

# **ANALYSIS OF SELECTED PROPOSED TRANSIT SERVICE CHANGES**

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*This report represents the views and findings of the author.  
It is not an official position of the Park Slope Civic Council.*

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

This is an analysis of transit service changes proposed by the MTA in January 2010, in the area defined roughly by the 33<sup>rd</sup>, 35<sup>th</sup>, and 39<sup>th</sup> Council Districts in Brooklyn, and portions of the 34<sup>th</sup> Council District. This report has been prepared for the benefit of elected officials, civic and advocacy organizations, and the general public, to understand the proposed service changes.

The changes proposed by the MTA result from a worsening financial picture. From the Introduction to the document *2010 NYC Transit Service Reductions*:

The 2010 budget presented to the MTA Board in November 2009 was balanced by a combination of fares, tolls, direct government subsidy, dedicated taxes, and other revenue sources. Between November 2009 and December 2009, revenue projections from these funding sources worsened dramatically. This was caused by a reduction of: \$143 million in 2009 direct state government subsidy; revenue from dedicated state taxes coming in much lower than projected; and an arbitrator's award of a cumulative three-year wage increase of 11.3 percent to certain union-represented NYCT employees. In combination, these factors created a projected budget shortfall of \$383 million in 2009-2010, and \$297 million in 2011.

In view of the severe financial challenges faced by New York State and the weak economy, there is no reason to disbelieve or discount the MTA's current projections.

In general, the changes proposed in January 2010 are less onerous than those proposed in March 2009. The document *2010 NYC Transit Service Reductions* provides a far greater level of analysis and detail to the public than has accompanied previous proposals for service cuts. In addition, some service cuts have been mitigated through route restructurings. As this report shows, the proposed changes affect different communities in different ways. Many people who rely most on bus service – the elderly, people with disabilities, children traveling to and from school – will find that at a minimum their weekday travel needs would be met by the mitigation measures although the bus route and schedule might change.

Section 2 of this report is a table outlining the bus service changes proposed in 2010 versus changes (if any) proposed in 2009 on a route-by-route basis. Section 3 discusses in detail the 2010 proposed bus service changes by route and Section 4 discusses in detail the 2010 proposed bus service changes by community. Section 5 reviews proposed subway service changes in these communities. Section 6 is a prognosis and provides some concluding observations and recommendations.

## 2 PROPOSED BUS SERVICE CHANGES: 2009 VERSUS 2010

The following table shows the bus service changes proposed in March 2009 versus those proposed in January 2010.

**PROPOSED BUS SERVICE CHANGES: 2009 VERSUS 2010**

<b>Route</b>	<b>Main Route</b>	<b>March 2009 Proposal</b>	<b>January 2010 Proposal</b>	<b>Net Difference/Remarks</b>
B16	13 <sup>th</sup> Avenue/14 <sup>th</sup> Avenue, Fort Hamilton Parkway	Complete elimination.	Retain route. Weekdays: start later, end earlier. Sundays: end earlier.	Most service retained.
B23	16 <sup>th</sup> Avenue, Cortelyou Road	Complete elimination.	Complete elimination.	No service retained.
B24	Greenpoint Avenue, Kingsland Avenue	No weekend service.	No weekend service.	No weekend service. No nearby alternate service.
B25	Fulton Street	Complete elimination.	Retain route and present service.	All service retained.
B26	Fulton Street/Halsey Street	No change.	No change.	No change.
B37	3 <sup>rd</sup> Avenue	Complete elimination.	Reroute B70 to cover present B37 route south of Bay Ridge Avenue, and to continue to VA Hospital.	Some service retained. Bus service preserved on 3 <sup>rd</sup> Avenue in Bay Ridge.
B38	Lafayette Avenue/DeKalb Avenue	No change.	No change.	No change.
B39	Williamsburg Bridge	Complete elimination.	Complete elimination.	No service retained. Duplicates J train over bridge.
B41	Flatbush Avenue	No change.	No change.	No change.
B43	Manhattan Avenue	No change.	No change.	No change.
B45	Washington Avenue, St. Johns Place	No overnight service.	No overnight service.	No overnight service.
B48	Lorimer Street, Clason/Franklin Avenues	No weekend service.	Eliminate service south of Fulton Street.	Weekend service retained on truncated route. Service south of Fulton Street maintained by B49 and Franklin Shuttle.
B51	Downtown Brooklyn to City Hall	Complete elimination.	Complete elimination.	No service retained.
B52	Fulton Street/Gates Avenue	No change.	No change.	No change.
B54	Myrtle Avenue	No change.	No change.	No change.

