

# NYC Ferry Network Optimization

Proposed Network Changes  
July 2025



# NYC Ferry is growing and improving

As more people ride, we have found ways to improve our service for riders



## Ridership growth

Ridership continues to grow throughout the system, with more than 7.4 million boardings in FY25.



## Expanded fare discount program

Enrolled nearly 25,000 riders in the Discount Program available to seniors, people with disabilities, high school students and Fair Fares NYC program participants.



## Rider-focused service changes

Implementation of Rockway Rocket, Rockway Reserve, and South Brooklyn Faster Connections to improve service for leisure and commuting riders.



## On-board and app upgrades

Automatic stop announcements, in-app concessions purchasing, and estimated seat and bike availability helped riders get more information and plan their trip.



## Seasonal schedule adjustments

Minor schedule adjustments are made to reflect seasonal demand fluctuations.



## Digital and in-person engagement

NYC Ferry Marketing team engages tens of thousands of New Yorkers through viral social media moments and community events.

# Optimization is different from past changes

First time making major changes that consider the entire network

## NYC Ferry has made network changes since launch, but most have been at the route-level

**2017** – NYC Ferry begins service, covering four boroughs

**2019** – Brooklyn Navy Yard added to Astoria route, original system in operation

**2020** – Lower East Side discontinued, extended Astoria route to East 90<sup>th</sup> Street, reconfigured East River route

**2021** – Expansion to St. George and Throgs Neck

**2022** – Governors Island added to South Brooklyn route

**2023** – Implement South Brooklyn Faster Connections

## 2025 Network Optimization proposes comprehensive systemwide changes that aim to:

**Give riders more places to go** by better connecting routes to Midtown and Lower Manhattan.

**Speed up commutes** by reducing the number of stops made on trips.

**Make more seats available** on our busiest routes during peak hours, weekends and other times of year.

**Operate more efficiently** by combining routes and eliminating empty vessels.

**Reduce subsidy per rider** by increasing ridership and making these changes with limited new costs.



# Where we are in the process

Using the past eight years of data and operating experience to develop a draft proposal, we are now looking for feedback

## 1 Existing Conditions

Winter 2024

Analyzed ridership data, rider demographics, travel patterns, and demand using existing historical operations data, annual surveys, and census data.

## 2 Draft Network Proposal

Spring 2025

Used historical operations data and elected/community advocacy as basis for an optimized network proposal that balances service efficiency, rider needs, and costs.

## 3 Public Review and Feedback

Summer 2025 (Now)

Present draft proposal and solicit community feedback to ensure alignment with their needs and secure support essential to a successful implementation.

## 4 Announce Final Network Map

Fall 2025

Incorporate public feedback and announce final network map. Publish report detailing optimization process and anticipated impacts, including an equity analysis.

## 5 NYCEDC Board Approval

Fall 2025

Present final proposal to NYCEDC's 24-member, board for adoption. Once adopted, NYC Ferry will begin implementation process.

## 6 Implementation

Winter 2025

Implement the adopted network design. New Yorkers will be notified of modifications to the routes, schedule, and service levels ahead of the effective date.

# Issues to address with optimization

## Route-level takeaways from existing conditions analysis

### East River

- High ridership, but often at capacity. Riders can struggle to board at times
- Slower speeds, takes a long time to go end-to-end

### Rockaway

- Important connection for commuters all year and beach-goers in the summer
- Difficult for riders to get to Midtown

### Soundview

- Valued commuter connection that genuinely saves time for commuters
- Ridership is not well balanced, route could be more efficient

### South Brooklyn

- Takes a long time to get to major destinations. Lots of stops and lots of waiting
- Difficult for riders to get to Midtown

### St. George

- Isolated from system - riders want to go to different parts of the city
- Growing ridership that could increase with more places to go.

### Astoria

- Boats sometimes go slower to safely navigate harbor.
- Strong, productive ridership with efficient operations.

# What we prioritized in proposing changes

Proposed network changes balance rider priorities and efficient operations

## Make it easier to get to Midtown

Midtown is NYC's largest employment center and generated over two million ferry boardings in 2024. Proposed changes emphasize giving all landings outside Manhattan direct access to Midtown.

