ferries in NYC
- Why does NYC need ferries today?
- **East River Ferry and MWA's ferry advocacy**
- Maximizing the benefits of ferries
- Discussion

MWA's Mission



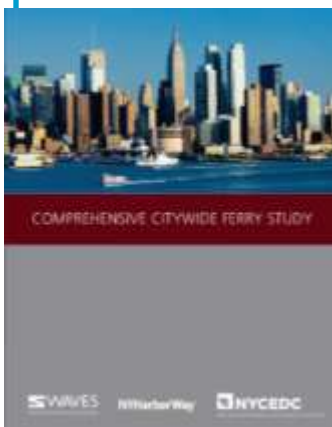
*MWA is determined to transform the New York and New Jersey Harbor and Waterways to make them clean and accessible, a vibrant place to play, learn and work, with great parks, great jobs, and great transportation **for all.***

The Alliance



Thanks to MWA Advocacy...

- NYC City Council establishes Waterfronts Committee (2002)
- Legislation passes to reinstate the Waterfront Management Advisory Board (WMAB) and require a new comprehensive waterfront plan every ten years (2008)
- NY-NJ Harbor Coalition launches to bring federal funds to the Harbor (2010)
- *Comprehensive Citywide Ferry Study* released (2010), which resulted in East River Ferry Service (2011)
- *Vision 2020*, first update to the Comprehensive Waterfront Plan in 18 years, is released (2011)
- City of Water Day attracts more than 25,000 visitors and incorporates 17 waterfront events across the city (2012)
- Ferry service resumes between Brooklyn Army Terminal and Manhattan (2013)
- City's first Eco Dock opens (2013)



History of Ferries in NYC



1807 First commercial steamboat runs from New York City

100+ ferry routes, 100 million+ annual riders



1931 George Washington Bridge opens

1967 Hoboken ferry final route discontinued



2008 Mayor Bloomberg and Speaker Quinn call for 5-borough ferry service

2011 East River Ferry launches, doubles ridership projections

47 new routes

Heyday

Decline

Revival

1642 First regular ferry service in NY Harbor (rowboat)

1871 Midland Railway purchases Weehawken ferry route

1927 Holland Tunnel opens

1937 Lincoln Tunnel opens

1959 New York Central Railroad Weehawken ferry service discontinued after 259 years

1986 Trans-Hudson ferry service re-established to ease PATH congestion

2001 New routes established to replace transit after 9/11; ridership spikes

2013 SIRR report calls for expanded ferry service for more resilient public transit.



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WHY DOES NYC NEED FERRIES TODAY?