**PROPOSED BUS SERVICE CHANGES: 2009 VERSUS 2010**

<b>Route</b>	<b>Main Route</b>	<b>March 2009 Proposal</b>	<b>January 2010 Proposal</b>	<b>Net Difference/Remarks</b>
B57	Flushing Avenue	No weekend service.	Retain present service and extend route to Smith/9 <sup>th</sup> Street station to cover northern part of present B75 route. No overnight service.	Most service retained and route extended. Bus service preserved on Court and Smith Streets at all times except late nights.
B61	Red Hook – Downtown Brooklyn	No change.	Retain present service and extend route to 20 <sup>th</sup> Street, covering existing B77 route and southern part of present B75 route.	All service retained and route extended. Bus service preserved on 9 <sup>th</sup> Street and southern part of Prospect Park West. New one-seat ride from Park Slope and Windsor Terrace to Red Hook.
B62	Downtown Brooklyn – Long Island City	No change (route was part of former B61 in 2009).	No change.	No change.
B63	Atlantic Avenue, 5 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	No change.	No change.	No change.
B65	Bergen/Dean Streets	No weekend service.	Retain route but discontinue overnight service.	Most service retained.
B67	7 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	No overnight service.	No overnight service. Weekday service to alternate with B69 south of Flatbush Avenue.	Most service retained. Overnight riders would have to walk to 9 <sup>th</sup> Street or 5 <sup>th</sup> Avenue for a bus to Downtown Brooklyn (B61 or B63). Left unclear is whether weekday B67 and B69 would operate on present frequency of each.

**PROPOSED BUS SERVICE CHANGES: 2009 VERSUS 2010**

<b>Route</b>	<b>Main Route</b>	<b>March 2009 Proposal</b>	<b>January 2010 Proposal</b>	<b>Net Difference/Remarks</b>
B69	Vanderbilt Avenue/8 <sup>th</sup> Avenue/Prospect Park West	Service to start later in the morning and end earlier at night.	No weekend service. No service on 8 <sup>th</sup> Avenue and Prospect Park West. Weekday service to alternate with B67 south of Flatbush Avenue.	Weekday service preserved north of Flatbush Avenue. No service on 8 <sup>th</sup> Avenue and Prospect Park West. No weekend service on Vanderbilt Avenue and points north.
B71	Union Street	Weekday service to start later in the morning and end earlier at night. No weekend service.	Complete elimination.	No service between Brooklyn Museum, Park Slope, and Carroll Gardens. No alternate subway service or direct bus service.
B75	9 <sup>th</sup> Street/Smith Street/Court Street	Complete elimination.	Complete elimination.	Service would be maintained by the extension of two other routes: B57 from Sands Street to Smith/9 <sup>th</sup> Streets (all times except late nights), and B61 from Smith/9 <sup>th</sup> Streets to 20 <sup>th</sup> Street (all times).
B77	9 <sup>th</sup> Street/Lorraine Street	No change.	Complete elimination.	Service would be assumed by extended B61.

### **3 REVIEW OF PROPOSED BUS SERVICE CHANGES BY ROUTE**

#### **3.1 General.**

There are two fundamental differences between the 2009 and 2010 proposals for service changes. First, the level of detail and quality of analysis provided in the document *2010 NYC Transit Service Reductions* is perhaps without precedent, and even if the proposed cuts are undesirable, the MTA is to be applauded for providing to the public the details and rationale behind the proposed changes. These data enable solid independent analysis. Second, attempts have been made to mitigate proposed service cuts by restructuring other bus routes. Considering that buses provide an essential service for the elderly, students, and people with disabilities, the mitigation measures retain at least some service – and, in a few instances, actually promise improved service – for these communities.