## Better interborough connections

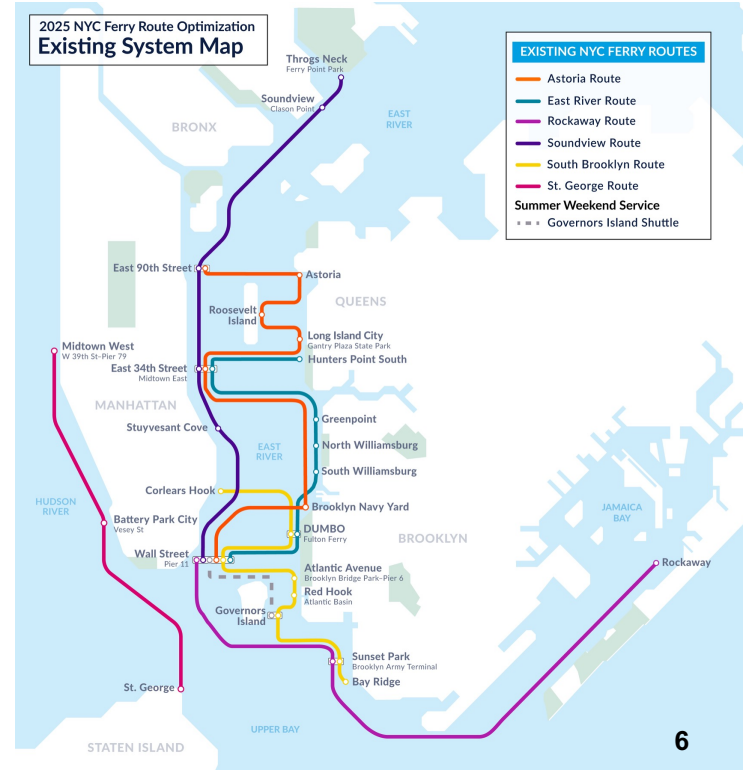
In 2024, about ¾ of NYC Ferry passenger trips went from one borough to another. Proposed changes create new interborough connections while speeding up existing ones.

## More space between stops

Most riders are not travelling locally via ferry. Routes with consecutive stops in the same borough have slow travel times and strained capacity. Proposed changes prioritize spacing out stops to improve travel times

## More direct routing

Most riders do not make transfers on NYC Ferry. Service changes prioritize direct routing to major destinations over transfers.



# Split up the East River route

## List of Stops

**East River A** – Wall St/Pier 11 > DUMBO/Fulton Ferry > North Williamsburg > Hunters Point South > East 34<sup>th</sup> St

