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**MAYOR BLOOMBERG AND SPEAKER QUINN ANNOUNCE LARGER VESSELS TO  
RUN IN EAST RIVER FERRY SERVICE DUE TO POPULARITY**

*New Landing at Brooklyn Bridge Park to Improve Service and Replace Aging Infrastructure*

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn today announced system-wide upgrades to increase efficiency of the popular East River ferry service, a public-private partnership between the City of New York and Billybey Ferry Company. Larger vessels, accommodating 399 passengers as opposed to 149, will operate on summer weekends, and a new landing is now open at Pier 1 in Brooklyn Bridge Park. The new landing will accommodate the larger vessels and has two slips, doubling capacity and eliminating service delays and traffic bottlenecks, as well as wider gangways, which will reduce passenger embarkation and disembarkation time. The popular concession service onboard has also been expanded to offer a wider variety during all operating hours.

“Opening up our waterways to transportation is making our City greater and greener,” said Mayor Bloomberg. “Since its launch, this pilot program on the East River has proven to be incredibly popular – so popular, it turns out, that we’re going to need bigger boats. The larger vessels and other improvements will make sure more New Yorkers and tourists can get wherever they want to go.”

“‘You’re going to need a bigger boat’ isn’t just a memorable quote from the movie *Jaws*; It’s what we’ve been hearing from New Yorkers due to the overwhelming popularity of the East River Ferry,” said City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn. “City residents and visitors alike have decided they want to ride on the East River, so we need to make sure we can accommodate them. The success of this pilot program is a sign that the Council’s dedication to alternative transportation is in step with the public demand.”

“We are thrilled we are able to provide our customers with this enhanced service,” said Paul Goodman, CEO of Billybey Ferry Company, which operates the East River Ferries. “With the new ferry landing, fleet of larger vessels, and recent addition of on-board concessions from local vendors, we know that this summer will be more successful than the last.”

The amended summer schedule will be able to carry more passengers seamlessly to their desired destinations. On weekdays, the vessels will operate from 6:45 AM until 8:45 PM. in both directions. During morning and evening peak hours, there will be three boats running every twenty minutes. During weekday off-peak hours, there will be two boats running on a thirty-minute schedule. On Saturdays and Sundays, there will be three larger vessels operating every forty-five minutes from 9:35 AM until 9:30 PM. Governors Island will be served on the regular weekend route during the Island's operating hours. Through a partnership between the East River Ferry and Benchmark Events, a diverse range of local establishments will have the opportunity to operate the concessions on the East River Ferry on a rotating basis.

“Two of Mayor Bloomberg’s signature economic development priorities have been to expand New York’s transportation options and to reconnect New Yorkers to their waterfront, and the East River Ferry is a critical component of both strategies,” Deputy Mayor Robert K. Steel said. “With larger boats and an expanded landing in Brooklyn Bridge Park, even more people will be able to take advantage of this fantastic service that, if it continues to be this successful, will become a permanent part of New York’s transportation network.”

“The East River Ferry’s first year of pilot service-has already allowed hundreds of thousands of passengers to commute to jobs and explore the City’s enhanced waterfront – an encouraging sign for the future of our City’s ‘blue highway,’” said New York City Economic Development Corporation President Seth W. Pinsky. “As we embark on a second summer, we plan to continue upgrading the service in order build upon this success, enticing even more New Yorkers and visitors to experience what has quickly become one of the City’s most popular and efficient modes of transportation,”

“This is great news for New Yorkers, who are in ever-increasing numbers embracing waterborne transportation as a means of getting around our great city,” said Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney. “The City and ferry operators have heard the familiar cry: ‘we’re gonna need a bigger boat!’ – and they are offering a welcome response. I look forward to the day when we not only have bigger ferry boats, but expanded routes that serve even more neighborhoods along New York City’s bustling East River waterway.”

“These modifications will help make the East River Ferry Service better and improve New York’s mass-transit and transportation systems,” said Congressman Jerrold Nadler. “By harnessing New York’s rivers and embracing a proud local maritime tradition, New Yorkers have tapped into a more interconnected and environmentally clean mode of transport. I am proud to have helped secure funding toward this project, and I commend Speaker Quinn and the City for continuing to improve this service and ensuring that more New Yorkers can use the ferries.”

“The East River Ferry has offered New Yorkers and visitors additional travel options. I look forward to more successes as this service continues to grow,” said Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez.

“East River Ferry service has been wildly successful, and the new and improved ferry landing at Brooklyn Bridge Park’s Pier 1, larger capacity vessels being added for summer weekends, and new concessions—including DUMBO’s very own Brooklyn Roasting Company—will mean a safer, faster and more comfortable ride,” said Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz. “The

popularity of the East River Ferry proves the viability of ferry service as a way for New Yorkers to get to and from work and to attract economic development and tourism to our bustling waterfront. It's a model that could be replicated for future ferry service along our rapidly growing shoreline in southern Brooklyn."