#### **3.2 Route B16.**

The 2009 proposed service cuts would have eliminated this route entirely. B16 serves two public elementary schools and Fort Hamilton High School. The elimination of both B16 and B23 (see below) would have had a significant impact in Borough Park as it operates along the community's commercial spine (13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Avenues). The 2010 proposed service cuts would retain nearly all B16 service, thus eliminating the impact on students relying on this route and retaining a key bus route (and subway connection) in Kensington and Borough Park.

#### **3.3 Route B23.**

This is a short route that provides connecting service from Borough Park (along 16th Avenue and Cortelyou Road) to various subway stations. It serves one public elementary school on 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue. As in 2009, the 2010 proposed service cuts include the complete elimination of this route. This is a light-ridership route. The retention of most B16 service in the 2010 proposed service cuts increases the likelihood of B23 being eliminated, as the effect of bus service cuts on Borough Park would be reduced.

#### **3.4 Route B24.**

This route operates along Greenpoint Avenue to Sunnyside, Queens, then back to Brooklyn via the Kosciuszko Bridge, through East Williamsburg to the Washington Plaza bus terminal. Both the 2009 and 2010 proposed service cuts include eliminating B24 weekend service. B24 serves many places of work along the route as well as one public elementary school and one public intermediate school, but no hospitals. The only large commercial area along the route is Greenpoint Avenue in Sunnyside. Weekend service frequency is generally every 30 minutes.

#### **3.5 Route B37.**

This route runs along 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue for nearly its entire length, paralleling the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue subway. As in 2009, the 2010 proposed service cuts include the complete elimination of

this route. B37 has three distinct segments: from Bay Ridge Avenue south, between Bay Ridge Avenue and Prospect Avenue, and north of Prospect Avenue. North of Bay Ridge Avenue, ridership is light, and it serves one public elementary school and Sunset Park High School. In the 2009 proposed service cuts, the elimination of this route would have had a serious impact on the ability of Bay Ridge residents to travel to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue commercial corridor. In addition, with the proposed reduction in service on B65 and B71, and the proposed elimination of B75, there would have been no bus service to Downtown Brooklyn at all on weekends between 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the waterfront, and no service convenient to two large housing projects (Wyckoff Houses and Gowanus Houses). The 2010 proposed service cuts have retained B65 and have restructured service along the current route of B75, and would reroute B70 to cover 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue south of Bay Ridge Parkway. The B70 rerouting would continue to Victory Memorial Hospital and the VA Hospital, providing a one-seat ride to these facilities not presently available to people using B37. In short, the 2010 proposed service cuts include mitigations at the north and south ends of the B37 route, with no alternative except the subway (one block away) or B63 (two blocks away) in the center portion of the route. Lastly, the elimination of this route (and the elimination of B71, discussed below) would leave no bus service at the Whole Foods site at such time as it is built up.

### **3.6 Route B39.**

This route operates only between the Washington Plaza bus terminal at the foot of the Williamsburg Bridge and Essex Street in Manhattan. As such, it duplicates the J train operating over the bridge. Making the trip on the subway is often faster. The Marcy Avenue station, just east of Washington Plaza, is ADA-compliant, while the Essex Street station is not. The duplicative nature of this service makes it a clear target for elimination.

### **3.7 Route B45.**

This route operates between Downtown Brooklyn and Ocean Hill via Atlantic Avenue, Washington Avenue, and St. Johns Place. Both the 2009 and 2010 proposed service cuts include elimination of overnight service on B45. Together with the proposed elimination of overnight B65 service, there would be no cross-town service between Fulton Street and the subway lines (3, 4) on Eastern Parkway.

### **3.8 Route B48.**

This route operates between Greenpoint and the Prospect Park subway station. The 2009 proposed service cuts eliminated B48 service on weekends. The 2010 proposed service cuts would retain weekend service but would eliminate service south of Fulton Street (Franklin Avenue subway station). The portion proposed for elimination serves one public elementary school and Prospect Heights High School. The MTA proposes that alternate service exists with B49 along Bedford and Rogers Avenues to the east, and with the Franklin Shuttle (S) subway. The Franklin Shuttle has a capacity constraint of two-car trains and a minimum ten-minute headway, and it would be worth examining the effect of student riders displaced from B48 on the Franklin Shuttle.