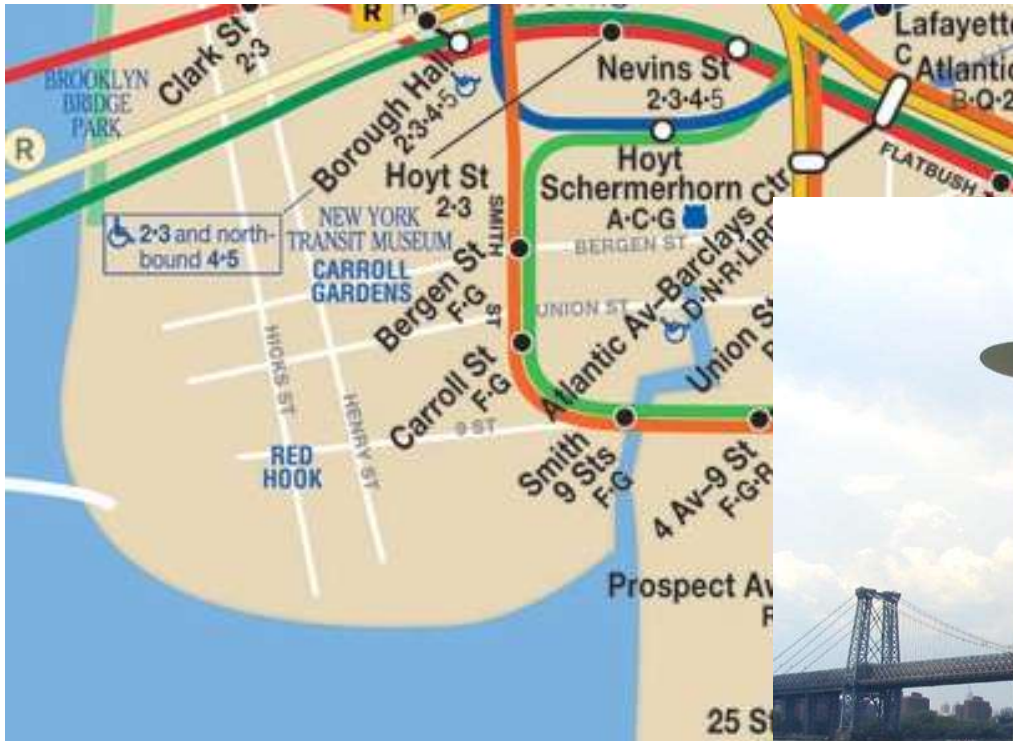
Overburdened transit and roadways



Emergency management/extreme weather

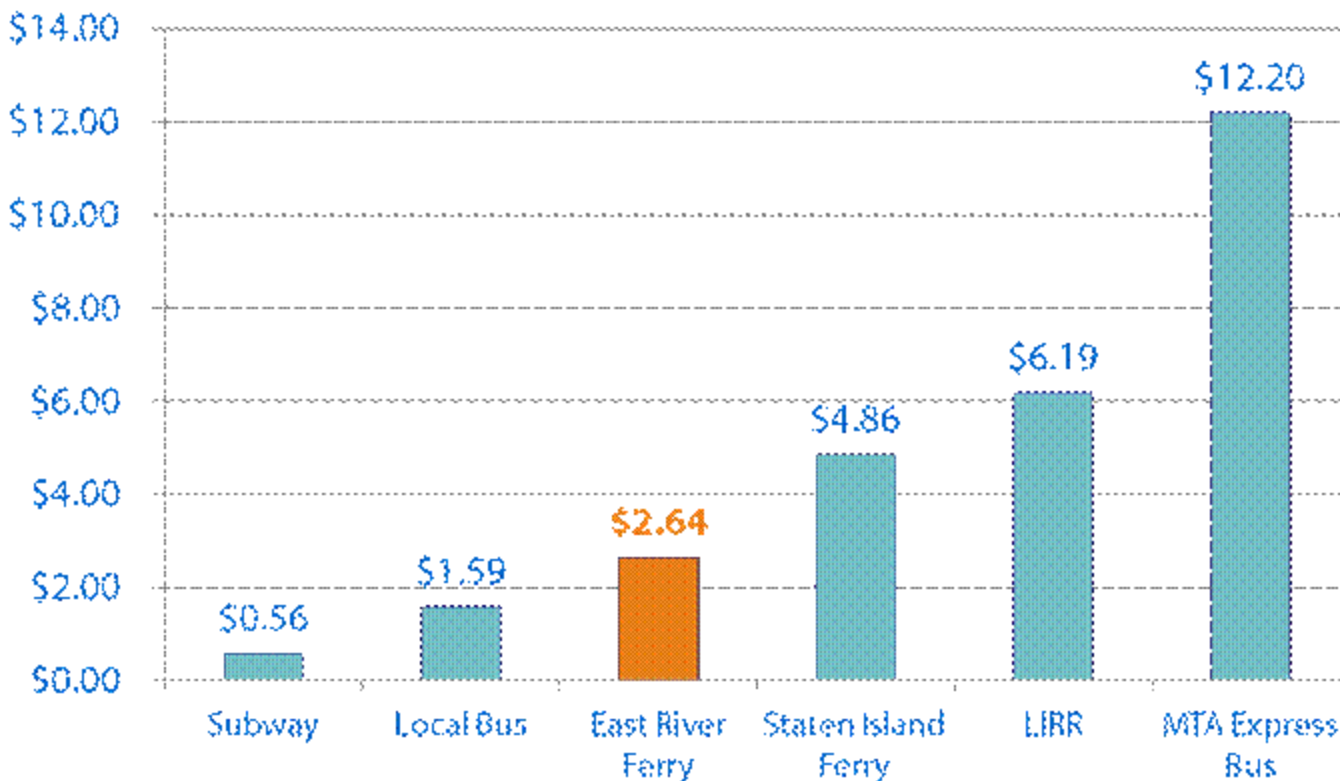


Transit-poor waterfront communities/transit equity



Cost-effective transportation

Transit Subsidies



\$5-\$8M for new landing



Sources: NYC Economic Development Corporation, silive.com

Growing residential and commercial centers on waterfront

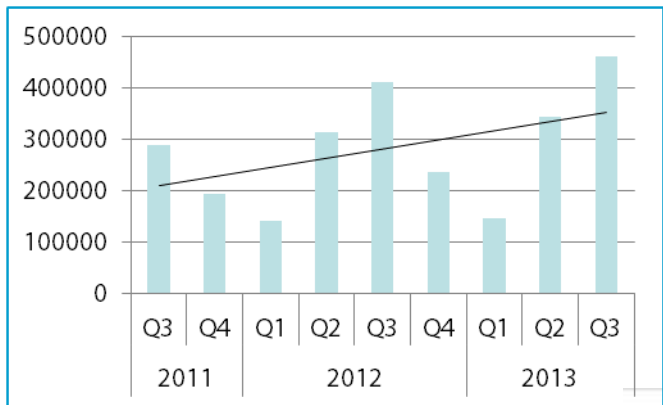


East River Ferry

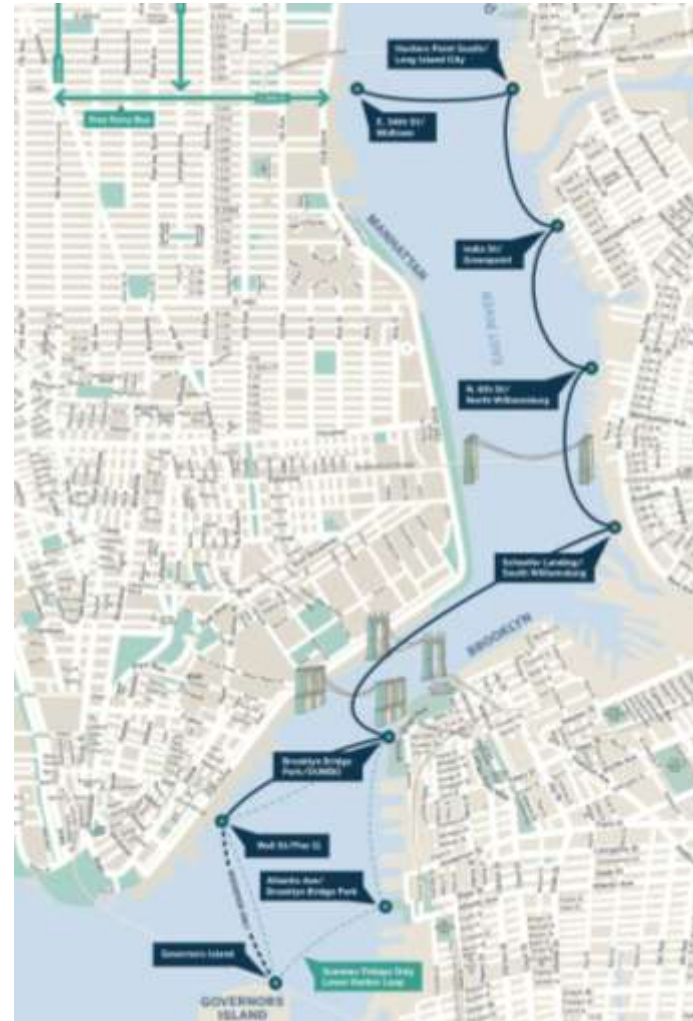


- Launched June 2011
- Connects rapidly developing waterfronts to each other and to Manhattan

East River Ferry Quarterly Ridership



- Ridership doubled initial projections
- 2013 ridership to date 10% higher than same period in 2012.
- Q3 2013 60% higher than Q3 2011





MWA FERRY ADVOCACY



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Building on success of East River Ferry, MWA is working to establish ferry service that is:

- **Extensive**, serving residents in all five boroughs
- **Affordable**, making ferry transit accessible to all New Yorkers
- **Frequent**, running on a schedule that conveniently serves community needs
- **Integrated** with New York City Transit so riders may pay fares with a MetroCard
- **Reliable** for mobilization during emergency events

Methodology

- Studied ½-mile radius around proposed ferry site in dense, walkable neighborhoods and roughly 5-minute drive from ferry in auto-dependent areas
- Analyzed travel behavior, commute times, demographics, community support, and development patterns for 43 potential sites for commuter ferry service
- Set up Ferry Advisory Committees in neighborhoods that would be well-served by ferry transit (southeast Bronx and southwest Brooklyn).