**East River B** – Wall St/Pier 11 > DUMBO/Fulton Ferry > South Williamsburg > Greenpoint > East 34<sup>th</sup> St

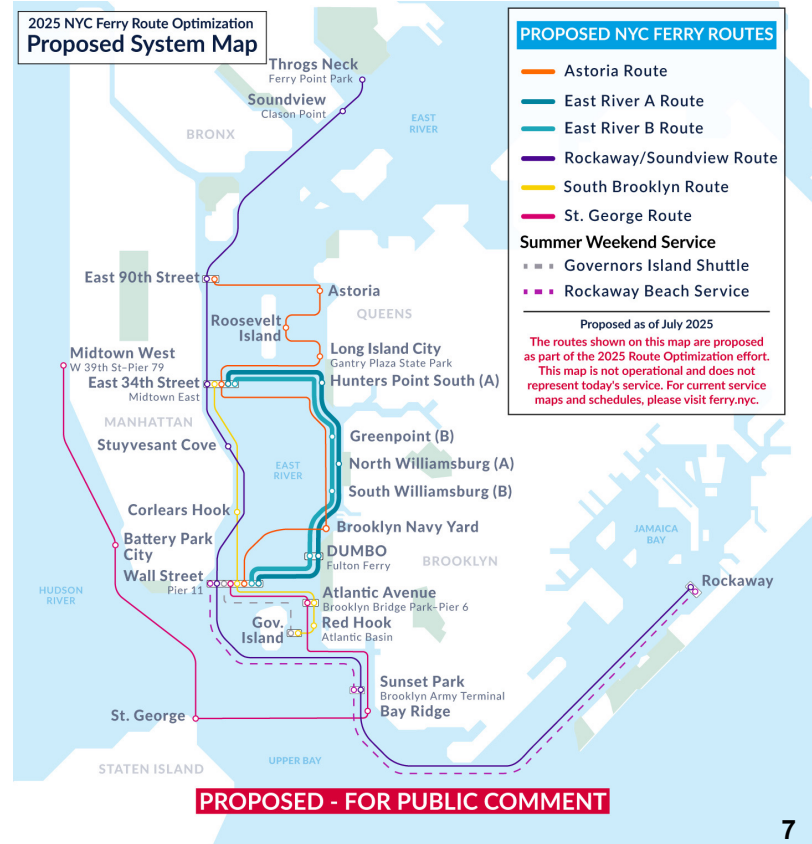
## Proposal Impacts

**More capacity during peak times** – Making fewer stops between DUMBO and East 34th will create more room on-board to avoid maxing out at peak times.

**More time moving, less time waiting** – Existing East River route spends nearly 50% of its travel time boarding and de-boarding passengers. Reducing stops on each trip means more time spent moving.

**Faster travel time to Midtown and Downtown** – Hunters Point South gets to DUMBO and Midtown much faster than today. South Williamsburg gets to Midtown faster.

**Frequency not impacted** – The East River route will continue to operate approximately every 23-24 minutes during peak times.



# Soundview to Rockaway

## List of Stops

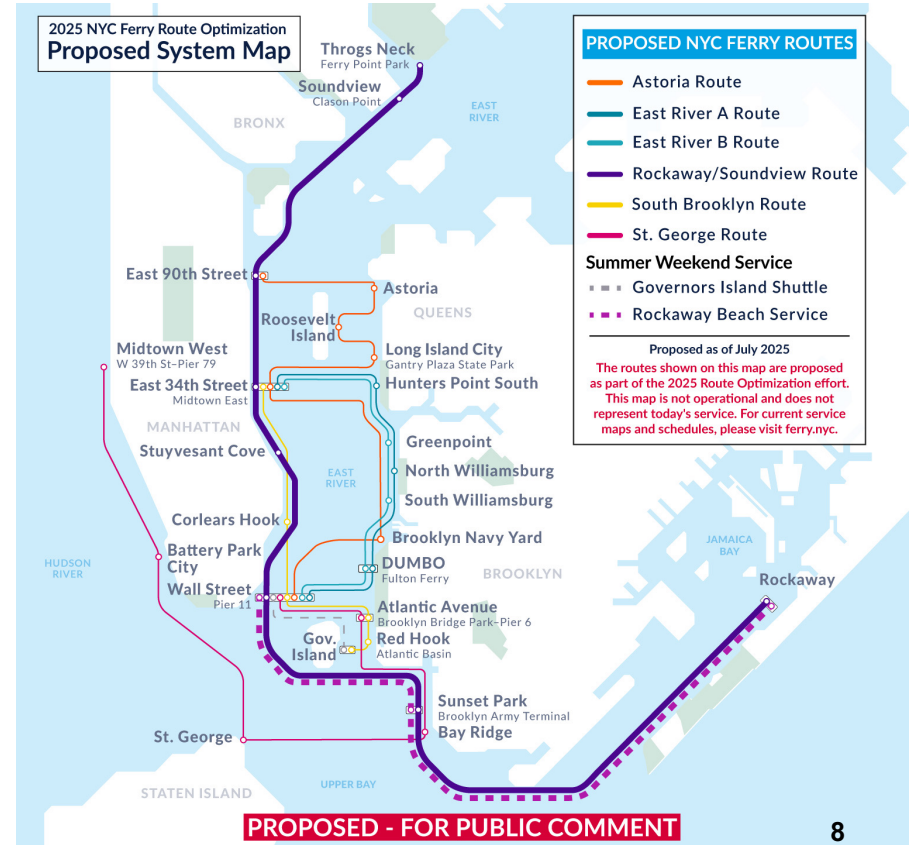
**New alignment** – Throgs Neck/Ferry Point Park > Soundview > East 90<sup>th</sup> St > East 34<sup>th</sup> St > Stuyvesant Cove > Wall St/Pier 11 > Sunset Park/BAT > Rockaway

## Proposal Impacts

**More commuting options** – residents in Rockaway and Sunset Park/BAT will get to Midtown and the Upper East Side without needing to transfer at Wall St/Pier 11.