### **3.9 Route B51.**

This route operates weekdays only, approximately every half-hour, from Downtown Brooklyn over the Manhattan Bridge to City Hall, serving both the Brooklyn Civic Center and Manhattan Civic Center. It provides a slow alternative to subway service between these two areas along the M (rush hours only) and 4/5 lines. Both the 2009 and 2010 proposed service cuts include the elimination of B51. The impact of its elimination would be minimal as most people take the subway.

### **3.10 Route B57.**

The 2009 proposed service cuts included eliminating B57 on weekends. This would have had a direct impact on area residents being able to travel to shopping on Broadway and to Woodhull Medical Center. The 2010 proposed service cuts retains B57 service and would extend it to the Smith-9<sup>th</sup> Streets subway station via Court and Smith Streets at all times except late nights, when there would be no B57 service. This would replace the northern portion of the present B75. If the B57 were to serve the whole extended route at its present service frequency, this would result in more frequent bus service along Court and Smith Streets than B75 provides. The proposed service frequency of the extended B57 must be clarified. This would also provide a one-seat ride between the growing Brooklyn Navy Yard area and Carroll Gardens. Nearby overnight service would be provided by B54 (Myrtle Avenue) and B62 (Downtown Brooklyn – Long Island City) east of Downtown Brooklyn, and the F and G subway lines along Court and Smith Streets.

### **3.11 Route B61.**

In January 2010 the former B61 (Red Hook – Long Island City) was divided into two routes, B61 (Red Hook – Downtown Brooklyn) and B62 (Downtown Brooklyn – Long Island City). This review concerns only the current B61. The 2010 proposed service cuts would extend B61 from its current terminus at Ikea Plaza to 20<sup>th</sup> Street, via 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Prospect Park West, and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, at all times, replacing B77 in its entirety and the southern portion of the present B75. If the B61 were to serve the whole extended route at its present service frequency, the result would be more frequent bus service between the Smith/9<sup>th</sup> Streets subway station and Windsor Terrace than B75 provides. It would also provide better service between the eastern part of Red Hook and Downtown Brooklyn. The proposed service frequency of the extended B61 must be clarified.

### **3.12 Route B65.**

The 2009 proposed service cuts included eliminating B65 on weekends. This was one of a number of proposed cuts that would have left no bus service to Downtown Brooklyn between 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the waterfront. The 2010 proposed service cuts would preserve seven-days-a-week service but would eliminate overnight service. This and the extension of B57 would preserve weekend bus service to Downtown Brooklyn in communities between 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the waterfront. Together with the proposed elimination of overnight B45 service, there would be no cross-town bus service between Fulton Street and the subway lines (2, 3, 4) on Eastern Parkway.

### **3.13 Routes B67 and B69.**

B67 operates between Kensington and Sands Street via McDonald Avenue, 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Flatbush Avenue, Livingston Street, and Jay Street. B69 operates between 20<sup>th</sup> Street and Sands Street via Prospect Park West, 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Vanderbilt Avenue, and Flushing Avenue. Both the 2009 and 2010 proposed service cuts include elimination of overnight service on both routes. The 2010 proposed service cuts would maintain the existing level of service between 20<sup>th</sup> Street and Flatbush Avenue but service would alternate between B67 and B69 on weekdays, B67 operating on its current route from Flatbush and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenues to Sands Street and B69 operating to Sands Street via Flatbush Avenue, Grand Army Plaza, and the current B69 route to Sands Street via Vanderbilt Avenue and Flushing Avenue. The result is that on weekdays service on the B67 from Cortelyou Road to 20<sup>th</sup> Street and from Flatbush Avenue to Atlantic Terminal and Downtown Brooklyn would be cut approximately in half. The 2010 proposed service cuts would eliminate B69 entirely on weekends and holidays.