Sites for consideration (source: NYCEDC)



MWA-led ferry site-planning charrette in Soundview

MWA-Proposed Ferry Sites



Soundview



Significant time savings: 30-40 minutes each way to Lower Manhattan, 15-20 to Midtown



Dense population within walking/driving distance of site



Planned residential and marina development



Very high share of commuters driving to Manhattan alone—unmet need for transit



High potential for park and sail; ample parking opportunities; potential to divert Bruckner Expressway traffic

Ferry Point Park



Significant time savings: 31-42 minutes to Lower Manhattan, 22-34 to Midtown



Large population within short driving distance from site



Lack of subway access (3+ miles from subway); overburdened bus lines



High share of commuters driving to Manhattan alone—unmet need for transit

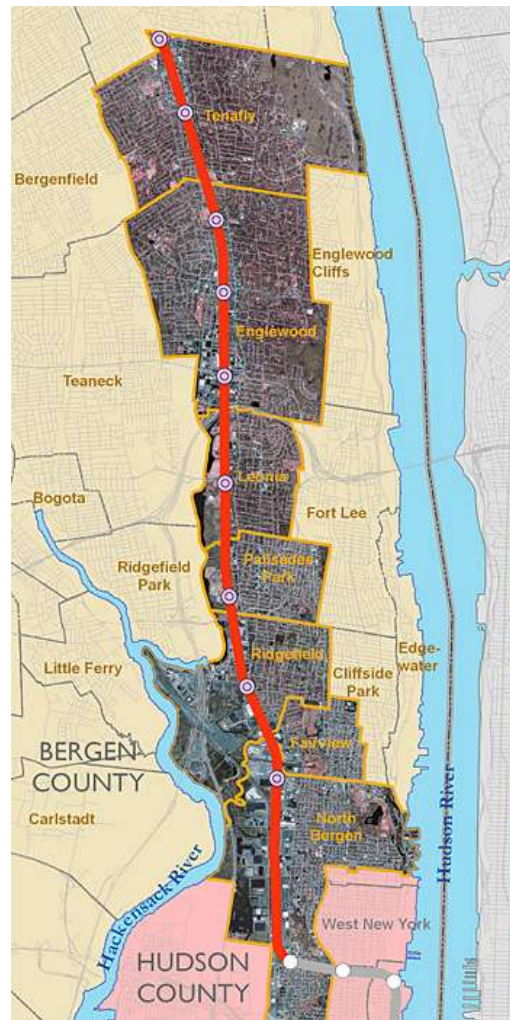
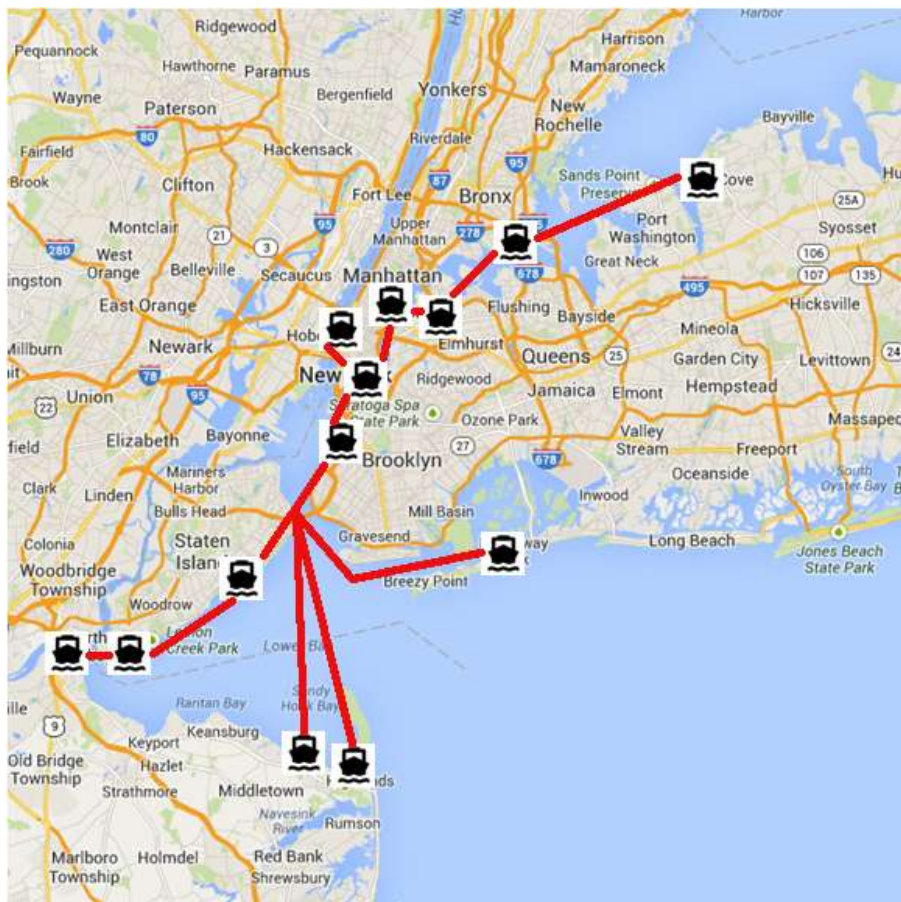