**More recreation/leisure options** – Midtown, Uptown, and the Bronx will connect to Rockaway, a major leisure destination during the summer.

**More frequent service at some landings** – New route will operate more frequently at Rockaway and Sunset Park/BAT than the existing Rockaway route.



# Staten Island to Brooklyn

## List of Stops

**New alignment** – Midtown West/W 39<sup>th</sup> St > Pier 79-  
Battery Park City/Vesey St > St. George > Bay Ridge >  
Atlantic Ave/BBP Pier 6 > Wall St/Pier11

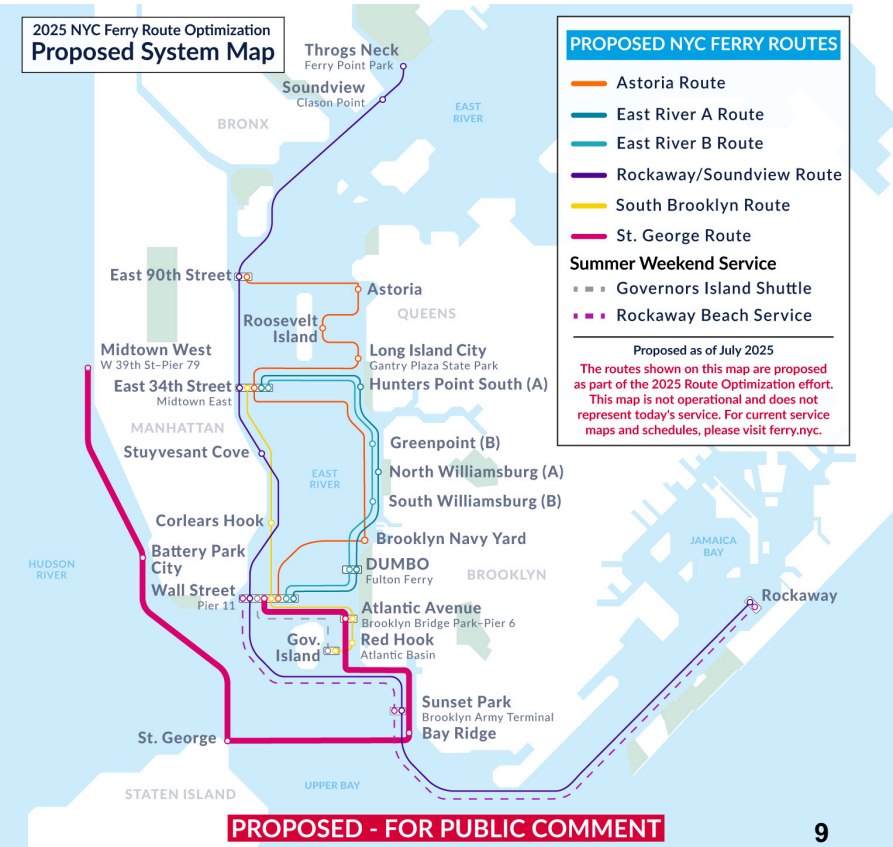
## Proposal Impacts

**More commuting options** – St. George will be connected to Brooklyn and the East Side of Manhattan and will be one free transfer away from any other NYC Ferry route. Brooklyn landings will connect to the West Side

**More frequent service in Brooklyn** – Ferries will depart Atlantic Ave/Pier 6 and Bay Ridge every 34 minutes during peak times, currently have vessels departing every 50 minutes.

**More appropriate frequency for Staten Island/West Side** – to accommodate longer route, St. George and West Side landings see peak frequency change from 28 to 34 minutes.

**Transfer required for Governors Island, DUMBO** – Bay Ridge riders can transfer for free at Pier 11 to access these landings.



