

## NY Waterway - Ferries to the Rescue

Posted by [Glenn](#) on April 24, 2006 - 11:13pm in [The Oil Drum: Local](#)

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Gas is just about at \$3/gallon at most stations in NYC for unleaded regular. Any plan seeking to insulate the city from rising energy prices from a transportation perspective will have to examine ferries. In addition to restoring [NYC's ports](#), [congestion pricing](#), [bus rapid transit \(BRT\)](#), more [pedestrian friendly areas](#), more [light rail](#), we really need to start rethinking the value of NYC's waterfront from a transportation perspective.

NY Waterways (map right) runs a whole privately funded system of ferries on the Hudson River. The problem on the NY side of is that few of these facilities are linked to good mass transit. Instead, the NY Waterways runs a fleet of private buses to key transportation hubs all around the city, but they get stuck in the same midtown traffic as all other city buses.

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In comparison to many of the rail proposals which have taken years or decades to plan, fund and construct, ferry lines can be established relatively quickly, do not require a right of way to be pieced together by buying up land and exercising eminent domain. It just requires ports to be established at key points around the city. In many cases, the ferry is not only an energy saver, but it also significantly shortens trip length by avoiding bridge bottlenecks.

Ferries are also just pleasant to ride since they are much more spacious than buses or trains and they offer riders fantastic views of the city skyline.

But ferries do need a mass ridership to breakeven and without the critical mass transportation links on both sides, they will never become popular modes of transportation. Both sides of the Staten Island Ferry are a model of great transportation links, although it could run more frequently to reduce trip times. NJ seems to be doing it's part to link rail to ferries. How about NY? How about some good transportation on the other side and how about some more East River ferries too!

Read what congressman [Weiner](#) has to say about ferries:

If the last year hasn't persuaded you that we need to start using ferries more in New York, you haven't been paying attention. Each transit emergency – the Roosevelt Island tram, the crippling transit worker strike, the terrorist attack against London's underground, the track fire that knocked out major parts of the A and C train service - reminds us that we need to begin to do what practically every other water borne major city has done – get on the boats. A fleet of ferries and a collection of landings would provide redundancy and security on bad days and ease traffic and smog everyday. Ok, we get the message. Now let's act.

Yeah, action sounds good. How about a little experimentation, a little testing of new ideas, a little long range planning? How about it Mike (Bloomberg), Dan (Doctoroff) and Iris (Weinshall)? Let's

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start taking some action.



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