The proposed changes to B67 and B69 would retain the current level of service at the two busiest stops on 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue: Flatbush Avenue (connection to B and Q trains) and New York Methodist Hospital. It would also provide the current level of service along 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue to several elementary and high schools along the route. The combination with B69 would cut weekday service between Cortelyou Road and 20<sup>th</sup> Street approximately in half, and would have the same effect on B67 service north of the intersection of 7<sup>th</sup> and Flatbush Avenues. One-seat weekday service from 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue to Atlantic Terminal and Downtown Brooklyn would be cut approximately in half. Passenger counts at various times of day along the northern and southern ends of B67 would be welcome in order properly to analyze the effect of the proposed B67/B69 weekday restructuring.

The proposed changes to B69 would eliminate service on weekends on Vanderbilt Avenue, and at all times on Prospect Park West between Grand Army Plaza and 9<sup>th</sup> Street, and on 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue between Union Street and 9<sup>th</sup> Street. South of Grand Army Plaza, people who now use B69 would have to walk to 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue for alternate service on B67. Riders on Vanderbilt Avenue would have to use the various lines intersecting Vanderbilt Avenue: B57 on Flushing Avenue, B62 on Park Avenue, B54 on Myrtle Avenue, B38 on DeKalb and Lafayette Avenues, B52 on Gates Avenue, B25 and B26 on Fulton Street, B45 on Atlantic Avenue, B65 on Dean and Bergen Streets, and B41 on Flatbush Avenue. There is no alternate service parallel to Vanderbilt Avenue.

### **3.14 Route B71.**

This route operates primarily on Union Street west of Grand Army Plaza and on Eastern Parkway east of Grand Army Plaza. The 2009 proposed service cuts included reduced weekday service and no weekend service on B71. The 2010 proposed service cuts include complete elimination of this route. Although this is the second least-patronized route in Brooklyn, it has shown an encouraging ridership increase in recent years despite poor schedule adherence in rush hours and an infrequent schedule (typically, every 35 minutes in either direction on weekdays and every 30 minutes in either direction on weekends). B71 offers the only one-seat service between Carroll Gardens and the Brook-

lyn Museum area. Because of the communities it serves, this is one route on which more frequent and more reliable service might reasonably lead to a more than corresponding ridership increase. It should be noted that heavy traffic on eastbound Union Street approaching Grand Army Plaza has a serious impact on schedule and reliability.

Rerouting B71 in the Grand Army Plaza area could improve schedule adherence, but eliminating B71 or reconfiguring its eastern portion might facilitate making Union Street one-way eastbound between 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Grand Army Plaza, thus addressing congestion on Union Street and opening up further reconfiguration of Grand Army Plaza.

### **3.15 Route B75.**

This route operates on Smith and Court Streets, 9<sup>th</sup> Street, and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Prospect Park West, between Jay and Sands Streets and 20<sup>th</sup> Street. As in 2009, the 2010 proposed service cuts include the complete elimination of this route. Whereas the 2009 proposed cuts proposed no mitigation and relied on the parallel operation of the F and G subway along most of the route, the 2010 proposed cuts would preserve bus service along the entire route except a short distance north of Tillary Street. This would be accomplished by extending B57 from Fulton Street to the Smith/9<sup>th</sup> Streets subway station along Court and Smith Streets, and by extending B61 from its present terminal at Ikea Plaza to the Smith/9<sup>th</sup> Streets subway station and then to 20<sup>th</sup> Street. Some passengers who presently have a one-seat ride between these two segments of B75 would have to transfer at the Smith/9<sup>th</sup> Streets subway station between B57 and B61. There would be no overnight service on the segment to be served by B57. The proposed extension of B61 would afford a one-seat ride between Windsor Terrace and Red Hook.

### **3.16 Route B77.**

This route operates between 5th Avenue/9<sup>th</sup> Street in Park Slope and Ikea Plaza in Red Hook. The 2009 proposed service cuts did not address B77. The 2010 proposed service cuts would eliminate B77 in favor of an extended B61 along the same route. The net result would be no change in service, but it must be noted that at peak times B77 buses are overcrowded from the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue/9<sup>th</sup> Street and Smith/9<sup>th</sup> Streets subway stations to the Red Hook Houses. The proposed reconfiguration of this service would not address this overcrowding.