# South Brooklyn to Midtown

## List of Stops

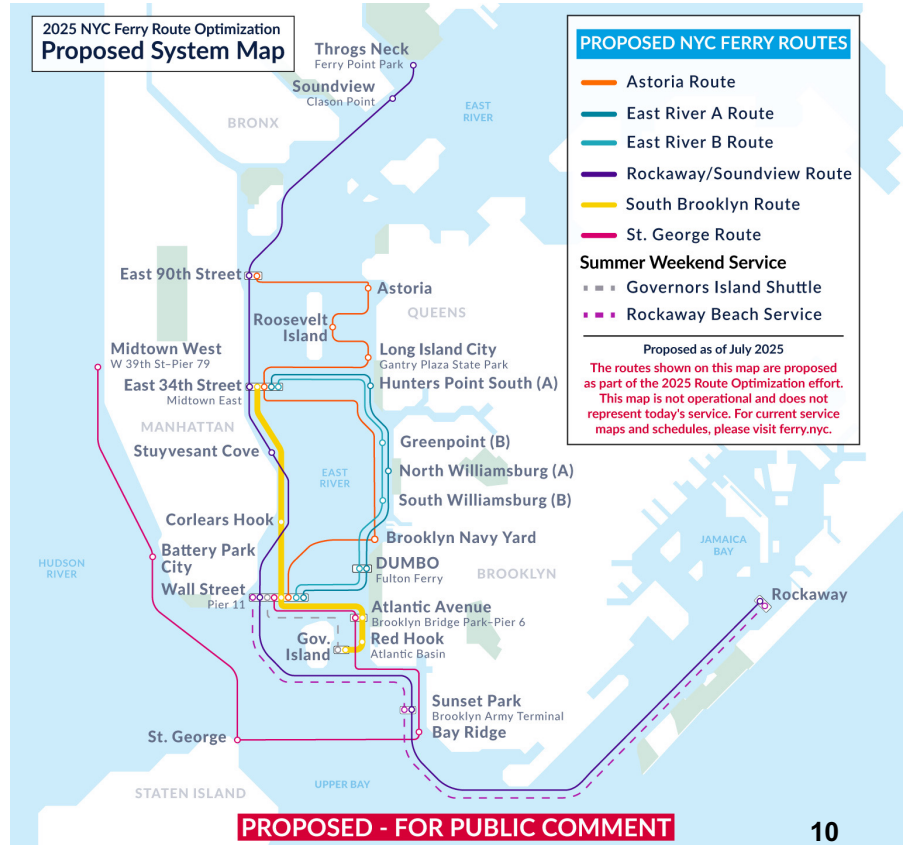
**New alignment** – Governors Island > Red Hook/Atlantic Basin > Atlantic Ave/BBP Pier 6 > Wall St/Pier 11 > Corlears Hook > East 34<sup>th</sup> St

## Proposal Impacts

**More commuting options** – Landings get connected to Midtown at East 34th Street.

**Improved service frequency** – Shortening the route to begin at Governors Island means ferries will now depart every 43 minutes during peak (currently every 50 minutes).

**Transfer required for Red Hook, Bay Ridge, Sunset Park/BAT, and DUMBO** – Riders can transfer for free at Wall St/Pier 11 to access some landings. Access to Brooklyn Bridge Park is still available at Atlantic Ave/BBP-Pier 6.

