

Transportation ALTERNATIVES

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Federal DOT to Fund Congestion Pilot

With money in the bank, transit upgrades are on their way

The decision of the US Department of Transportation to provide \$354.5 million in congestion relief funding to New York will allow the City DOT, the State DOT and the MTA to move forward to develop a congestion pricing plan, make improvements to the region's mass transit system and to implement a congestion pricing plan that will fund critical medium- and long-term improvements.

According to the U.S. DOT, the three hundred-plus million dollars must be used to implement a plan that uses pricing as the principal mechanism to reduce traffic. The grant also requires at least a 6.3% reduction in traffic. It provides funding for express bus lanes over the East River bridges, bus signal prioritization, ferry service as well as Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridors in neighborhoods underserved by transit in every borough.

“If money talks, the US DOT is screaming for New York to get buses moving and unclog congested streets,” says Paul Steely White, Executive Director of Transportation Alternatives. “This federal grant is the down payment on needed transit and transportation infrastructure improvements. The \$350 million awarded is recognition that New York's plan is the most innovative and effective way to shorten commutes, thin traffic and help thousands of commuters make the switch to greener commuting options.”

The amount awarded far exceeds the \$200 million that was deemed necessary to move forward with the congestion pricing pilot program when Albany legislators brokered a deal last month.

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