## **4 REVIEW OF PROPOSED BUS SERVICE CHANGES BY COMMUNITY**

### **4.1 Effects of Proposed Changes in Borough Park and Kensington.**

In the 2009 proposed service cuts, both B16 and B23 were marked for complete elimination. In the 2010 proposed service cuts, the route with the higher ridership, B16, would be retained except for the elimination of some trips on weekdays and Sundays. B16 serves, among other areas, the 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue/14<sup>th</sup> Avenue commercial corridor in Borough Park. In Borough Park, B23 operates along 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue, between B16 on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>

Avenues and B8 on 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The effect on the community of eliminating B23 would be low.

#### **4.2 Effects of Proposed Changes in Windsor Terrace.**

Along the portion of Prospect Park West now served by B69 and B75, service would be provided by B61. Overall, service frequency would be approximately the same. A trip to Downtown Brooklyn would require a transfer to B57 or B63 at all times except late nights, when a transfer to the F, G, or N subway would be required. Weekday service along 20th Street and McDonald Avenue would be reduced as a result of the reconfiguration of B67 and B69, but this segment does not have high ridership. The effect on the community of these changes would be small.

#### **4.3 Effects of Proposed Changes in Park Slope and Gowanus.**

Service along 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Prospect Park West between Grand Army Plaza and 9<sup>th</sup> Street, now provided by B69, would be eliminated, forcing people to walk to 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue for a B67 or (weekdays only) B69 bus, or to 9<sup>th</sup> Street for a B61 bus. This would eliminate one of the lines (B69) serving New York Methodist Hospital (NYMH), but most people going to NYMH by bus use B67. The actual effect of this change in Park Slope would be slight. B67 overnight service would be eliminated, and the remaining overnight bus service serving Park Slope and Gowanus would be on B41 (Flatbush Avenue), B61 (9<sup>th</sup> Street/8<sup>th</sup> Avenue/Prospect Park West), and B63 (5<sup>th</sup> Avenue). B37 (3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue) and B71 (Union Street) would be eliminated. B37 passengers would have to take the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue subway or B63. B71 passengers would be left without a one-seat alternate or, in some cases, any transit option at all. Park Slope residents would lose a one-seat ride to Carroll Gardens and the Brooklyn Museum area by the elimination of B71 but would gain a one-seat ride to Red Hook by the extension of B61. The proposed service cuts, if implemented, would leave the Whole Foods site without any bus service. The effect on the community of these changes would be low to moderate, corresponding mostly to the discontinuance of B71.

#### **4.4 Effects of Proposed Changes in Red Hook.**

If the changes proposed in 2010 were to come to pass, the level of service in Red Hook would remain nearly as it is today. Routes B61 and B77 would be combined, but they have very little overlap and they serve primarily different parts of Red Hook. The impact on the community of these changes would be negligible.

There is, however, a missed opportunity to transform B71 into a service extending into the northern part of Red Hook, then through the Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel to South Ferry in Lower Manhattan. In 2008 NYCT proposed this among various service improvements that would have been paid for had the Mayor's congestion pricing proposal been adopted. This would speed travel from Red Hook to Manhattan significantly and would relieve pressure on the A, C and F subway lines in Downtown Brooklyn. Riders could transfer to subways at South Ferry and Bowling Green.

#### **4.5 Effects of Proposed Changes in Carroll Gardens and Cobble Hill.**

Under the 2010 proposed service cuts, B61 service would be unchanged, and B75 service in these communities would be replaced by B57 service at all times except late nights, when there would be no service along Smith and Court Streets. The elimination of B71 service would end a direct connection to Park Slope and the Brooklyn Museum area. The 2009 proposed service cuts would have kept a reduced schedule of weekday B71 service while eliminating weekend B71 service, and would have eliminated B75 without replacement. In sum, the impact of the 2010 proposed cuts on these communities would be small and less onerous than the cuts proposed in 2009.

#### **4.6 Effects of Proposed Changes in Downtown Brooklyn and Boerum Hill.**

The 2010 proposed service cuts would make the Livingston Street bus corridor less busy: B37 would be eliminated, weekday B67 service would be reduced, and overnight B45, B65, and B67 service would be eliminated. The little-used B51 to City Hall via the Manhattan Bridge would be eliminated. This is still an improvement from the 2009 proposed service cuts, under which there would have been no overnight or weekend B65 service. The effect of the proposed changes on these communities would be small.

