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September 9, 2021  

NJ TRANSIT Newark Bus Network Redesign  

The Tri-State Transportation Campaign is a 501(c)(3) non-profit policy advocacy organization dedicated to mobility, accessibility and livability in New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut.  

TSTC welcomes the opportunity to be part of the public process to help shape the bus network redesign and ensure that throughout this journey we are constantly collecting meaningful rider feedback so that this new system works for the people it was designed to serve.  

This past year has changed the way we live, work and travel: while some have been able to adopt a remote work model, essential workers and transit-dependent residents continued to lean on NJTransit to get to their jobs, stores, and essential health services. We must prioritize our residents who rely on public transportation, especially intra-city bus riders to ensure that their way of getting places is dependable and respectable to safeguard their livelihoods. This starts by providing reliable and affordable service all day, every day. We must make buses accessible for all mobility needs and focus on what riders need today. The best way to make this happen is to hear from riders directly; those who use NJTransit everyday. Suggestions to achieve the aforementioned goals are: (1) installing dedicated bus lanes along primary corridors and having frequent service daily; (2) improving connectivity between the bus and rail networks to create a seamless regional transit network; and (3) connecting existing rails to bus routes and prioritizing multimodal connections.  

TSTC recognizes NJTransit’s effort to obtain rider feedback to make this redesign optimal. To date, the public participation has consisted of two virtual meetings and simple surveys asking riders questions such as where they live/where they work and what bus lines they use. While this information is useful and fundamental, TSTC suggests the additional collection of this information by holding in-person roundtables and designing more in-depth surveys that allow the new redesign to innovatively reimagine. The public comments obtained during these public forums should be shared online and available to the general riding public, elected officials and any and all others who are interested. We recommend creating a portal or a designated email address to send in additional comments NJTPA and the Energy Master Plan both implemented similar methods for soliciting feedback in their public outreach process. This would increase NJ TRANSIT’s transparency and accountability to its stakeholders.  

The redesign should also prioritize deploying an all electrified bus fleet. As the state looks to improve its infrastructure, resilience and reducing caustic emissions in environmental justice
communities must be the utmost priority. Electrifying our buses and building supporting infrastructure is the key to providing both clean and sound transportation; in addition to being statutorily mandated.

TSTC looks forward to working with NJ TRANSIT in its continued efforts as we support and share the agency's goal of instituting meaningful changes that will benefit communities who need it most.