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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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When's the Next Bus Arriving? Downtown Alliance Has The Answer

-Downtown Alliance, Senator Squadron Introduce New LED Signs Providing Arrival and Departure Times of Free Buses in Lower Manhattan-



NextBus signs like this one have been installed along the Downtown Connection route in Lower Manhattan.

New York, NY (September 23, 2010) – No more guessing games or neck-craning.

Riders of the Downtown Connection—the Alliance for Downtown New York's free bus service in Lower Manhattan—will now know exactly when the next bus will arrive. The Business Improvement District has installed seven LED signs, which list the next two arrivals, along the 37-stop route.

The NextBus program uses Global Positioning System tracking satellites to provide accurate vehicle arrival/departure information and real-time data to passengers waiting at selected Downtown Connection stops.

Funding for the program was secured by New York State Senator Daniel Squadron and established in coordination with the New York City Department of Transportation (DOT).

Thanks to a grant from Goldman Sachs, two additional signs will be installed in Battery Park City in the coming months.

“Lower Manhattan is the center of a vast, multi-modal regional transit network. Our Downtown Connection extends that reach, making it easier for Lower Manhattan’s 300,000 workers, 55,000 residents and six millions annual visitors to get around,” said Elizabeth H. Berger, President of the Downtown Alliance. “Starting today, GPS technology meets service in Lower Manhattan. Thanks to Senator Squadron and Goldman Sachs, our nearly 900,000 annual riders will know, with certainty, when the next bus is coming.”

“NextBus signs will make a great service—free buses for the Lower Manhattan community—even better,” Senator Squadron said. “Now, bus riders can spend less time waiting for a bus, and more time enjoying the shops, restaurants, cultural institutions and more in this wonderful neighborhood. I am pleased to have supported this program, and I thank the Downtown Alliance and the DOT for their work in making it happen.”

"The Downtown Connection is a valuable free transportation alternative for the residents and employees of the Battery Park City area," said Battery Park City Authority Chairman William C. Thompson, Jr. "I want to thank Senator Squadron, the DOT and the Downtown Alliance for improving upon this very popular service by installing these NextBus signs so riders can have up-to-the-minute information about arrival times. It is this type of planning and initiative that has helped turn Lower Manhattan into a vibrant, successful community."

"NextBus uses the latest technology to provide riders with the convenience they need in their busy lives, and will allow residents, workers and tourists alike to spend more time in the shops, restaurants and parks that make Lower Manhattan one of the best places to live, work and visit," said Community Board 1 Chair Julie Menin.

"As a long-standing member of the Lower Manhattan community, Goldman Sachs is pleased to support the Downtown Alliance and its efforts to provide great services to our neighborhood," said Timur Galen, a Managing Director at Goldman Sachs and also board member of the Downtown Alliance.

The Downtown Alliance piloted the service two years ago at two of the Downtown Connection’s 37 stops in Lower Manhattan. Thanks to funding secured by Senator Squadron, the Alliance has posted new LED signs at five new spots, bringing the total number of signs to seven. An eighth is awaiting the removal of scaffolding from a stop. The signs are on Water, Warren, Washington, Greenwich and Pine streets, and at 4 New York Plaza.

A grant from Goldman Sachs will technically equip two additional stops in Battery Park City. Those signs will be installed in the coming months on Vesey Street.

The Downtown Alliance launched the Downtown Connection in late 2003, instantly improving Lower Manhattan’s quality of life and accessibility. The buses shuttled more than 834,000 workers, residents and visitors in 2009, and the Downtown Alliance expects ridership to increase this year. The shuttle buses run at 10-minute intervals from 10 AM to 8 PM daily, with more limited service on weekends.

Last year, the ADA-accessible service was expanded to offer direct access to the World Financial Center and Battery Park City, the 1,2, 3, 4, 5, 6, A, C, E, R, J and Z subway lines and retailers on Warren and Murray streets.

In addition to broadcasting messages about arrival times, the NextBus signs also can be used to transmit emergency public service messages. You can learn more about NextBus—already offered in Boston, Montreal, Washington, D.C. and at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, N.J—at <http://www.nextbus.com/>.

“We are pleased to work with the Alliance for Downtown New York to bring this passenger enhancement to Lower Manhattan and showcase our proven technology,” said Owen Moore, President of Nextbus, Inc.

Passengers can also check on the buses before they even step outside. In 2004 the Downtown Alliance introduced a Web page— <http://downtownny.interfleet.com/>—that allows them to pinpoint the exact location of buses throughout the day from the comfort of their offices and homes.

The mission of the Alliance for Downtown New York is to be the principal organization that provides Lower Manhattan's historic financial district with a premier physical and economic environment, advocates for businesses and property owners and promotes the area as a world-class destination for companies, workers, residents and visitors. The Downtown Alliance manages the Downtown-Lower Manhattan Business Improvement District (BID), serving an area roughly from City Hall to the Battery, from the East River to West Street.

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