#### **4.7 Effects of Proposed Changes in DUMBO and Vinegar Hill.**

The 2009 proposed service cuts would have eliminated B25, B69 and B75 at all times, overnight B67, and weekend B57. The 2010 proposed service cuts retain B25 and (except late nights) B57. B62 is unchanged. If this proposal is realized, DUMBO and Vinegar Hill will retain some 24-hour bus service. The effect of the proposed changes on these communities would be small.

#### **4.8 Effects of Proposed Changes in Brooklyn Navy Yard area.**

The 2009 proposed service cuts would have eliminated B57 on weekends and retained a reduced level of B69 service. B61 (now B62) would be unchanged. The 2010 proposed service cuts retain B57 except late nights, and eliminate B69 on weekends. B62 is unaffected. The proposed elimination of B69 on weekends would end a direct bus connection between the Navy Yard area and Clinton Hill, Fort Greene, Prospect Heights, and Park Slope. To test the true impact of the proposed cuts, it would be worthwhile to survey workers at the Navy Yard to determine how many use public transportation to go to and from work. The effect of the proposed changes on this community would be small to moderate, resting entirely on the impact of discontinuing B69 on weekends.

#### **4.9 Effects of Proposed Changes in Fort Greene and Clinton Hill.**

The 2009 proposed service cuts would have eliminated B25 at all times and reduced B69 service. The 2010 proposed service cuts would leave B25 intact, reduce B69 on weekdays, and eliminate B69 on weekends. B38, B52, and B54 would not be affected. In sum, the effect of the 2010 proposed service cuts on these neighborhoods would be small

but a one-seat ride to Prospect Heights and Park Slope on weekends would be lost with the weekend elimination of B69.

#### **4.10 Effects of Proposed Changes in Prospect Heights.**

The 2009 proposed service cuts would have eliminated B45 overnight and B65 overnight and on weekends, and would have reduced B69 service. The 2010 proposed service cuts also would eliminate B45 and B65 overnight but would retain B65 on weekends. B69 would be eliminated on weekends. A one-seat ride to Fort Greene and Clinton Hill would not be an option except by walking to B25, B26, B38, or B52; and a one-seat ride to the Navy Yard area and Park Slope would be eliminated by the discontinuance of B69 on weekends. The discontinuance of B48 south of Fulton Street would eliminate direct service to Prospect Heights High School. B48 operates more frequently than B69 and has higher ridership, so its discontinuance through Prospect Heights would eliminate a significant transit option. Together with the weekend discontinuance of B69, there would be no north-south service through Prospect Heights. The only weekend bus service through Prospect Heights would be on B45 and B65. The effect of the proposed changes on this community would be moderate to significant.

#### **4.11 Effects of Proposed Changes in South Williamsburg.**

For the purposes of this report, South Williamsburg is defined as the area bounded by Flushing Avenue on the south, Broadway on the east and north, and Kent Avenue on the west. The 2009 proposed service cuts would have eliminated B48 and B57 on weekends. The 2010 proposed service cuts retain both routes on weekends but eliminate overnight B57. The overall impact of the proposed cuts in this community would be small. No other routes traversing South Williamsburg would be affected.

#### **4.12 Effects of Proposed Changes in East Williamsburg and Greenpoint.**

The 2009 and 2010 proposed service cuts would eliminate B24 on weekends and the 2009 proposal would have eliminated B48 on weekends. Passengers using the Greenpoint section of B24 could transfer from B62 to Q60 (or the 7 subway) in Long Island City. Passengers using the Williamsburg section of B24 would have to walk to B43 or B48. The impact of the proposed weekend elimination of B24 should be studied to the extent that it would affect the elderly and people with disabilities going to and from shopping in Sunnyside in particular.