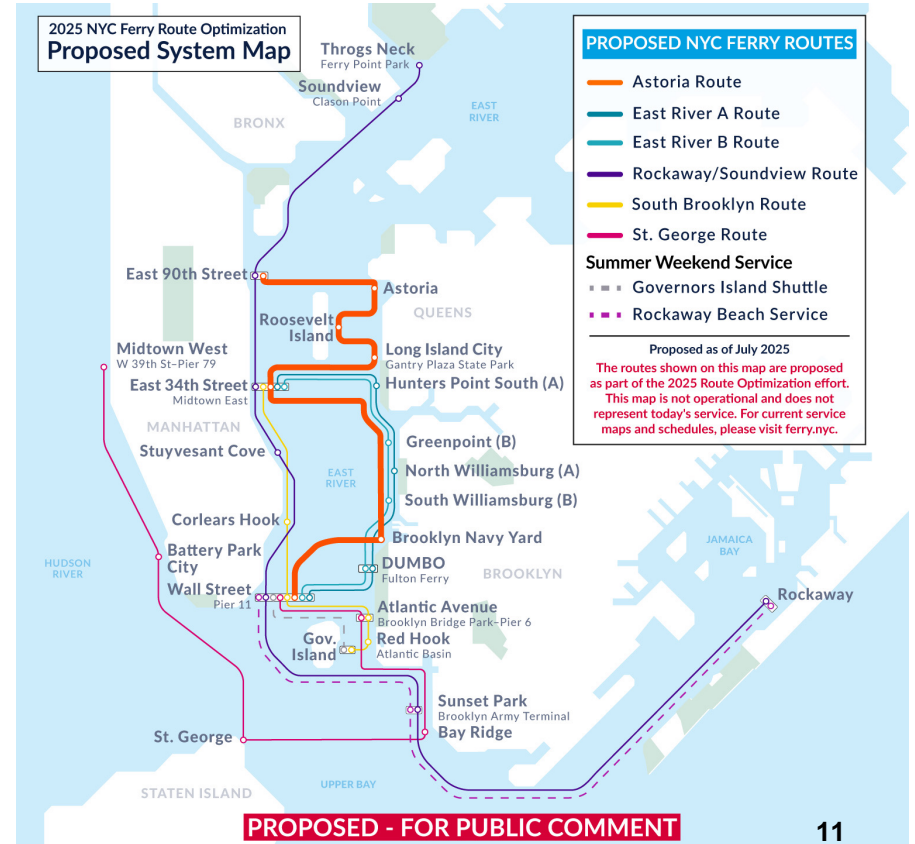


# Astoria

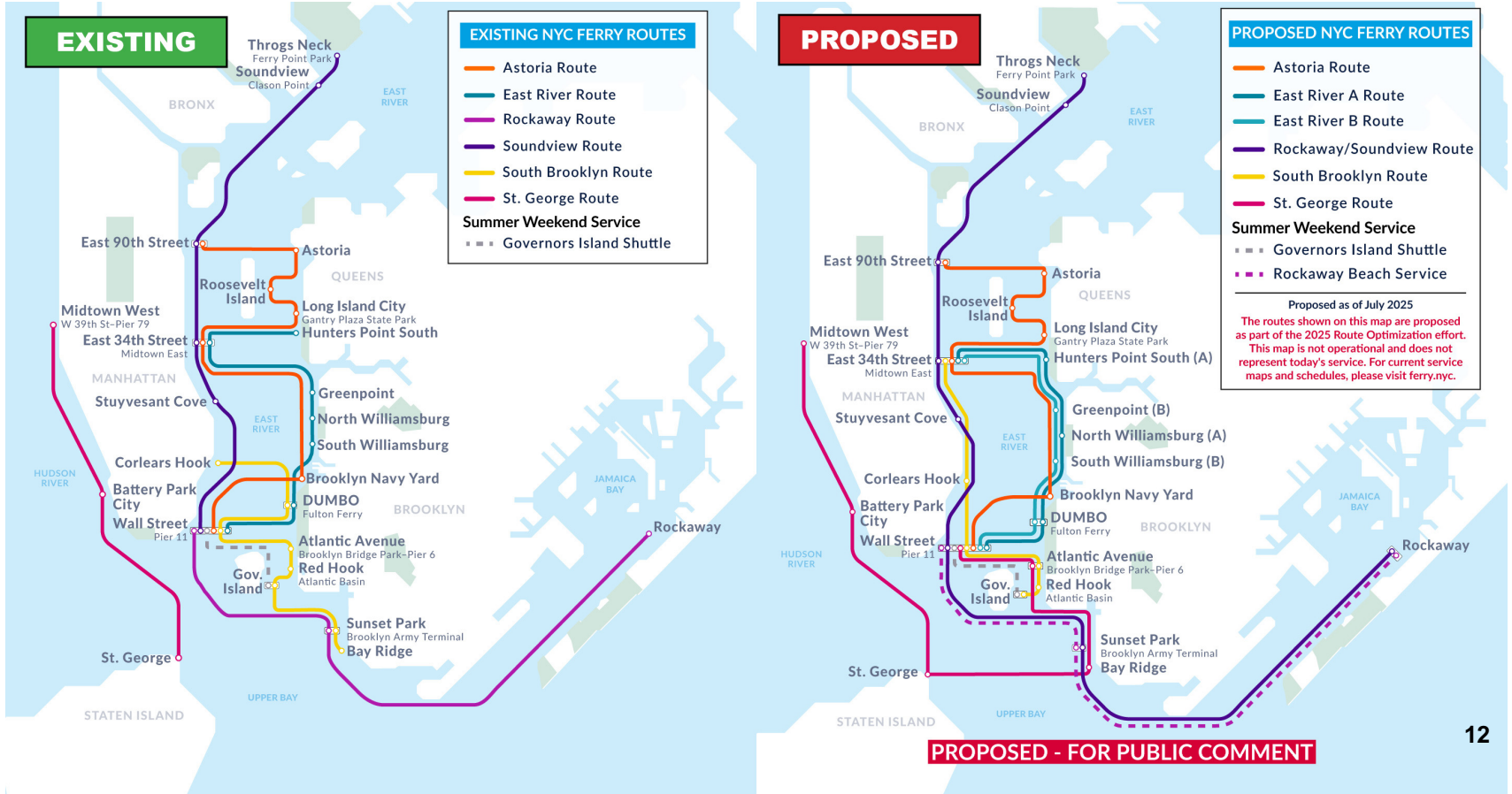
**No proposed changes, but the route will benefit from overall network improvements.**