Ample parking available; potential to divert highway traffic



Transit demand generators—golf course and outlet mall opening in area

Regional Ferry Integration





MAXIMIZING THE BENEFITS OF FERRY SERVICE

Multimodal Service Coordination

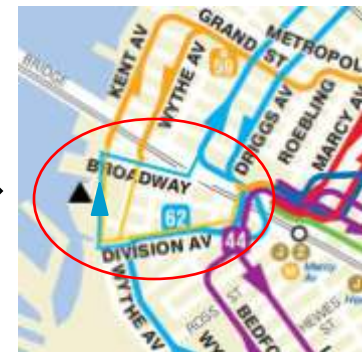
Challenge

Waterfronts can be difficult to access by public transit.



Solution

Extend bus routes and bike lanes to the waterfront.



Facilities Integration

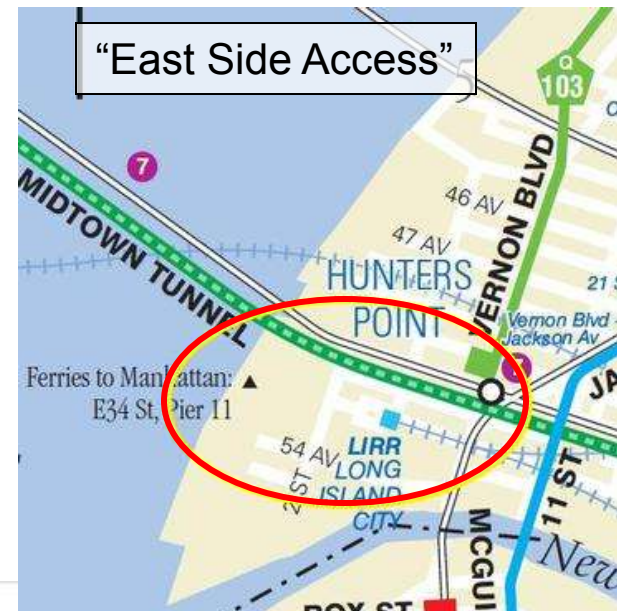
Challenge

Interborough ferries are not conducive to suburban commuting.



Solution

Coordinate ferry service with commuter rails, and provide ample parking.



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Fare Integration

Challenge

The need to pay separate fares makes riding ferries expensive.

Solution

Integrate ferry fare payment with the MTA MetroCard.



An aerial photograph of the Manhattan skyline in New York City, featuring the Manhattan Bridge and the East River. Two ferries are visible in the water, moving from the bottom left towards the center. The bridge's stone towers and suspension cables are prominent. The city buildings are densely packed in the background under a clear blue sky.

DISCUSSION

QUESTIONS, COMMENTS?