

## MMDA to reopen 2 EDSA U-turn slots

The Manila Times · 17 Dec 2020 · A4 · BY ARLIE O. CALALO

THE Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) will reopen two U-turn slots to ease traffic congestion on EDSA. The MMDA closed all U-turn slots along EDSA to give way to the EDSA Busway or EDSA Carousel. The closures resulted in monstrous traffic jams as thousands of motorists needed to take longer routes to reach their destinations. Quezon City Mayor Josefina Belmonte, in a Viber message to The Manila Times, said she was scheduled to meet with some key MMDA officials on Wednesday to finalize the reopening of the U-turn slot in front of the Quezon City Academy and the second near Dario Bridge.

Belmonte had written to the Department of Transportation, Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board and MMDA to request for the reopening of the two U-turn slots to decongest traffic in these areas.

“It would be reopened either Friday or Saturday depending on what we would agree during my meeting with them (MMDA officials),” she said.

Belmonte bared that the Quezon City Task Force on Transport and Traffic Management would manage the stop-and-go scheme for the U-turn slots by allowing Uturning vehicles to cross the EDSA Bus Carousel which, according to the city’s transport planners, usually last from one to two-and-a half minutes between buses. The U-turn slot in front of Quezon City Academy will be opened to light vehicles, while the U-turn slot near Dario Bridge will be open for emergency and marked government vehicles only.

“This is a win-win solution for motorists who have been experiencing heavy traffic along EDSA due to congestion caused by the U-turn closures and along nearby roads due to the spillover of vehicles. Patients and visitors going to the Quezon City General Hospital will benefit the most, and we thank the MMDA for its favorable response,” Belmonte said.

At the same time, the mayor reiterated her support for the national government’s efforts to find solutions to the traffic problems in the metropolis such as the elevated busway plan. The city government was seriously studying the plan with the possibility of shouldering part of the construction of the elevated busway, according to the Quezon City chief executive. “The city government and the MMDA will continue to explore short and long-term solutions to the perennial traffic grid lock along EDSA. We are willing to help for as long as it will bring comfort to our constituents and ensure that their mobility is not hampered,” Belmonte added.