## **5 EFFECTS OF PROPOSED SUBWAY SERVICE CHANGES**

The 2010 proposed subway service changes that would affect this area are:

- Reduced midday and weekend service frequency on A, F and J
- Permanently moving the northern terminus of G to Court Square (Long Island City)
- Eliminating J/Z skip-stop service in favor of all-stop J
- Extending V across the Williamsburg Bridge and along the Myrtle Avenue route, eliminating M.

The first three changes noted above were also proposed in 2009. The effect would be more crowded trains. The proposed reduction in service frequency on F should be examined in light of NYCT's commendable study of F service released in October 2009. The proposed change to G has been in prospect ever since the 63<sup>rd</sup> Street connector was completed, and F routed through it, in 2001. At a minimum, NYCT should ensure that the moving walkway in the passageway between the Court Square (G) and 23<sup>rd</sup> – Ely stations (E, V) is consistently and properly maintained.

Much more encouraging is the proposed extension of V. This would afford riders on the northern end of the existing M a one-seat ride to Midtown Manhattan for the first time, and would afford riders on Broadway a one-seat ride to Midtown for the first time since K service (6<sup>th</sup> Avenue – Broadway) was discontinued in 1977. People taking the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue subway to Lower Manhattan would lose a one-seat ride in peak hours to stations along the Nassau Street line, but Lower Manhattan is so well-served by subways that the actual impact should be slight. It should be noted that peak-hour R trains between 36<sup>th</sup> Street in Brooklyn and Lower Manhattan would become more crowded with the loss of M service. On the other hand, the benefits to riders in Bushwick, Ridgewood, and Glendale would be significant. NYCT should be encouraged to extend late night and weekend Myrtle Avenue service across the Williamsburg Bridge to Essex Street in Manhattan, to afford riders to Midtown Manhattan at those times a single-transfer trip. This may also reduce crowding on the L line.

## **6 THE PROSPECTS**

The financial position of the MTA and New York State in 2010 is so dire that there are no “quick fixes” available. In general, the 2010 proposed service changes are more benign than those proposed in 2009, and in a few cases would offer better service than at present. The public must expect that most or all of the service cuts proposed in January 2010 will be implemented. Not even the fact that this is an election year affects this prognosis.

Contrary to the position taken by some, the proposed cuts in total are not devastating although they affect different communities very differently. The proposed service cuts would affect the elderly, people with disabilities, and students to some degree, but whereas in 2009 the MTA proposed no mitigation measures, in 2010 mitigation measures are proposed in several places to lessen the impact. It makes no sense for the MTA to provide bus service where there is little demand for it, although a reasonable argument can be made that infrequent service leads to low demand. Two bus routes discussed in this report that are marked for complete elimination, B23 and B71, pass subway stations at various points, but in neither case does the route do more than cross a dense commercial zone. Neither route offers much, if any, potential for combination with another route. Moreover, the low frequency of service in both cases makes these routes undesirable connections from the subway.

As was stated in paragraph 3.14, re-routing B71 into Red Hook and through the Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel to Lower Manhattan would provide a much-needed alternate to the existing transit trip from Red Hook to Manhattan, which entails a slow bus ride (on B61 or B77) to the subway at Smith/9<sup>th</sup> Streets or Jay Street – Borough Hall. It is likely that even a weekdays-only

service of this type would be well patronized and would relieve pressure on the F subway in particular. This would benefit residents of Carroll Gardens as well as Red Hook. Making the Manhattan Central Business District more accessible to Red Hook should be a key policy goal; it would provide better access to jobs for Red Hook residents and make Red Hook a more desirable place to live. The financial pressures on the MTA notwithstanding, this is one service enhancement that merits serious attention and a determined search for funding, if only as a pilot project.

All bus services in Brooklyn need to be examined critically to determine the best way to schedule and encourage bus use as feeders to and from the subway, commuter rail, and other bus routes; as transportation to and from schools, churches, and health care facilities; and as transportation to shopping, entertainment and recreational activities. It is not clear that the current bus service in Brooklyn does this as effectively or as efficiently as it could. Many bus routes have been unchanged over a long period of time, and some operate on substantially the same routes as former streetcar lines. Much work remains to be done, probably originating from outside the MTA, in the way of a comprehensive restructuring of bus service that would provide needed service, and even improved service, in a more cost-effective manner.