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All Aboard! New Downtown Connection Bus Fleet Arrives in Lower Manhattan Just In Time for the Holidays

- Seven New State-of-the-Art Buses Feature Greater Seating Capacity and ADA-Wheelchair Accessibility -



*New Downtown Connection Bus
Photo Credit: Downtown Alliance*

New York, NY (November 22, 2011) – Get ready to ride around Lower Manhattan in style – the Downtown Alliance’s new fleet of seven Downtown Connection buses has hit the streets just in time for the holiday shopping season.

Travelling around the perimeter of Lower Manhattan - from river to river, the fully accessible bus fleet features periphery seating for 25 passengers (up from the previous 19 seats) and LCD screens – showcasing all that the district has to offer - on every bus.

“The arrival of our new Downtown Connection fleet is exciting news for everyone who works in, lives in or visits Lower Manhattan,” said Elizabeth H. Berger, President of the Downtown Alliance. “And, it’s just in time for the holiday, making it even easier to explore Lower Manhattan and discover all of the wonderful places in which to shop and dine.”

“The Downtown Connection is one of the best things about living in and visiting Lower Manhattan,” said New York City Council Member Margaret Chin. “These new, bigger, wheelchair accessible buses will allow more people to explore and discover all that our neighborhood has to offer. I want to thank the Downtown Alliance and its President, Elizabeth Berger, for being a consummate advocate for our community.”

"The Downtown Connection buses provide residents, workers and visitors with a convenient and free way to get around and enjoy all that Lower Manhattan has to offer," said New York State Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver. "The new bus fleet will further enhance this wonderful service. I applaud the Downtown Alliance for making this investment in the future of our community and for the important role that they play in making Downtown such a great place to live, work and visit."

“The Downtown Connection provides a vital connection for the residents, workers, and visitors in Battery Park City,” said Gayle M. Horwitz, President of the Battery Park City Authority. “As a rider myself, I recognize the importance in delivering a necessary service, and one that is free to riders. And, the fact that the new buses are bigger, better, and are rolling out just before the holiday shopping season makes it all the better!”

The roll-out comes as the Downtown Alliance kicks off the Lower Manhattan 2011 Holiday Shopping season, highlighting Lower Manhattan as a premiere shopping destination. As they shop, Downtown Connection riders can hop on and off of Downtown Connection buses, which make 37 stops with easy access to subway lines, bus routes, and ferries.

“We see the Downtown Connection as a substantial benefit to lower Manhattan. It provides residents, visitors, and our employees an economical and quick way to get around,” said Michael Piazzola, South Street Seaport’s General Manager. “To see the Alliance continually advancing the service with recent upgrades like NextBus helps make it a better way to move about our neighborhood, and we hope these improvements increase ridership as more people learn about them and the Connection itself.”



*New Downtown Connection Bus
Photo Credit: Downtown Alliance*

Launched in late 2003, the Downtown Connection has become an important transit option for many Lower Manhattan workers, resident, and tourists, connecting the South Street Seaport to Battery Park City. Ridership has grown every year since the service began, and is now just shy of 900,000 annual rides. In February 2009, the route was expanded to include a Warren/Murray Street loop to offer better access to retailers and restaurants, including Whole Foods, Bed, Bath & Beyond and Barnes and Noble.

Recognizing the value of this free service, the Downtown Alliance earlier this year moved to replace its older fleet with new – and larger – vehicles. Over the last few months, the Downtown Alliance kept the same schedule, and also set up a system in which passengers requiring accessible transportation could schedule pickup and drop-off service at its regular stops.

Downtown Connection service and routes remain the same -- seven days a week from 10 AM to 7:30 PM. Service, as always, is suspended on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

Additionally, the Downtown Alliance has made it easier to track buses, so riders don't have to stand out in the cold this winter (or sweltering heat next summer!). Ten electronic countdown clocks – NextBus signs – were installed at bus stops to announce when the next Downtown Connection buses will arrive. And, riders can use smartphones or computers to determine the location buses by following these steps:

Step 1. Go to www.nextbus.com.

Step 2. Under New York, select Downtown Connection.

Step 3. Choose your stop to find out when the next bus will be arriving.

Riders can visit www.DowntownNY.com/downtownconnection for more information.

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