"This latest enhancement in ferry service will help to spread the news that many New Yorkers already know," said Queens Borough President Helen Marshall. "Travel by ferry is quick, reliable and enjoyable. It is environmentally friendly and efficient and not prone to traffic jams. I applaud the Bloomberg Administration and all those who made today's announcement happen."

"This service exceeded even our most optimistic expectations," said Council Member Dan Garodnick. "We can see clearly that New Yorkers will embrace a viable ferry commuter service. Let's stay invested in it, and do what we can to help meet the demand that's out there."

"I am very excited that the East River Ferry has been so successful, we now need bigger boats to meet the demand," said Council Member Levin. "Brooklyn Bridge Park is a gem on the East River Waterfront and Pier 1 is a great location to locate the ferry for residents and tourists from throughout Brooklyn and all of New York."

"I'm thrilled that there will be larger boats on the weekends this summer for the East River Ferry, as I know this was a demand of many of the city's ferry riders," said Council Member Michael Nelson, Chair of the Committee on Waterfronts. "Today's announcement is a testament to the City Council and Bloomberg Administration's dedication to develop our city's waterfronts and a great example of the public voicing a concern and city government answering that call."

"Enhancing the East River Ferry service is the way to go as ridership continues to increase," said Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer. "It will give more City residents the opportunity to utilize a mode of transportation that is quickly becoming popular. In Queens, residents choose the ferry to get to work, take in many of our cultural offerings and to experience a different slice of New York City. I look forward to helping expand this exciting service in my district in Western Queens as more people 'Ride the River'."

"The success of the East River Ferry proves that investing in smart and efficient transportation options that make use of our natural waterways is good for New York and good for New Yorkers," said Council Member Margaret Chin. "The East River Ferry surpassed its ridership projections in the first six months of operation, and I am confident that New Yorkers will welcome more service options and extended hours of operation this summer. I urge New Yorkers to come see the city from a new perspective and take advantage of all that the East River Ferry has to offer."

"These infrastructure improvements and the increased summer demand are further proof that New Yorkers view their waterways as both a method of transportation and a source of recreation," said Council Member James Vacca, Chair of the Transportation Committee. "Continued success of the ferry pilot is key to expanding the network, which is a very high priority for me. The Bronx remains the only borough in our city that lacks ferry service, but with each success of the East River Pilot, I am more confident that will not always be the case."

“Waterborne transportation is a key component of Brooklyn Bridge Park and enhancing the facilities to accommodate them makes the park a more dynamic place,” said Regina Myer, President of Brooklyn Bridge Park. “The improvements to and relocation of the Fulton Ferry Landing will not only provide a safer and speedier passage to Brooklyn Bridge Park, it will also ensure that more visitors get to enjoy fabulous art and cultural events, participate in educational programming and experience the stunning waterfront views.”

“The enhancement of frequent ferry service between Brooklyn, Queens and Manhattan brings convenience and pleasure to residents of our growing waterfront communities as well as everyone who uses our waterways, which we think of as our Sixth Borough,” said City Planning Commissioner Amanda M. Burden. “Commuters, residents and visitors are eager for waterborne transit service, one of the major recommendations of the City's Comprehensive Waterfront Plan. The water is now becoming part of New Yorkers’ everyday lives.”

“Numbers don’t lie and the verdict is in – New Yorkers love and use affordable, frequent ferries. The bigger boats and the new facilities at Brooklyn Bridge Park will only add to the capacity and the excitement of the East River Ferry service. Full steam ahead!” said Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance President Roland Lewis.

Ferry service was launched on June 13, 2011, as part of a 3-year pilot program to provide year-round ferry service between East 34th Street and Pier 11 in Manhattan, Long Island City in Queens, Greenpoint, North Williamsburg, South Williamsburg, and DUMBO in Brooklyn, and seasonally to Governor’s Island. The service costs riders \$4 for a one-way ticket, \$12 for an unlimited all-day pass, and \$140 for an unlimited monthly pass. Ferries accommodate bikes on board for an additional dollar. Ticketing machines are available at all commuter locations along with staffed ticket agents at some stops.

This initiative is part of the Waterfront Vision and Enhancement Strategy (WAVES), a citywide strategy launched by Mayor Bloomberg and Speaker Quinn, which lays out a sustainable blueprint for the City’s more than 500 miles of shoreline. WAVES has two core components: Vision 2020: The New York City Comprehensive Waterfront Plan, released a year ago, which established long-term goals for the next decade and beyond, and the New York City Waterfront Action Agenda, which set forth priority initiatives to be implemented by the end of 2013, many of which are being realized. Together, the initiatives provide a blueprint for the City’s waterfront and waterways, and focus on the following categories: open space and recreation, the working waterfront, housing and economic development, natural habitats, climate change adaptation and waterborne transportation.

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