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***Long Island Mobility Week and the 8th Annual Car Free Day Long Island
Kicks-Off with Virtual VIP Panel “Trading Gridlock for Cleaner Communities”***

Nassau County Executive Laura Curran and Phillip Eng, President of MTA/LIRR, were joined by Erika Richards, Marketing Manager of NICE bus, Joseph Brown, Commissioner Suffolk County Public Works and Dr. William Lowe, Northwell Health Medical Director for Employee Health Services, to talk about a future for Long Island with less single-use cars, cleaner air and more resilient communities. This conversation facilitated by Mindy Germain, Car Free Day LI organizer, showcased innovation on the horizon, as well as what is happening right now to keep transit safe.

County Executive Laura Curran spoke about the County’s Open Streets Pilot Program, the expansion of the LI Motor Parkway Multi-Use Trail, and complete streets projects in Baldwin and Hicksville. “My administration is committed to providing more sustainable forms of transportation for residents and visitors to get around Nassau County, as well as increasing access by developing desirable, walkable, downtown communities centered around mass transit. I’m pleased to once again support Car Free Day Long Island and encourage all residents to reduce their carbon footprint this Car Free Day and every day.” stated Curran.

Transit panelists took time to break down measures to keep riders safe “The LIRR is doing everything possible to safely bring riders back to our system,” Phillip Eng, President of the Long Island Rail Road said. “We’re disinfecting our trains and stations at a frequency never before seen, while handing out millions of free masks and hand sanitizer to customers who need them. Our newly revamped TrainTime app has first-in-class features that can help customers better plan their trip on less-crowded trains, and also to choose a less-crowded train car in real time while they’re standing on the platform. These tools are going a long way in restoring confidence and giving more power to our customers to make the most informed decisions about their travel habits.”

Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone stated his support: “On September 25th I encourage all residents to join me in the pledge to be car-free or car-lite for Long Island’s 8th Annual Car Free Day. Joe Brown, Suffolk County Commissioner for Public Works shared Suffolk County initiatives to help people move beyond the car, “From first and last mile partnerships to a quality bus rapid transit system in planning - Suffolk County is working towards a future with ease of connectivity.” Brown also shared innovative measures to keep riders safe, including plexiglass shields.

Erika Richards, Marketing Manager of NICE bus, emphasized that ridership is coming back. “Our riders depend on us to get to work, doctor appointments and even essential food shopping. Like the railroad and Suffolk County Transit, Ms. Richards outlined extensive protocols to keep drivers and passengers safe.”

The panel concluded with Dr. William Lowe, Northwell Health Medical Director for Employee Health Services, discussing the health and wellness benefits for Long Island communities reducing car-dependency. “Reducing cars on the road improves air quality, road safety and supports a more active and healthy lifestyle,” Lowe stated.

Following the discussion, Germain stressed the importance of getting educated, “We all have a role in helping Long Island communities realize clean and sustainable mobility initiatives. Explore [The 2020 LI Mobility Week series](#) September 20-26, with free workshops delving into transportation innovation, complete streets, innovative funding sources, electric vehicles and more. Also, take the [Car-Free Day LI pledge](#).”

About Long Island Mobility Week:

Launched two years ago by the US Green Building Council Long Island Chapter (USGBC-LI) in partnership with Car Free Day Long LI, [Long Island Mobility Week](#) is a week-long series of sustainable transportation activities and events engaging leaders in government, academia, transportation and planning, culminating with Car Free Day Long Island.

About Car Free Day Long Island:

Car Free Day is an international event celebrated every September in over 3,100 cities in over 50 countries around the world. Long Island will observe the 8th Annual [Car Free Day LI](#) on Friday, September 25, 2020, encouraging people to drive less and get around through transit, bicycling, walking; vanpooling and also telework for people who can work from home. Car Free Day gives people the opportunity to reflect on the negative impact of single-occupancy vehicles and to use alternatives that help reduce traffic and harmful emissions, conserve energy and reduce parking problems.

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