**Improved network integration** – Free transfer to Staten Island and the West Side

**New, faster transfer options** – About 10 mins travel time savings to RW & SB transfers



# Comparing current and proposed network



# Systemwide benefits

Impacts may vary, but the proposed changes are a net gain for the system with improvements in frequency, connectivity, capacity, and travel times

## Service Frequency

**All routes will have access to a boat at least every 45 minutes during peak hours.** About 390,000 residents or 36% of those living in neighborhoods served by NYC Ferry will gain more frequent service.

## Travel Times

**On average, about 60% of daily riders will save time in the proposed network.** Average daily travel time savings is about 878 hours or ~4 minutes saved per impacted rider. It is a modest improvement but a step in the right direction.

## Connectivity

**Every route will have direct access to key terminals,** providing direct access to 450,000 more jobs (a 17% increase over existing network). Every landing in the network will be just one transfer away from each other.

## Capacity

The most constrained route in the system, the East River route, will have ~46% more trips to Wall St./Pier 11, DUMBO/Fulton Ferry, and East 34th Street while keeping cost roughly the same. **This increases capacity by up to 50%, helping relieve overcrowding and reduce left behinds on local stops during the busiest days.**

# How to Provide Feedback

There are multiple ways to share your thoughts about the proposed changes



## Online Feedback Form

Complete the feedback form at  
[edc.nyc/ferrychanges](https://edc.nyc/ferrychanges)

Available in seven languages

## Phone

People with disabilities or with limited internet access can participate by calling  
[\(212\) 618-5714](tel:2126185714)

## E-mail

Send an e-mail to [ferrysurvey@edc.nyc](mailto:ferrysurvey@edc.nyc)

## Connect with Our Team

Catch NYC Ferry and EDC staff at select ferry landings during scheduled times  
(see website for details)

# FAQs

## Are you expanding to new sites?

The optimization plan is focused on new connections within the existing NYC Ferry network. We will have more to say about our plans to study potential new locations later this year.

## Would the changed routes have new names?

Some routes may be renamed to better reflect the new areas they serve and to make them easier to understand. We'll make sure to notify you well in advance of any route name changes so you can get familiar with the new names before they take effect.

## Do you have the schedule for these proposed changes?

Not yet, we will finalize schedules after the Final Network Map is adopted this fall.

## When will the changes take effect?

The final network map will be developed after the feedback period closes and will be implemented later this year. We will notify riders well before any changes take effect.

## Would the proposal remove any stops from the system?

No. The proposed network change will continue to serve all 25 landings within the existing system.