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Curran, Solages Announce Expansion of NICE Bus PEAK Flexi Service in Elmont & Introduce Larger Vehicles to Accommodate Ridership Growth

Valley Stream, NY - Nassau County Executive Laura Curran, Legislator Carrié Solages and NICE Bus CEO Jack Khzouz joined to announce that Nassau Inter-County Express/NICE Bus will introduce new vehicles with more capacity and an expanded schedule for Elmont area residents this summer. Effective June 23rd, NICE's new **Elmont Flexi** vehicles will accommodate up to 30 passengers at a time and offer a new AM and PM peak schedule.

Flexi, which travels a fixed route beginning in the south at Green Acres Mall and travels north toward Hempstead Turnpike, features popular travel destination stops in Valley Stream and Elmont and an on-demand stop which can be requested at Northwell Hospital. On-demand stops allow the route to serve a larger footprint more efficiently and respond to individual rider needs.

When it was initially launched as a pilot program in early 2017, Elmont Flexi was one of the nation's first fixed-route/on-demand hybrid routes. Since the pilot launch, ridership has doubled to approximately 400 daily riders – roughly 2,000 riders a week – with weekday service running mornings and evenings.

"We heard the voices of our bus-riders, and today we're delivering for them by expanding our PEAK Flexi Service in Elmont. More and more residents are relying on NICE Bus to get around, and it's vital that we accommodate their commuting needs and thus encouraging growth in ridership," said **County Executive Laura Curran**. "Nassau County is committed to implementing innovative solutions that provide more transportation options for our residents while also reducing road congestion."

"In the two years since piloting the 'Flexi' model, we have seen great success. Elmont Flexi has been well accepted by the community and ridership has grown steadily since 2017," said **NICE CEO Jack Khzouz**. "To comfortably accommodate this ridership growth, we are excited to unveil a new class of vehicles that will be serving the Elmont area this summer. In addition, NICE had responded to rider requests by adding three additional peak trips – two early-morning and one in the PM."

"Since its inception, the Elmont Flexi route has served as an innovative solution for providing vital bus transportation options to residents," said **Nassau County Legislator Carrié Solages**. "By expanding its offerings,

NICE is listening to the consumers who rely on mass transit to access employment, health care, shopping and recreation. I thank NICE and County Executive Curran for their continued partnership and supporting our ongoing efforts to ensure these essential services are effective and accessible.”

The new Ford 350 28-foot vehicle can accommodate 30 riders at a time - 22 seated passengers plus an additional eight standees. This is an enhancement from the current 24-foot Arboch-model cutaway bus, which safely accommodates 20 riders (14 seated passengers and six standees). All NICE vehicles are accessible for passengers utilizing a mobility device.

“Not every route requires a 40’ vehicle. Flexi has shown us that by diversifying our fleet, we have the opportunity to try new and innovative means of serving Nassau’s communities,” said Khzouz. “Micro-transit pilots like Flexi are a great way to grow ridership, and we’ll continue to look for opportunities to cultivate ridership in Nassau County.”

Elmont Flexi now runs 4:50 a.m. to 9:57 a.m. weekday mornings, and from 3:00 p.m. to 8:18 p.m. in the evenings. The three additional PEAK trips are designed to help facilitate connections to the N6, NICE’s busiest route, providing early and late-night commuters flexibility getting to and from work.

Flexi fares remain the same as fixed-route buses at \$2.75 one-way, with NICE GoMobile, MetroCard, and cash (in exact change) payment methods available. Fareboxes do not accept dollar bills. For a full schedule and additional information visit www.nicebus.com or call the NICE Transit Information Center at (516) 336-6600.

Follow NICE on social media @thenicebus for transit news, service updates and rider giveaways.

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