NYC DOT’s Response to the Transit Strike of December 2005

Unexpected Events, IMPACTS
Intercontinental 11th Annual Conference
June 30th, 2006
Overview

- New York City: Our Role
- Strike Background
- The City’s Response
- What We Learned
New York City DOT

What We Do …
• Regulate how transportation infrastructure is used
• Maintain transportation infrastructure

What We Don’t Do …
• Manage the subways and buses (Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA))
• Manage toll crossings (MTA, Port Authority)
• Manage all highways (Some under State DOT)
• Traffic enforcement (NYPD)
Mayoral Partners

- Office of Emergency Management (OEM)
- Police Department
- Taxi and Limousine Commission
- Department of Parks and Recreation
The Five Boroughs

- 8.2 million residents
- 321 square miles total
- 56% of New York City residents don't own a car
- Overwhelming reliance on public transportation
Pre-Strike Planning

• Modeled after the 1966 and 1980 experiences
• Last threat of strike: 2002
• Goals of contingency plan:
  – Move *people* rather than vehicles
  – Ensure continuity of essential public services
  – Manage traffic and reduce congestion
  – Share information with commuters
  – Collect data
Scale of Strike Action

- **33,700** TWU members
- **490** Subway stations
- **6,000** Subway cars
- **244** Bus routes
- **4,500** Buses
- **7.5 million passengers** use NYC Transit system on an average weekday
- **600,000 public school students** depend on mass transit daily
Unique Concerns

- City has undergone considerable growth since previous transit strike

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1980</th>
<th>2005</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>7.1 million</td>
<td>8.2 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>3.3 million</td>
<td>3.6 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subway use</td>
<td>6.2 million</td>
<td>7.5 million</td>
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- Holiday Season – tourism, travel, retail sectors adversely affected
- Low average daily temperatures
MTA vs. TWU 2005

• Contract negotiations for weeks leading up to the strike
• Contract expired 12 AM December 15, 2005
• Major issues – healthcare, pension, wages
• TWU called strike at 3:00 AM on Tuesday, December 20
• Subways and buses out of service for three full workdays
December 20, 2005
Immediate Response

• The Office of Emergency Management coordinated effort and led strike plan

• DOT monitored commuter patterns, collected data, and managed traffic

• Police Department ensured enforcement of vehicle restrictions
2005 Strike Plan Summary

- Limit vehicle entries to Manhattan
- Maximize vehicle occupancy
- Add roadway capacity where possible
- Optimize functioning transit
- Promote alternate transportation modes
- Widely publicize strike regulations
STRIKE PLAN 2005:

Limit Entries

- HOV-4 at all entry points to Manhattan below 96th street from 5 AM to 11 AM

- No trucks or commercial-plated vehicles entering Manhattan below 96th Street between 5 AM and 11 AM
STRIKE PLAN 2005:

Maximize Occupancy

- Major roadways reserved for HOV-4 vehicles – 5 AM to 11 AM (peak direction)
- Bus Lanes on expressways reserved for HOV4 vehicles
- Taxis subject to HOV-4 restrictions
Map 4: Taxi and For-Hire Vehicle Zones

- Zone A - Manhattan - South of 23rd St.
- Zone B - Manhattan - 23rd St. - 60th St.
- Zone C - Manhattan - 60th St. - 96th St.
- Zone D - Manhattan - North of 96th St.
- Zone E - Brooklyn
- Zone F - Bronx
- Zone G - Queens
- Zone H - Staten Island

NYC Office of Emergency Management
STRIKE PLAN 2005:

Add Roadway Capacity

• Lane reversals on bridges and tunnels (peak direction)
• Certain Manhattan arterials reserved for use by emergency and priority vehicles to ensure emergency access between 5 AM and 8 PM
STRIKE PLAN 2005:

Add Roadway Capacity

- No Standing regulations extended in peak direction to add capacity
- No Parking regulations to allow for truck loading/unloading during non-peak hours
- Street cleaning regulations suspended
- Construction embargo
STRIKE PLAN 2005:

Optimize Functioning Transit

- Increased service on Staten Island Ferry
- Encouraged private ferry operators to expand service
- Additional service on commuter trains
Maximize Bicycle Access

- Extensive bike lane network in place
- Additional lanes created at river crossings
- Bike lanes expanded using traffic cones and No Standing regulations posted
STRIKE PLAN 2005:
Facilitate Pedestrian Access

1980

2005
Plan Modifications

- Staten Island Ferry deployed to Brooklyn in response to large crowds (day 1)
- Scaled back “emergency only” lanes (day 3)
- Scaled back bridge and tunnel lane reversals (day 3)
- Continued outbound signal progressions beyond 10pm to meet demand (throughout)
IT’S OVER!
Strike ends as transit union blinks

Subways, buses roll

TRANSIT STRIKE ENDS ON 3RD DAY; FRAMEWORK FOR DEAL REACHED

All aboard!
Findings

Alternate Modes: Pedestrians

- Walking was primary mode of non-motorized transportation during the 2005 strike

- On average 34,381 pedestrians traveled inbound across the 4 East River Bridges daily

- Compared to the 1980 strike, pedestrian bridge volumes were higher by 14% – 6am to 10am
Findings

Alternate Modes: Bicycles

- Fewer people rode bicycles during the 2005 strike than in 1980
- On average 11,717 bicyclists traveled inbound across the East River Bridges daily
- From 6-10am 44% fewer bicyclists used the East River Bridges as compared to 1980
Findings

Functioning Transit Modes

- Private ferries: Daily inbound ridership increased by 50%
- Staten Island Ferry ridership decreased slightly 6-10am
Findings

Primary Mode: Cars

- Private passenger vehicles were the primary mode of transportation during the transit strike.

- Many drivers opted not to commute during the traditional morning peak.
Findings

Peak Hour Shifted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Peak Hours</th>
<th>Normal Conditions</th>
<th>1980 Strike</th>
<th>2005 Strike</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inbound</td>
<td>8am – 9am</td>
<td>7am – 8am</td>
<td>11am – 12pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outbound</td>
<td>5pm – 6pm</td>
<td>5pm – 6pm</td>
<td>10pm – 11pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Findings

Lower Entry Volumes

Percent change in volume for the three days of the strike

Includes all Manhattan crossings and screenlines
Findings

Low Bridge Volumes 5AM - 11AM

Pre-Strike: 85,878
Strike Day 1: 43,585
Strike Day 2: 50,383
Strike Day 3: 52,140

49% Decrease
16% Increase
3% Increase
### Findings

#### High AM Vehicle Occupancies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strike Year</th>
<th>Average Vehicle Occupancy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>3.53 persons per vehicle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>3.19 persons per vehicle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>2.20 persons per vehicle</td>
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<tr>
<td>Normal Circumstances</td>
<td>1.50 persons per vehicle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings

Vehicle Occupancy 5AM - 11AM (people entering Manhattan)

East River Bridges - Vehicle Occupancy

Pre-Strike: 128,817
Strike Day 1: 150,368
Strike Day 2: 193,975
Strike Day 3: 199,175

17% 29% 3%
Findings

Commercial Traffic Management

From 7am to 10am…

• 94% fewer trucks and commercial vans entered Manhattan via East River bridges

• Only 1.8% of traffic on the bridges was trucks and commercial vans
Findings

Lessons Learned

1. People will rely on private vehicles to get around – HOV rules are effective

2. Walking remains a viable option for New Yorkers
Findings

Lessons Learned

3. Congestion worsens as the day wears on

4. Restrictions could have been less severe
HOLIDAY BACK ON TRACK
DAILY NEWS

NOBODY
WINS

In this strike everyone has lost: the workers, the union, the MTA, New York business and most of all, you.

SEE PAGES 2-11